

# UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI TRENTO DIPARTIMENTO DI SOCIOLOGIA E RICERCA SOCIALE SCUOLA DI DOTTORATO IN SOCIOLOGIA E RICERCA SOCIALE XXI°CICLO

Tesi di Dottorato

# "The Romanian Orthodox Churches in Italy: The Construction of Romanian-Italian Transnational Orthodox Space"

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I. THESIS INTRODUCTION	1
I.1. Aims and Objectives	1
I.2. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS	3
I.3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND FIELDWORK	
I.4. THESIS OUTLINE	
CHAPTER II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	17
II.1. INTRODUCTION	
II.2. SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION	
II.3. TRANSNATIONAL MIGRATION STUDIES II.4. TRANSNATIONAL MIGRATION IN GLOBAL RELIGIOUS SYSTEM	
CHAPTER III. THE CHRISTIAN ORTHODOX TRADITION FROM PAST TO PRESENT	66
III.1. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHRISTIAN ORTHODOX CHURCHES	
III.2. THE ORTHODOX WORLD IN THE POST-COMMUNIST ERA	
III.3. THE ORTHODOX TRADITION WITHIN THE TRANSNATIONAL MIGRATION CONTEXT	99
CHAPTER IV. FROM THE PAST TO THE PRESENT: EVOLUTION OF THE ROMANIAN	100
ORTHODOX CHURCH	
IV.1. THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND UNTIL 1989 REVOLUTION	122
IV.2. RECONQUESTING AND RECONSTRUCTING: COLLAPSE OF COMMUNISM IN ROMANIA AND THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH	140
CHAPTER.V. A PROCESS IN THE MAKING: IMMIGRATION AND RELIGIOUS PLURALIS IN ITALY	
V.1. CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR RELIGION(S) IN ITALY V.2. IMMIGRATION AND CHANGE IN THE ITALIAN RELIGIOUS LANDSCAPE	
V.2. IMMIGRATION AND CHANGE IN THE ITALIAN RELIGIOUS LANDSCAPE V.3. THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS AND CHURCHES IN ITALY	
CHAPTER VI. THE ROMANIAN-ORTHODOX TRANSNATIONAL SPACE AND ITS ACTOR	
VI.1. MAPPING OUT THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCHES IN ITALY VI.2.INSTITUTIONAL ACTORS IN THE ROMANIAN-ITALIAN TRANSNATIONAL SPACE AND THEIR RELATIONAL SPACE AND THEIR SPACE AND THE SPACE AND THEIR SPACE AND THEIR SPACE AND THE SPACE	
WITH THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH	
CHAPTER VII. ADAPTIVE PRACTICES OF THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCHES IN	
ITALY AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCHES IN	
VII.1. THE CHURCH OF SAN MARCO: THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN TRENTO	
VII.1. THE CHOREN OF SAN MARCO. THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHOREN IN TRENTO	211
TRANSNATIONAL SPACE	
VII.3. CHANGING MISSION OF THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCHES IN ITALY	
VII.4. THE ROMANIAN-ITALIAN TRANSNATIONAL ORTHODOX SPACE	
VIII. CONCLUDING REMARKS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS	380
REFERENCES	389
APPENDIX.A: THE ROOT CAUSES, EVOLUTION AND FUTURE OF ROMANIAN MIGRAT	IONI
I.1. THE END OF THE COMMUNIST RULE AND LABOR MIGRATION FROM ROMANIA	Т
II.2.TRANSNATIONAL ROMANIAN MIGRATION TO ITALY	VI
III.3. THE FUTURE OF THE ROMANIAN MIGRATION TO ITALY	
IV.4. IMPACT OF MIGRATION ON ROMANIA	
APPENDIX B. DISTRIBUTION OF ROMANIAN NATIONALS IN ITALY	XXIV

### LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1. MAP OF RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS IN ROMANIA	148
FIGURE 2. DISTRIBUTION OF THE ROCS IN EUROPE UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE ROMANIAN ORTHO	DOX
METROPOLITANATE OF WESTERN AND SOUTHERN EUROPE	237
FIGURE 3. DISTRIBUTION OF THE ROCS IN ITALY	238
FIGURE 4. DISTRIBUTION OF ROMANIAN NATIONALS PER REGION IN ITALY ACCORDING TO ISTAT $01/01/2$	2008
FIGURES	239
FIGURE 5. ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX DIOCESE IN ITALY	243

### LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1. RELIGIOUS MINORITIES THAT ARE ITALIAN CITIZENS	191
TABLE 2. RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION OF MIGRANTS IN ITALY (ESTIMATES OF CARITAS/MIGRANTES – DOSSIE	R
2008)	. 192
TABLE 3. MAIN MIGRANT RELIGIOUS MINORITIES IN ITALY (ESTIMATES OF CESNUR 2008)	
TABLE 4. REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF ROMANIAN NATIONALS IN ITALY ACCORDING TO ISTAT 01/01/2008	8
FIGURES	.XXIV
TABLE 5. DISTRIBUTION OF ROMANIAN NATIONALS IN ITALY ACCORDING TO ISTAT 01/01/2008 FIGURES	XXIV

#### **Chapter I. Thesis Introduction**

#### I.1. Aims and Objectives

Religious institutions as transnational actors play a very important role within the context of transnational migration. Religious transnational space is formed and shaped with the involvement of different actors, particularly through the agency, commitment and religious practices of migrants that reproduce or reconstruct their religions in a new setting. Religious institutions, which are actively involved in all stages of migration or are pulled into the transnational space by migrants, gain a new area of agency within the transnational space. However, the extent of the involvement and agency of the religious institutions within the transnational migration space differ and to what extent religious institutions cope with this new area of agency requires a closer examination. The primary interest for this research initiative is, therefore; the role religious institutions play in the articulation of transnational ties as well as the processes through which transnational migration trigger structural and cultural changes in the way religious life is organized and experienced. In particular, this research project analyzes the way in which the Romanian Orthodox Church (ROC) acts, organizes and positions itself within the religious landscape of Italy following the mass migration of Romanians into Italy, its adaptive practices and socio-religious role within the receiving context and implications of this experience within the sending context as well as the extent of the ROC's agency within the Romanian-Italian transnational migration space.

The ROC emerges as one of the most important transnational actors within the transnational social space created through *sui generis* Romanian migration to Italy.<sup>1</sup> The presence of the Romanian Orthodox Churches (ROCs) in the Italian territory is a rather new phenomenon, which is directly related with large scale immigration that has started following the fall of communist regime in Romania. Due to immigration Romanian community emerged as the most numerous Orthodox community in Italy and the ROCs have succeeded in forming a well-structured and connected network in a very short span of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For the discussion of the root causes of the Romanian migration to Europe and Italy after 1989, the main characteristics of *sui generis* Romanian migration to Italy, the emergence and future of the Romanian-Italian transnational space through transnational migration, and the impact of mass emigration on Romania See: Appendix A. The Root Causes, Evolution and Future of Romanian Migration.

time and with limited resources. While the number of parish churches has reached up to 76 and there are many parish churches in the making, in early 2008 the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate took the decision to form a Romanian Orthodox Diocese in Italy, which has important implications for the current status and future prospects of the ROCs and Romanian Orthodox community in Italy.

It is not only the Romanian migration and institutional dynamics of the ROC that define the emergence and organization of the ROCs in Italy but also institutional, structural and socio-cultural factors in Italy. Casanova argues that religiosity of migrants should be seen as a means for adapting to the new setting (2005: 13). The institutional context of the receiving country plays a role in impeding or facilitating the establishment of religious organizations and in articulation of transnational ties. Additionally, perceptions and values of the receiving society have an impact on the organization, practices and experiences of migrant's religious bodies. Within this context, the thesis inquires to what extent migrant religious organizations undergo a process of adaptation and Italianization, while they transform the Italian religious landscape by focusing on the case of the ROCs and referring to the experiences of some other migrant religious organizations in Italy. Therefore, one of the aims of the thesis is to draw the scholarly attention to the dynamic and negotiated adjustment process of the ROC to the Italian context, while re-producing the Orthodox tradition in a new (Catholic) setting.

The negotiation and adjustment process as well as the experiences of the ROCs in diaspora also have implications on the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate's discourse, practices and future plans of action, which are revealed through interviews with the Romanian Orthodox priests, research findings from participant observations and official church documents. Father Valdman of the ROC in Milan argues that the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate grows stronger as its "branches" develop and gain strength in diaspora.<sup>2</sup> This research project aims to evaluate and discuss to what extent the emergence and growing number of the ROCs as branches make the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate at influential transnational actor within and outside Romania, within the Italian (and the EU) space by tracking the process of emergence and adaptation of the ROCs in Italy and evaluating the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Interview with Pr. Valdman at the ROC in Milan on July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

agency of the ROCs in construction and maintanence of the Romanian-Italian Orthodox transnational space.

The ROC besides being a migrant church within the Italian and European landscape should be seen as an EU member state church, which affects the reconfiguration of its role in the European context (Carp, 2007: 18) and at global level with the extension of the Romanian diaspora to Europe, America and Australia and other parts of the world. The agency of the ROC in the transnational space between Romania and Italy is also embedded within the EU transnational space and globalizing world. Therefore, even though it is not the main focus, the thesis refers to the bigger picture that the ROC is situated in to highlight trends in immigration, religions, religious pluralism at European and global level and interconnectedness and embeddedness of transnational spaces, which seems to be one of the unaccented links in theorizing on transnational social spaces.

This research project is situated within the transnational migration studies and aims to contribute to the ongoing debate on transnational religious actors within the migration context from an organizational point of view. This research project, which has a rather explorative character, has taken the literature on transnational migration, sociology of religions and the Orthodox tradition as guidelines throughout the research journey, while the participant observation, interviews, consultation to the official church sites and documents have been the main data-gathering and generating techniques. This research initiative by focusing on the ROCs in a context in which studies on transnational migration and transnational migrant religious organizations are rare and transnational agency of the ROC almost inexistent, aims to claim that religion and religious institutions deserve scholarly attention within the transnational migration context. Therefore, the utmost purpose and aspiration of this research is to stimulate new debate and research inquiries on this issue area.

### I.2. Scope and Limitations

This thesis is on the socio-religious role of the ROC in the lives of Romanian Orthodox migrants Italy, its adaptive organizational practices within the Italian religious landscape and its agency in constructing and maintaining the Romanian-Italian transnational space. The need to define the role of the ROC as a religious institutions in the construction and/or of maintenance of the transnational space and to identify the difference

between transnational religious practices and other transnational practices were the main initial concerns that informed and inspired the formulation of the research question and the definition of the scope and framework for this research initiative. The findings of this research do not only provide us with insights regarding the agency of religious bodies within the transnational social space encompassing Italy and Romania but also reveal the impact of migration and living experience on the self-perceptions and frames of reference of immigrants in a new setting; the reasons and mechanisms of resort to religion, and the importance of religion in migrants' survival strategies. Besides providing new answers and explanations, this research project seeks to pose new questions, which would hopefully contribute to the ongoing scholarly debate and further research on international migration.

This research project prefers qualitative research methodology, which provides the researcher with flexibility throughout the planning phase and research process. Since the research process is "an inductive, data-led activity" (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996: 10), it "is not a linear follow-the-rules procedure" and "putting together concepts, propositions, and a research design involves circularities" (Gerring, 2001: 23). Furthermore, the observational research allows the researcher to review and reformulate the research question as new data presents the researcher with a new perspective (Silverman, 1993: 43). However, besides advantages, qualitative research poses some challenges to the researcher. One of the main limitations and challenges for this research initiative has been managing time; as the assumptions based on literature review before entering the field and certain expectations were revisited and re-elaborated to better capture the research field, and the decision to extend the research field from Trento, led to changes and rearrangements in the schedule. There were delays due to the difficulty in setting interview dates and preparations for visits to other cities in Italy or to Romania. Certain visits were cancelled, since no positive response was received or the response arrived late. However, despite the time limitation, changes in the research plan and other problems, I managed to bring together facts, insights, perspectives and experiences without deviating much from the initial plan.

During fieldwork for this research, one of the data-generating techniques that have been used is the participant observation. Doing participant observation as an "outsider" – since I am neither an Orthodox nor Romanian – has certain advantages and disadvantages. Being an "insider" would have allowed me to have a quicker access to the research field, while speaking the language and being familiar with religious culture and practices would have facilitated communication. However, being an outsider did not prevent my access to the field or my communication with the parish community. My personal migration experience was an important factor that enabled me to build a dialogue with different members of the parish community. As a Turkish citizen I was also an "outsider" to the Italian context; I have lived as an immigrant in Italy, I had to apply for Italian visa and residence permit, and I have been to the local Questura and other institutes many times. I had to apply to the Romanian Consulate in Milan for a visa during my first visit to Romania. I experienced difficulties similar to that of my research participants as I was searching for an accommodation in Trento. I had to listen to and understand people's concerns or criticisms about where I come from or answer their questions and talk about their curiosities regarding my country or my identity. This first-hand experience gave me the chance to understand the bureaucratical issues or problems concerning migrants in Italy and relate to the Romanian community in Trento. Even though I was an outsider to Italy and Romanian community, I was not perceived as a "neutral" self. Historical ties and geographical proximity of Turkey and Romania and acquaintance of many Romanians with Turkey (that many Romanians have visited Turkey or had short migration experiences in Turkey or have relatives that have been to Turkey) in certain cases facilitated interactions and conversations, while showing me history is not something of the past but a very important element in the identity construction process of individuals as well as communities, particularly migrant communities.

Being a student who is willing to learn Romanian and seeking help to improve her language skills and knowledge on the Orthodoxy was also another factor that facilitated my access to the "field". Moreover, being an outsider allowed me more room in terms of asking questions and legitimized my position as an enthusiastic student, who is curious about their religion, tradition and culture. When I willingly and sincerely volunteered to help in certain small tasks and be a "participant" within or outside the church, it was taken very positively and their good will enriched my experiences and "observations". My interactions with people in the Church also allowed me to make sense of and reflect on my own migration experience. Very little knowledge I had about Orthodoxy at the beginning and my observations in the Church stimulated my curiosity and gave me the chance to realize small but important details which might have gone unnoticed by a researcher who is an "insider". All throughout this process I encountered certain small problems, however I tried to follow Neitz's advice and considered small problems I encountered in the field as part of the learning and research process (1999: 102) and I used them to improve the research project.

#### **I.3. Research Methodology and Fieldwork**

This research project is on the role and agency of the ROC within the Romanian-Italian transnational Orthodox space and is of explorative character. The research project requires the researcher to collect first-hand information about the religious life, practices and conduct of religious practices in the context where it occurs in order to analyze the construction and adaptation of the ROC and have a glimpse of religion as a living experience.

The starting point for the field research has been the Church of San Marco in Trento, which is a Catholic Church used by the Romanian nationals of Orthodox creed for Sunday prayers. There is a big Romanian community in Trento and the community keeps growing in size due to continuing migration from Romania as well as new births and family reunification. There is a big church-going community and it is the main meeting and reference point for many Romanians in Trentino region, which makes the Church a very important research site. Since it is a Catholic Church, used by the Romanian community only for Sunday services and important religious feasts, it is a "part-time Orthodox Church". The fact that it is a religious space under constant construction and redefinition, which allows the researcher to witness a very dynamic process in the making, makes it an important point to start the research initiative.

This research project uses qualitative research methodology. During the fieldwork in the Church from late December 2006 until the end of August 2008 (with short breaks or intervals for research trips), participant observation is used as one of the main research techniques. Participant observation is a useful tool for gaining an understanding of the context in which the research participants live, work or act. One of the basic merits of participant observation is that it enables the researcher to observe what people do and how they behave in addition to what they say (Gans, 1999: 540). Face-to-face encounters with the participants, observing them directly in the social setting, the atmosphere and the conditions that they pray, and hearing the problems they encounter as immigrants help the researcher to have a better understanding of the feelings and perceptions of the participants. During my fieldwork I have participated in social and religious practices of the Romanian church-goers during Sunday prayers, their religious gatherings or other religious events organized by the Church. Face-to-face encounters with the participants and observing directly their interactions within the collective religious space has provided important insights and information on the parish life, the Church and the ROCs in Italy and on beliefs and practices of the participants, on their daily worries and problems as well as hopes and moments of happiness and joy. Even though the Church was the main site of participant observation, since the practice of religion cannot be restricted within the walls of the Church, I tried to participate some of the gatherings for baptism celebrations and activities such as *Festa dei Popoli* or visited their houses.

Throughout the participant observation phase, I took fieldnotes about the research site, events or gatherings, religious practices, frequency and intensity of social interactions and group dynamics of research participants. I took notes mainly just after the Sunday prayer but sometimes I noted down some key words or sentences during the Sunday prayer and later on wrote my observations in detail. Since Orthodox people write down the names of the loved ones that are alive or have passed away on pieces of paper to ask the priest to pray for them before or during the liturgy, I sometimes –especially at the initial stages of the research – used this occasion to write down brief notes without getting much attention. Since the Sunday service is a three-hour ritual, I have felt overwhelmed with the details of the service as well as all new faces coming in and going out of the Church during the services and their interactions. However, in time I could identify and focus my attention on certain aspects of the research site and the participants. The Church of San Marco is reconstructed internally and "converted" into an Orthodox Church every Sunday and for special religious gatherings. The space is reorganized for religious services and after religious services the Orthodox "make up" is removed to turn the Church into a Catholic one. The spiritual, symbolic and socio-cultural meanings attached to the reorganization of space have been the objects of observation. The icons, materials and symbols used in this reorganization as well as the people working or volunteering in reorganization of space were part of this observation. The second focus of the observation has been on the conduct of religious services (Sunday and other religious feasts) and rituals in the Church. The third focus of observation has been on the religious practices. Observations regarding the religious practices were twofold; individual practices and organizational pastoral practices. Since the Church of San Marco is temporarily converted to an Orthodox Church, I tried to

explore to what extent the limitations regarding the use of space by the priests and people of Orthodox creed have an impact on the spiritual and symbolic meaning attached to religious practices within the Church, how the Church adapts to the new context and to what extent it can accomodate changes in practicing of religion. Another element of observation was obviously the Church-goers themselves in terms of gender, age, place of origin, frequency of attendance and division of labour for those (volunteers) who take part in the maintanence and the organization of the Church. This observation helped me to identify regular church-attenders and in the last phase of the research I interviewed some of the regular church-goers. I also tried to observe type and intensity of interactions, active and marginal actors, and ways of collaboration regarding practice of and maintenance of the Church among the parish community. Through observation during the religious services and informal conversations before, during or after the liturgy I tried to capture the expression of religious feelings, practices and experiences of the Church-goers.

During the literature review and early phases of the research, I have observed that the ROCs are the main institutions that Romanian migrants turn to within the Italian context not only to worship but also to get help, meet or reach out to other Romanians and to re-produce their identity. Therefore, in addition to participant observation in the Church of San Marco, I have decided to put more time and emphasis on mapping out the network of ROCs and concentrating on certain important nodes in the network, which led me to rearrange my time plan and renegotiate the time I would spend in Italy and Romania and follow a slightly different time schedule than the original one. Therefore, I have decided to extend the research field in order to identify the basic traits of an emerging transnational Orthodox space due to transnational migration, map out and capture the trans-local connections within the network of the ROCs in Italian religious landscape, and to better account for how the ROC acts transnationally within the transnational migration space. What has been influential in my decision was the ability of the ROC not only to form a well-structured and connected network of churches in the Italian territory in a very short span of time, but also in bridging Romania and Italy.

Therefore, I have contacted and visited the ROCs in different Italian cities in order to conduct interviews with Romanian Orthodox priests in Bologna, Milan, Verona, Bolzano, Turin (there are two ROCs in Turin), Ivrea and Padua, Mestre-Venice and Trento (two interviews) ranging from 20 minutes to almost 2 hours depending on the time they could spare to talk to me. All the interviews were conducted in Italian and recorded with their permission. Since most of the priests are overburdened not only with the requirements of the Romanian communities in their cities, but also with the need to work to maintain themselves and their families in Italy (the contribution they get from the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate is meager), it was not easy to set an interview date. In some cases the interview date was changed or delayed or the the time available for the interview was compromised.

In addition to the interviews with Romanian priests, I have tried to contact and discuss changes in the religious landscape of Italy due to immigration with representatives or priests of different churches or religions in Italy. I have interviewed two Catholic priests, one is Don Antonio Sebastiani, the Head of the Diocesan Office for Ecumenism in Trento, who is involved in activities within the framework of ecumenical dialogue with different churches including the ROC (such as co-celebrating the Prayer Week for the Unity of Christians at the Church of San Marco and at the Cathedral, and at Orthodox Easter) at local as well as transnational level (he has represented the Archbishopric of Trento at the Third European Ecumenical Council in September 2007 in Sibiu, Romania); and the other is Don Giuseppe Caldera, the Head of the *Fondazione Migrantes* in Trento, who works with the representatives of different migrant communities for the organization of "*Festa dei Popoli*", a festival for migrant communities that is organized every year in May in Trento. The interviews were in Italian and were recorded. I also followed and attended relevant activities and meetings organized by *Tavolo Locale delle Appartenenze Religiose*.<sup>3</sup>

While the organization and adaptation of the ROC to the Italian setting is the main focus of my thesis, in order to give a more thorough and comparative account of the transformation within the Italian religious landscape due to immigration, I have contacted the representatives of other migrant religions. Given the fact that Islam has become the second religion after Christianity in Italy due to immigration, I have decided to interview the President of the Islamic Alliance Association of Trentino region and the head of the Islamic community, which presented me with a comparative perspective regarding the prospects and problems for a different migrant religion in terms of religious organization and practices within the Italian religious landscape. I have also interviewed the priest of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Trento, which allowed me to hear his experiences

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Il Tavolo Locale delle Appartenenze Religiose was established in October 2001 on the occasion of 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Inter-religious Meeting in Assisi in 1986. This centre has been created for furthering inter-religious dialogue by the Provincial Administration of Trento. The Romanian Orthodox community is one of the communities that are represented in this centre. <u>http://www.arcidiocesi.trento.it/ecumenismo/ec\_tavolo\_religioni.htm</u>

within Italy (but also in France) and take into consideration how different migratory patterns and systems and the composition of the community affect the organization and activities of the migrant church and finally I have interviewed a Moldovan Orthodox priest in Vicenza from the Metropolitan Church of Chişinău, which is an autonomous Orthodox Church under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate. In other words, he is the priest of a Russian Orthodox Church for Russian speaking Orthodox people. The interview allowed me to learn and evaluate how the largest Eastern Orthodox Church in the world organizes itself and its activities within the Italian religious landscape after the 90s due to immigration from the Russian speaking Orthodox territories. The interviews were conducted in Italian and recorded.

During my visits to different cities for interviews with the priests, I had the chance to meet and interview the representatives of the Romanian associations in Chieri, Turin and Padua. The interviews were conducted in Italian and were recorded. I have also attended the meetings and activities of the Romanian association *Arta-A*, which is established in Trento in January 2008. The interviews and meetings with the representatives of the associations allowed me to get more information on the Romanian community, its problems and needs as well as the links and collaboration between the ROCs and the associations.

Even though I have chosen to focus on the organizational aspect of religion within the migration context, i.e. on the migrant church, the key role played by the Romanian Orthodox migrants as active participants and agents in carving out the space for the churches and pulling the ROC into the Italian territory convinced me about the need to interview some members of the Romanian church-going community in Trento to give an account of the religious beliefs and practices that the Romanian migrants bring with them to Italy, if and how they are transformed, channels of religious remittances sent back to the hometown and the role and involvement of the Church within the transnational space through migrants' own words. The aim is also to strike a balance between the organizational and individual aspects of a migrant religion or top-down and bottom-up ways of looking at the same phenomena and to better analyze the empirical data collected through participant observation. Moreover, they serve to confirm as well as challenge the accounts of the Romanian Orthodox priests that I have interviewed. I have conducted 11 interviews (6 men, 5 women). All the interviews were conducted in Italian and recorded, except one. I have written the interview just after we have talked. Majority of the interviewees (7) are regular church-goers, the rest (4) try to attend but cannot attend

regularly due to work or health issues. Two of the interviewees are members of the woman's committee of the Church and one interviewee is a member of the parochial council. Another interviewee has become a parochial member recently. The interviews were conducted in Italian and were recorded.

In addition to the fieldwork in Trento and in Italy, I have visited Romania three times during the research process. For the first visit, I have been invited by the Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes in Romania<sup>4</sup> as a visiting fellow for the period from March 19<sup>th</sup> to April 15<sup>th</sup> 2007. During my stay in Romania, I conducted interviews with two Orthodox priests; with Father Mircea Uta, who is the patriarchal consultant at the External Ecclesiastical Relations Department of the Romanian Patriarchate and with Rev. Prof. Alexandru I. Stan, who is a professor of cannon law and a priest, at his office/home. The interview with Pr. Uta was conducted in Italian, however was not recorded (I took notes during and after the interview), while the interview with Pr. Stan was conducted in English and was recorded. I also interviewed two people who lived in exile during the communist period and returned back with the fall of the Communist regime. I have interviewed Dr. Adrian Niculescu, who had been one of the founders and vice president of INMER<sup>5</sup> in the past, on April 6<sup>th</sup> 2007 and Mr. Dinu Zamfirescu - the president of INMER on April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2007, who told me about their experiences under the communist rule and in exile and their impressions about the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate in Romania and abroad during the Cold War years. The interview with Prof. Niculescu was conducted in Italian, while with Mr. Zamfirescu in French/Italian. Both interviews were recorded. In addition to the interviews, this visit allowed me to contact researchers and research institutions, attend and observe religious services at the Orthodox Churches in Bucharest and attend a Romanian language course. My second visit was for a conference in Cluj-Napoca,<sup>6</sup> which allowed me to meet some Orthodox priests and collect written material on my research project.

For the third time, I have visited Bucharest at the end of August 2008 in order to conduct one-week archival work on the official bulletin of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate. The official gazette of the ROC, *Biserica Ortodoxa Romana* (The ROC), is one of the main channels for the Patriarchate to publish the proceedings of the Holy Synod

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> <u>http://www.crimelecomunismului.ro/en/about\_iiccr</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> http://memoriaexilului.ro/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> International Conference on "Living in Truth: A Conceptual Framework for a Wisdom Society and for the European Construction" organized by Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca in collaboration with UNESCO-CEPES on September 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> 2007.

and its assemblies, news and information about the meetings, visits and activities. With the archival work, I tried to identify important transformations that the Patriarchate went through in the post-communist context, evaluate to what extent immigration issue is taken into consideration by the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate in comparison to other important issues on its agenda; and define the main stance of the Patriarchate regarding the immigration issue, if the Patriarchate follows a certain strategy regarding the Romanian immigrants abroad, how the Patriarchate maintains links with the ROCs abroad and if the presence of the ROCs abroad have a positive impact on the ecumenical dialogue with the Catholic and Protestant Churches of the receiving countries.

Being from Istanbul, where the Ecumenical Patriarchate of the Orthodox world is located, allowed me the chance to visit the Patriarchate and get information about the role of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the Orthodox world and particularly in diaspora, the relations between the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate and the status of and ties with the only the ROC in Turkey, which is in Haskoy, Istanbul. I have also visited the ROC in Istanbul three times, talked with the Romanian Orthodox priest,<sup>7</sup> with the chief parochial council member and some Romanians who attend the church. I also had a chance to meet and get information from the president of Romanian association in Istanbul, which provided me with a different experience of a ROC in a very different context from that of Italy. However, the information and findings from these encounters are used to a very limited extent and there is no full-fledged account of the ROCs experience in Istanbul in the thesis, since it is beyond its scope.

To sum up, in parallel to the literature review, which allowed me to formulate and reformulate the research question and design the theoretical framework of this thesis, I have conducted fieldwork in the Church of San Marco ROC in Trento through participant observation mainly at the Church, but also at Church activities and other activities organized by local institutions or Romanian association in Trento and interviews with the local priest and some Church-goers and interviews with Romanian Orthodox priests in different cities of Italy. The interviews with two Romanian Orthodox priests in Romania and researchers were planned to discuss the impact of expanding Romanian diaspora on the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate within and outside Romania, while interviews with the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Since Pr. State did not speak Turkish well, the interview was conducted half in Turkish and half in Romanian with the help of a parochial council member.

community in Italy, its experiences, problems and prospects. Additionally, I have interviewed three representatives of different religious institutions and two Catholic priests to discuss the ROCs' experiences in Italy on a comparative basis. Visits to the ROC in Istanbul and Ecumenical Patriarchate and interviews were conducted to get information on the organization of the ROC in a different setting and better evaluate Ecumenical Patriarchate's stance on the issue of the Orthodox diaspora. A brief archival work was conducted on the official bulletin of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate covering the period from 1990 to 2006. In addition to the observations, interviews and archival work, internet sources such as different church websites, some internet forums of Romanians in Italy, particularly Liga Romanilor din Italia, and online editions of newspapers were consulted and referred to. Local newspapers as well as some issues of Romanian newspaper Objectiv published in Turin were used to state and discuss the problems of the Romanian and other migrant communities in Italy. By using a different range of research tools this research initiative aimed at and hopefully succeeded in capturing a snapshot of a certain period of a very dynamic migration process and make a contribution to the ongoing debate by providing certain answers and inspiring new questions.

### I.4. Thesis Outline

The thesis is composed of eight chapters. The first chapter is an introductory chapter, which include a general introduction of the thesis, main aims and objectives of the research project, organization of the study and research methodology used throughout the research activity.

The second chapter aims to present the theoretical framework this thesis work is situated in. There are three main sections in the chapter. The first section is on the evolution of the sociology of religion and current approaches regarding the study of religion. Second section talks about the basic parameters of transnational migration, and the role and agency of religion and religious institutions within the transnational migration context. Religion is present at different stages of migration; it affects and is affected by the transformations that the migrat community in question goes through. Since the thesis focuses on adaptive organizational practices of the ROCs in Italy, there is particular emphasis on theoretical approaches and ethnographic work describing the adaptation process that religious institutions go through at the migration setting. Since the transnational migratory systems are embedded in a global web of connections and relations, the last section is on the global religious system and how religious institutions respond to factors and forces of globalization and transnational migration.

The third chapter discusses the Orthodox world within the context of globalization and transnational migration. The heartland of Christian Orthodox tradition is in a period of transformation due to transnational migration and global forces and factors after the end of the Cold War. In order to better evaluate how the Orthodox world copes with global influences it is necessary to discuss the historical evaluation of the Orthodox Church into the Orthodox Churches with particular emphasis on certain periods or events that can be defined as turning points in the life of the Orthodoxy, which is the task of the first section. Since with the end of the bipolar world, the Eastern Orthodox heartland became more open to geopolitical, regional and global influences and change, the second section tries to evaluate how the Orthodox world responded to factors and forces of change. The discussion on the responses of the Orthodox world to the post-communist era prioritizes increasing involvement of the Orthodox Churches in the social sphere, since developments after the 90s are urging and challenging the Orthodox Churches to be more active in this sphere. With regards to the Orthodoxy and immigration, the third section describes how the Orthodox diaspora emerged and evolved in time and analyzes how the Orthodox tradition adapts and responds to the challenges posed by transnational migration in diaspora (in Europe, the US and other parts of the world).

The ROC is one of the Orthodox Churches that came out of the communist rule and is indulged in vigorous effort to cope with the post-communist environment – as described in the third chapter – shaped by globalization, the EU and transnational migration providing the ROC with a new area and chances of agency within and out of Romania. The fourth chapter; therefore, focuses on the history and current status of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate and evaluates its agency within Romania, since its power, status and resources inside Romania define and influence its agency within the Romanian Orthodox diaspora. The first section of the fourth chapter, narrates the evolution of the Church into a Patriarchate and its experiences under the communist rule. After the narration of the historical background, the second section discusses the resurgence of the ROC as an important public actor and extension of its jurisdiction to different spheres of life in Romania following the fall of Ceausescu regime; how the ROC copes with opportunities and challenges posed by global factors and forces of change and the EU accession of

Romania, which extend the jurisdiction of the ROC beyond borders of Romania. Last part of the second section, tries to answer how the ROC responds to the demands of growing Romanian Orthodox diaspora in European, American and Australian continents.

Following the description and analysis of the Romanian context, which is the homeland of the Romanian Orthodoxy, it is necessary to describe the religious landscape the ROC is inserted in. The fifth chapter; therefore, focuses on the Italian religious landscape and changes it is going through due to immigration and emergence of migrant religious institutions. The first section is on the impact of the emergence of migrant religions on the Italian institutional framework of church-state relations, i.e. concordat system, the debate on a new law for religious liberties and spaces of inter-religious encounters. The second section is on the emergent migrant religions, religiosities and religious pluralism in Italy due to immigration and problems related with this transformation. There is particular emphasis on Islam, which became the second religion in Italy due to immigration and the capability of which to adapt to the Italian setting is most questioned. The last section of this chapter focuses on the experiences of different Orthodox Churches that are transplanted on the Italian territory due to recent migratory systems from Eastern Europe.

Through Romanian migration different Romanian religious and secular actors are transplanted or reconstructed in the Italian setting. The main and most fully established actor is the ROC. However, there are also other actors and the level and tone of the ROCs' relations with these Romanian actors and the Catholic Church affects its positioning within the Italian religious landscape. The sixth chapter discusses the actors of the Romanian-Italian religious space. The first section of this chapter describes the process of formation of the Romanian Orthodox parishes in different parts of Italy and tries to map out the network of the ROCs in Italy. The second section discusses the role of other institutional actors within the same space such as other Romanian Churches, the other Orthodox Churches, the Catholic Church, Romanian state and its missions in Italy and Romanian associations. Interviews with the Romanian Orthodox priests and representatives of Romanian associations as well as the ROCs publications and websites have informed this chapter.

The seventh chapter analyzes the agency of the ROC within the Romanian-Italian transnational Orthodox context and evaluates to what extent the ROC uses the opportunities and responds to the challenges posed by the new context, how the ROCs carve out an Orthodox space within the Italian context and how they articulate transnational ties between

Romania and Italy. The first section gives an ethnographic account of the conduct of and participation to the religious services at the ROC of San Marco in Trento based on the empirical data collected through participant observation, interviews with the local priest and church-goers. The second section of the chapter is on the adaptive organizational practices of the ROCs in Italy and discusses to what extent the Churches assume new roles, how do they become community centers and main spaces of the reproduction of Romanian Orthodox culture and identity. As the ROCs try to adapt to the new setting, the role of the priests are also redefined. They are the main witnesses of this change, the main actors that take proactive action and the reference point for the Romanian community. They are also the main reference point for this research as well, since the interviews with the Romanian Orthodox priests is one of the main sources of empirical data. While the role of the ROCs and Romanian Orthodox priests change, the migrants redefine their relations with the Church, the priest and their faith. The section on migrant religiosity is informed by the interviews with the Romanian church-goers and findings from participant observation in the ROC in Trento. The last section on the Romanian-Italian transnational Orthodox space discusses how the ROCs articulate or maintain transnational ties with the ROCs and parish communities in Romania.

The eight and the last chapter presents the concluding remarks and future prospects for the ROCs in Italy. The appendix chapter aims at discussing briefly the root causes, evolution, current and future trends in Romanian migration to Italy and the impact of migration on Romania.

#### **Chapter II. Theoretical Framework**

#### **II.1. Introduction**

International migration is an important "force of social transformation in the modern world" (Castles and Miller, 1998: xiii). International migration is a process embedded in transformative global context, which affects the migrant, receiving and sending societies and leads to the questioning of the naturalness of visible and invisible borders and redefinition of social space. Therefore, migration is both a global and individual experience through which identities, social relations and social world are constructed and reconstructed. As new types of migrations emerge owing to globalization alongside the old types and as different forms of migration become increasingly interdependent, we have a more complex picture ahead of us (Castles, 2002: 1153).

Transnational community as a new form of belonging (Ibid: 1157) is one of the main forms of contemporary migration and is likely to be so in the future. Even though in classical community studies, the community is associated with place (Brunt, 2001: 80), new community theories argue that a community can be something imagined or "based on symbols or even attitudes, rather than concrete villages or urban neighbourhoods" (Ibid: 83). A new form of community embedded in different settings and connected through transnational ties and channels emerge due to transnational migration. Transnational migration is composed of bi- or pluri-directional continuous flows of people, goods, capital and ideas that travel across international boundaries and that bring together different political, social and economic spaces together within the transnational social space (Cingolani: 2; Pries, 1999: 3-4). Emergence of transnational forms of migration has implications for the way migration is studied. "Methodological nationalism" (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2003: 576), the view that the geographical and social space coincide, has been the dominant way of thinking in sociology, which led to restriction of the society within the limits of nation-state container (Pries, 1999: 16-7; Schuerkens, 2005: 550) has been the dominant way of thinking in migration studies (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2003: 577). Transnational migration that leads to de- and re-territorialization of migration, challenges this formulation (Vasquez, 2003). The new transnational research agenda has the possibility to encompass a broader context of locations connected through transnational

the possibility to encompass a broader context of locations connected through transnational ties and problematize the relationship between the geographical and social space, which promises new openings not only for the theorization of space but also for the theorization of society.

It was not only the society but also the religion that was expected to fit in the nation-state container, which led to disregard for religion's transnational character. As nation-states delimited the religion to private space, religion had lost its central position in classical sociology and even though it has been always "there", it has been neglected by mainstream sociology and migration studies up until recently. Within almost last two decades, the religion has made a great come back to the mainstream social sciences and public debate. Vibrant migrant religious transnationalism was one of the main factors drawing scholarly attention to the "return of the sacred". Recently, globalization and transnational migration studies started to take note of religious transnationalisms and open room for bringing religion back into the agenda of migration studies.

Religious institutions are important transnational actors and they play a very important role within the transnational migration space. In order to better evaluate this role and the extent of transnationalism, this chapter seeks to define the theoretical and conceptual framework, which this research initiative is situated in. Sociology of religion and transnational migration literature are two main strands that are referred to in the formulation of the theoretical framework. This chapter is composed of four main sections. The first section is informed by the sociology of religion and aims at defining religion and religious institutions, describing evolution of the study of religion -with particular emphasis on the impact of secularization theory on the study of religion – and explaining growing interest in the study of religion in sociology. One of the main factors that bring religion on the agenda of sociology and migration studies is transnational migration. The second section of the chapter therefore describes the transnational turn in migration studies and main issues, actors and concerns on the agenda of transnational migration studies. Since Romanian migration to Italy has led to the emergence of Romanian-Italian transnational space and the ROC is actively involved in articulation of new transnational connections, the discussion of basic concepts and different forms of transnational migration is essential. Following the second section, the task of the third section is to discuss the role of religion, religious networks, actors and institutions in different stages of migration, while identifying the factors why migrants resort to religion. Since religions and religious

organizations are the agents that balance the continuity and change throughout the migration process, they transform the new setting they are inserted in through their presence and practices, while they go through transformations themselves and transmit new experiences to the sending setting. Therefore, in this section the adaptation process of the religious institutions and flow of change through the transnational ties they articulate are also discussed. Growing scholarly interest in religion cannot be explained only with reference to transnational migration; globalization is another important factor that affects religions and religious actors. With this point in mind the last section of this chapter aims at discussing religion and transnational migration at global level. There is a global religious system in the making and it allows religions to enter into dialogue with and respond to challenges and opportunities posed by globalization. Both globalization and transnational migration extend the reach of religions and carry them to new territories and construct new areas of agency for religions. In brief, the discussion on the theoretical framework aims at informing and facilitating the analysis of the agency of the ROC within the Romanian-Italian transnational migration space.

#### **II.2. Sociology of Religion**

The foundation of sociology of religion could be traced back to the emergence of sociology as a discipline (Ebaugh, 2006: v). Religion was one of the main concerns of all the founding fathers of sociology, since it was defined as an important social phenomenon and it had fulfilled important functions in social life. As one of the founding fathers of sociology Durkheim in *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* conceptualized religion as "something eminently social" (1915: 10), since religious representations are collective representations and rites are collective manner of acting to stimulate mental states of the group. He defined religion as "a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden – beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them" (Ibid: 47).

Despite Durkheim's formulation of religion as a collective affair, different traditions in sociology of religion came up with new formulations. In its current form, it is possible to identify four traditions in sociology of religion: the first approach is the individualist approach, which is subjective and focuses on individual beliefs, practices and values (Luckmann, 1967), second approach is structural analyzing patterns that pave the way for cultural integrity; third approach is dramaturgical focusing on communicative and interactive aspects of social structure, and the last approach is the institutionalist approach (Kurtz, 1995: 15-16). The individualist approach sees religion as primordially individual affair seeing all the institutional aspects as secondary (Casanova, 1994: 44-5). According to Luckmann, who is a leading scholar in this approach, both Weber and Durkheim theorized on the social location of the individual in their study of religion and they explained the issue of individual within the modern society with secularization (1967: 12). Since through the individuation of *conscience collective* the individual becomes a social and moral being, Luckmann argues that the problem of the individual is a religious problem (Ibid).

However, the institutionalist approach challenges this formulation. According to the institutionalist approach, individual belief and practice, while essential, cannot by themselves count as religion; they have to operate and be observed as religion in order to be defined as religion (Beyer, 2006: 9). Even if piety or religious devotion are personal experiences, these personal experiences rest upon shared beliefs, values, rites and practices. Since religion involves communication with God as well as with men, religious life and worship is a social experience (Moberg, 1962: 4). The emergence and growth of sociology of religion is indicative of the recognition of the social dimension of the church as an organization (Ibid: 7).

The institutional and individual dimensions of religion and "dual relation" between these two dimensions are the main area of interest for the sociology of religion (Remy, 2002: 313), since religion is practiced in formal, organizational, centralized as well as in individual, informal, decentralized settings. These two dimensions are interlinked and coexist with a growing tension due to growing pluralism within the contemporary world. However, the focus and emphasis in this thesis is on the organizational dimension of religion. Within the institutional approach, religious institutions are the focus of research. Durkheim argued that since religion is "eminently collective" religion is unthinkable without religious institutions (1915: 47). Religious institutions<sup>8</sup> give the religion its "generalized form" in order for it to prevail (Moberg, 1962: 6). Even though there are individualistic and shamanic cult institutions and community cults, the most common organizational structure for major world religions is ecclesiastical institutions with their

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Group life, complex system of social relationships and a functioning organization make an institution (Moberg, 1962: 19). Main characteristics of institutions are stability, universality, identification with human needs, variability, interrelation (or interdependence with other institutions), systemization of positions (roles and statuses of participants) (Ibid: 19-21).

own personnel (Ibid: 83-84). Therefore, the religious institution, the "church", becomes synonymous with "organized religion" (Ibid: 1). While religious tradition is kept alive by the community that lives, practices and reproduces it through ritual practices (Kurtz, 1995: 9), it is religious institutions that ensure continuity, regularity and reproduction of religious tradition and shape the organization of religious life (Ibid: 82-83).

Religion by its nature cannot be static. It shapes and is shaped by the transformations the societies go through. Therefore as Beyer argues rather than a universal theory of religion, which is true for all times and places, it is necessary to define religion by placing it into a historical context to understand religion in the global era and global religious system (2006: 2), which itself is a historical construction (Ibid: 9).<sup>9</sup> Religion takes particular forms in particular settings (Ibid: 255). As Weber argues revelations are reinterpreted to adjust religious revelations and doctrines to religious needs (Geerth and Mills, 1961: 270). Adaptive capacity is crucial for religious institutions to survive and remain relevant. They are relevant as long as they reproduce themselves in accordance with time and the context they function (Beyer, 2000: 416). The religious institution in order to serve religious needs and purposes can take different forms in terms of functioning and institutionalization (Moberg, 1962: 5-6). Therefore, rather than substantive definitions that treat religion as transcendent, functional definition of religion that tries to explain what it does and serves (Beyer, 2006: 4) and treats it as a social phenomenon rather than a theological or psychological one (Ibid: 9) would serve the purposes of social research.

This is what Beyer does. Based on Niklas Luhmann's idea of social as consisting of communications, Beyer defines society as "interconnectedness of communication" (2006: 35). Within the same reasoning religion, which is a social phenomenon, constructs itself as communication (Beyer, 2006: 10). Religion as communication takes new forms in different periods and the new form it reaches is a result of continuities, discontinuities and elements that are shaping it. Therefore, the religions can be defined both as social phenomena that were always there and modern inventions (Ibid: 11). Since the church emerges out of social communication and interaction, is embedded in social fabric and there is a division of labour among its members for the fulfillment of certain tasks and delivery of certain services, it is a social organization (Moberg, 1962: 5). What makes the church different

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Underscoring the historicity of religious construction does not mean religion is unreal or illusory that has no existence beyond a scholar's imagination (Beyer, 2006: 63-4).

from other social institutions are its "social values, philosophical rationalizations and theological postulates" (Ibid: 517). Definition of the church as a social institution is not denial of its divinity. It is a spiritual institution as well as a social one (Ibid: 22). However, for our purposes we are interested in its social role.

**II.2.1. Secularization vs. the Return of the Sacred:** Religion has played a very important role in social organization all throughout the history and it was this function that gave religion its central role in the sociology of the founding fathers. However, Durkheim, Weber and Marx estimated that religion – as the main organizing force of social order in pre-modern times – would lose its importance due to rationalization and secularization processes. Weber argued that as the rational thought comes to dominate the conceptualizations of the world, religions are going to be pushed into the realm of the "irrational" (Geert and Mills, 1961: 281). Sociology as a discipline was a product of the Enlightenment and in time secularization thesis came to dominate the sociological thought. The fear of legitimizing a normative system by studying it led to the marginalization of religion within the discipline (Dillon, 2003 cited in Ebaugh, 2006: vi; Hadden, 1989 cited in Ebaugh, 2002: 387). Furthermore, the positivist bias, which defined religion as value-laden, was unfavorable for the study of religion (Ebaugh, 2002: 388).

The roots of the secularization theory, which had a considerable impact on the study of religion, could be traced back to the Enlightenment. The secularization theory was based on three important propositions: secularization as religious decline, secularization as differentiation, and secularization as privatization (Casanova, 1994: 7). The first proposition was based on the expectation that with the advance of science and technology, the role of religion in the lives of people would be diminished (Bloß, 2003: 8). The second proposition, which is the core of the theory, argued for the division of religious and worldly secular spheres. As for the third proposition, it was expected that the emancipation of individual conscience from religion would restrain religion to private sphere (Hervieu-Léger, 2005: 327), which was the case in Europe (Davie, 2005: 33).

The secularization theory assumed that industrialization, urbanization and bureaucratization would transform the traditional societies and lead to the creation of one modern society (Oommen, 2005: 151). As Europe became more modern it became more secular and the assumption that it would be a global phenomenon gained ground (Davie, 2005: 34). Through structural differentiation social transformation would take place leaving

nothing unchanged and the direction of change was from simple to complex, traditional to modern, communal to social, sacred to secular, rural to urban, status-based to contractbased (Ibid: 152). In addition to differentiation, rationalization and calculability of action brought the disenchantment of the world. Berger foresaw the dissolution of the "sacred canopy", which was the base of the social organization composed of collective morality and meanings (1967 cited in Hefner, 1998: 85). All the classical theorists of modernization expected the modernity and modern institutional structure in Europe to be extended all around the world (Eisenstadt, 2005: 1). The peace, stability and prosperity in the post-World War II period in the West strengthened the conviction that the Western model and ideal will be simulated in different parts of the world, which however was not really the case (Ibid: 2; Graubard, 2005: xiii). Even though it was not simulated in the entire world, the conviction that religion is losing its importance and influence as a historical force in modern societies continued to be the dominant viewpoint in social theory (Hefner, 1998: 85).

In parallel to the role of the secularization theory in shaping social theory, the shift of the centre of sociology of religion from the European continent to the US also had an impact on the study of religion. This shift has reduced the emphasis of sociology on theory and under the influence of behaviorialism and positivism religion lost its central place in sociological theory. By 30s and 40s, the sociologists lost interest in the study of religion and it was only cultural anthropology that kept religion under its theoretical and empirical gaze (Luckmann, 1967: 18). Only after the World War II, the study of religion was rediscovered. However, rather than the sociologists it was the the churches that indulged in religious studies, which emphasized denominational sociologies of religion (Ibid: 20). Since positivistic secularization theory that foresees the eventual replacement of religion by science in modern societies informed the theorization on religion, the main focus of the studies was the decline of churches due to transformations such as urbanization and industrialization. The eventual conclusion of this approach was that modern society is nonreligious and what survived are "islands of religion (irrationality) in a sea of secularism (or reason)" (Ibid: 23). Luckmann argues that as sociology of religion focused on churchoriented religiosity, it moved away from the main concerns of social theory, fell behind the theoretical accomplishments of the founding fathers and was restricted to a parochial viewpoint that sought to explain decline of religious institutions in the modern world (Ibid: 18).<sup>10</sup>

By the 70s church-oriented sociology started to go through important changes. In 1971 the *Societe Internationale de Sociologie des Religions* (SISR) became a scientific association with the goal of producing knowledge and theories on religion than doing research for the interests of the religious bodies (Dobbelaere, 2000: 440-2). However, despite the move away from the parochial viewpoint, the dominance of secularization theory on sociological thought has continued to distort the sociological lenses (Calhoun, 1999: 237 cited in Ebaugh, 2002: 387). Up until the end of 80s, social theory foresaw only a limited role for religion in social organization (Turner, 2006: 439). The study of religion, while however restricting their reach to whole scientific societies specialized in religion, while however the real theme in any of the American Sociological Association meetings (Ibid: 387). Only in 1994 sociology of religion could become a section of the ASA (Ibid: 389; Ebaugh, 2006: vi).

It was the growing importance of religion in the public sphere and in international affairs that paved the way for the return of religion to mainstream social sciences. Starting from the 1980s, religion "went public" all around the world and it gained publicity and access to the public sphere (Casanova, 1994: 3).<sup>11</sup> The emergence of public religions is an important challenge to the privatization of religion (Makrides, 2005: 179). The religion is "deprivatized" by constantly questioning its restriction to the private sphere (Casanova, 1994: 6) and this phenomenon gained a global character (Ibid: 10). Religious institutions, as actors in national public space and global civil society engage in different forms of interactions and activities with other actors. They question and contest the claims of other actors from a traditional normative perspective and act as defenders of the "common good", which can only be defined in global, universal and humanitarian terms and which goes beyond the boundaries of the nation-states (Ibid: 229). Their success in attracting adherents

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Conference Internationale de Sociologie Religieuse (CISR) was founded on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1948, which later became the Societe Internationale de Sociologie des Religions (SISR) (Dobbelaere, 2000: 434). Both RRA (Religious Research Association) and SISR wanted to conduct and motivate research at the service of the churches to help them understand and adapt to the post-war social and cultural environment and come up with new strategies (Ibid: 434). The SISR soon became an international association.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> According to Casanova, it was the public role that religions started to play in this decade that led to the deprivatization of religions, rather than the emergence of new religions or religious consciousness. It was a result of long evolutionary process. Through the secularization process religion had to accept the autonomy of different spheres of life and structural differentiation of secular spheres and had to adapt itself to the same dynamic and restrain itself to its autonomous sphere (Casanova, 1994: 212).

can be seen in their eagerness to address the mass society and staying away from the elite groups (Hefner, 1998: 98).

Recent upsurge of religious movements and religiosity in Islam, Hinduism and Christianity also poses serious challenges to the classical secularization theory (Hefner, 1998: 89-90). High level of religiosity in some ex-communist countries after the collapse of communism is another challenge (Davie, 2005: 11). Emprical evidence shows that modernization did not lead to diminishing importance of religion in Africa, Latin America and Asia. It rather led to reinvigoration of religious life. Religious movements, globalization, transnationalism, the end of the Cold War, identity politics, communal violence, wars and conflicts in the national and international arena, September 11<sup>th</sup> and global war on "terror" armed with clash of civilizations thesis, the immigration flows and rise of migrant religious institutions, change in global and religious landscapes are important factors that bring religion to the fore as an important local and global agent and leads to growing scholarly interest in the role of religion in the global public sphere.

Growing role and visibility of religion in different spheres of life bring the secularization theory under criticism. One of the criticisms is the assumptions of the secularization theory were based on the Western model and did not take multiple modernities into consideration (Hefner, 1998: 86; Oommen, 2005: 155) even within Europe. Wittrock argues that it would be wrong to assume a uniform process of secularization within modernity. There are different interpretations regulating the relationship between the divine and profane spheres of live in different parts of Europe (2005: 57). Dungaciu (2004) argues that the European sociology of religion has ignored the Southern and Eastern Europe and the region presents a challenge to the sociology of religion and particularly to the secularization thesis today, since as he suggests Romania and the South Eastern Europe do not fit in the "believing without belonging" or "belonging without believing" schemes. He also states that as religion and the ROC were involved in the modernization process of Romania from the 19<sup>th</sup> century up until today; therefore, multiple modernities approach might prove to be a more useful lens to better explain Romanian and Eastern European modernities and the secularization patterns.

There are also criticisms that refer to secularization theory's misperceptions regarding the religious observance in Europe. Introvigne and Stark argue that the world is not only religious but more religious as compared to the past (2005: 14). They base their

claims on the religious economy theory<sup>12</sup> and explain the low level of religious observance in Europe with "highly regulated and constrained religious markets" that prevent competition (2005:2). The religious regime in Europe was based on the monopoly or domination of national churches along with religious minorities that had the status of cults or sects (Casanova, 2005:17). According to Introvigne and Stark Europeans do not stop believing but stop going to the Church when they are disappointed with their national or monopoly church, since they do not have alternatives (2005: 2). However, even though participation rates and institutional commitment seem to be falling, religion is still crucial for many Europeans (Davie, 2001: 463). Casanova suggests that rather than secularization, it is more appropriate to talk about the "unchurching" of European population and parallel individualization of religion (2005: 6).

Despite the dominance of the secularization doctrine within the discipline of sociology, as empirical evidence proved the importance of religion in modern life (Berger, 2005: 438) and as exceptions to secularization thesis emerged even within Europe, voices critical of associating modernization and secularization started to argue that secularization process, rather than being a universal phenomenon, should be seen as something specific to a certain period of European history (Davie, 2005: 1). For many years vivacity of religious life in the US was seen as "American exceptionalism"<sup>13</sup> and as Introvigne and Stark argue it was seen as a defect by the Europeans that can be attributable only to "backward nations" (2005: 1). Today, Berger argues that Europe, which is the only part of the world that secularization theory could be empirically defended, is the exception (2001: 446).<sup>14</sup>

Due to its pitfalls, Davie describes secularization theory as a "grand theory", which would not be helpful to describe and understand the recent developments and patterns in European religious landscape. (Davie, 2001: 472). In contrast to Davie, Casanova is not in favor of abandoning the theory of secularization altogether but suggests desacralizing the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Chaves and Gorki argue that empirical evidence fails to confirm the claim of supporters of supply-side model of religious activity that there is a positive relationship between religious pluralism and participation and they criticize attempts to generalize context specific findings (2001: 262) and come up with a general law. Moreover, they argue that the vigor and energy of the Catholic Church both in Europe and the US is an important challenge to religious market theorists (Ibid: 271).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Cauthen argues that in fact religion in the US has never totally withdrawn from the public sphere and it has always had the potential to exert influence (2004: 30).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> In an interview he gave to *Christian Century*, Berger admits that the argument that associated secularization and modernity in the 60s had some foundations for it; however, today it is wrong, since majority of the world is as religious as it was, and some parts, more religious and Western Europe, not the US, seems to be the exception. In his opinion the main inquiry for the sociology of religion should be on the "European exceptionalism" (Berger, 1997: 974 cited in Introvigne and Stark, 2005: 1).

basic assumption of progress from religion to science and replace the "myth" with comparative accounts of phases of secularizations in different parts of the world (1994: 17). This new approach needs to consider the emergent religiosities and practices, reinvigoration of religious institutions and the question of re-enchantment of the world (Ibid: 234). Similarly, Hervieu-Léger suggests that rather than doing away with the secularization theories, it is more interesting to analyze the disruptions or periods of de-secularization in the evolution of modern societies (2005: 329), i.e. to contextualize secularization.

Growing criticisms on the secularization theory accompanied by recent scholarly interest in religion is indicative of the fact that religious factors, variables and studies are becoming part of the mainstream sociology (Ebaugh, 2006: vi). Many anthropologists, who were critical of broad generalizations, put forward by modernization and secularization theory focused their scholarly effort and attention on the case studies on local and translocal religion particularly in the non-Western world (Hefner, 1998: 84). Kurtz argue that studying religion in modern and globalizing world is central to the understanding of the social reality (1995: 5). Turner argues that "religion, far from declining, is central to modern political life" (2006: 441) and globalization poses a challenge to scientific study of religion by bringing the issue of nature of religion to the fore (Ibid: 439). The role that religion plays in globalization processes and in connecting the global and the local brings religion to the forefront of globalization debate. Through transnational migration, religion's culture-specific nature and the role of religious institutions in creating social space and social capital becomes clearer. Growing interest in human rights and justice issues also opens more room for religion in mainstream social sciences. The attempts of rational choice theorists such as Stark and Finke to create a new paradigm on religious behaviours also are instrumental in creating more interest and diverting scholarly attention towards religion (Ebaugh, 2002: 390-391).

Today there is the need for more research on religion at local, transnational and global levels with new conceptualizations of religion and religiosities, which would "glocalize" research agenda of sociology of religion (Dobbelaere, 2000: 446). As the discussion in this section makes clear, sociology of religion is going through a revitalization process. There are two main forces that contribute to the return of the sacred; transnational migration and globalization, which are discussed in the following two sections.

#### **II.3.** Transnational Migration Studies

Transnational migration encompasses increasing "flows of persons, goods, information and symbols triggered by international labour migration" (Çağlar, 2001: 607 cited in Vertovec, 2003: 2). Mobility of transmigrants and transnational flow of ideas, values and experiences create links and patterns of constant exchange and interaction between sending and receiving ends and through new research new aspects of migratory flows come to the fore. A new field of research, transnational migration studies, emerges to account for this form of migration. Transnational turn in migration studies suggests recontextualizing migratory, global and local processes and contexts within a broader framework. Transnational lens helps us to see the signs that were already there but rendered invisible (Smith, 2003 cited in Vertovec, 2003: 4). Even though it is a new research field, recent publications such as (Basch, L. et al. 1997; Levitt, 2001; Vertovec, 1999; Vertovec, 2003; Glick Schiller, N., 2003; Glick Schiller, N., 1992) dedication of special issues of main academic journals on migration studies such as *International Migration Review* or *Ethnic and Racial Studies* to transnational migration is indicative of the growing scholarly interest and is very promising for the future of research in this area.

It was the beginning of the 90s when Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch and Christian Szanton Blanc introduced "transnationalism" as a new analytical tool to explain, understand and discuss today's migration through books and conferences (Kivisto, 2001: 551). They address the need to revisit our concepts when dealing with contemporary migration, since previous formulations and assumptions are no longer sufficient and; therefore, they set to formulate a new analytical as well as a new conceptual framework for what they call as "transnational migration" (Basch et al., 1997: 4). Glick-Schiller argues that transnational migration is the "new paradigm" for migration studies (1999 cited in Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2002: 1). Theorists of transnational migration are critical of nation-state bias of social sciences that define the society only within the boundaries of the nation-state, ask for taking the broader global context into consideration when discussing social organization and argue that the time has come to use the term "transnational", since the phenomenon is already in place, which could be seen in studies such as Chaney's where she talks about "people with feet in two societies" (1979: 209 cited in Basch et al., 1997: 7).

Transnational migration paradigm is critical of the assimilation theory and challenges the popular image of the migrant as the one who leaves his/her country and

culture behind, settle in a new country and assimilate into it. Up until very recently migration research had a receiving country bias and rather than migration trajectories, mobilities, flows that emerge and evolve between two or more settings as sending and receiving ends, assimilation of migrants to the host country used to be the main concern. In other words, the migration story was told more from a receiving country perspective. Assimilation model estimated a gradual process of adoption of the majority social and cultural forms and values by the migrant communities. However, assimilation of migrants has never been straightforward but always negotiated (Tilly, 1990: 86). Therefore, classical assimilation model came under attack for being way too simplistic and for failing to explain and analyze or totally leave aside different processes related with migrant settlement. One of the main challenges for the classical theory was to explain "resilient ethnicity" among migrant groups in the US (Morawska, 1990: 213).<sup>15</sup>

Today transnational migration ties the sending and the receiving country through networks, organizations and practices of migrants, who are embedded in more than one setting (Basch et al., 1997: 4). Basch et al. call this new type of migrant as "transmigrant" and define transnationalism as "the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement" (Ibid: 7). Transmigrants are "international migrants whose migration courses are not one-time and unidirectional" and whose practices combine distinct places into a transnational social space (Pries, 1999: 26). Transmigrants, who bring distant places together through their networks, relations, practices and form transnational social spaces, are simultaneously embedded in more than one social setting (Glick Schiller et al. 1995: 48; Glick Schiller et al. 1999: 73) and their lives, social, economic, political and cultural practices take place in a transnational setting. While they establish themselves in the receiving context, they preserve their ties with the sending context through their activities such as investing, voting or praying (Levitt, 2003a: 850).

It was Glick Schiller, Basch and Blanc that initiated the debate and many scholars followed them by using transnationalism in their works as a conceptual and analytical tool. While this has led to plethora of studies with very interesting findings, the concept was over extended and stretched to its limits. For instance, Rogers argues that transnational research

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Revised theory aimed at accounting for structural and contextual factors of the sending and the receiving country, arrival time of the migrant, whether the place of settlement (big city-small town, urban-rural), segments of the labor market that migrants get integrated into; in other words, factors facilitating and blocking assimilation.

agenda should not only take migrants into consideration but also advocacy and business as well as criminal and terrorist networks and religious organizations (2005: 403-404). More importantly as a new field of study, transnational migration studies is a very fragmented one lacking an encompassing theoretical framework (Portes et al., 1999: 278). This has led to attempts to delimit the scope and provide conceptual guidelines to investigate new exchanges, transactions and activities that cross borders as was the case with the 1999 special issue of *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. Another concern was to identify the unit of analysis, since transnational migration involves different actors such as individuals, networks, communities and institutionalized structures (Ibid: 220).

Vertovec, who sees "transnationalim" as an umbrella concept for some of the most globally transformative processes and developments of our time (1999: 459), categorizes the term transnationalism into six different clusters: as a social formation that goes beyond the national boundaries of states that leads to the emergence of transnational communities (Ibid: 449-450); as "diasporic consciousness" working through "imaginary coherence" (Ibid: 450), which is transformed into a "transnational imaginary" (Wilson and Dissanayake, 1999 cited in Vertovec, 1999: 451); as a way of syncretic and hybrid form of cultural reconstruction working through globalized media and flow of images (Ibid: 451-452); as an economic space for flow of capital of transnational corporations as well as remittances from migrants to the sending country, which also allows room for the emergence of transnational entrepreneurs (Ibid: 452-453); as a (global) political space besides activities of international non-governmental organizations and transnational social movements, which allows room for migrant activism in homeland as well as receiving country politics with regards to rights of migrant communities (Ibid: 453-455); and lastly as redefinition of place or reconstruction of the local, which leads to emergence of translocalities and translocal understandings through improvements in telecommunications (Ibid: 455-56). While some scholars of migrant transnationalism try to map out social change in different contexts affected by transnational practices, networks and organizations as part of transformations at a global scale. Vertovec prefers to constrain the discussion on social change triggered by transnational migration to "basic structures of individual habitus, fundamental political frameworks, and integral modes of economic development" (2003: 9). He puts emphasis on factors that sustain transnational ties in the daily life of migrants such as phone calls (Ibid: 10-13), transnational families and changing gender roles (Ibid: 14-16), norms, moral duties embedded in families, communities, networks and (religious) institutions and migration

experience itself that create a transnational *habitus* (Ibid: 18). By way of conceptualizing transnational experience through *habitus*, he argues, social scientists might better appreciate how dual orientations arise and are acted upon. This can help the scholars to investigate further to what extent transnationalism decreases with the second-generation, since the influence of transnational *habitus* can be more long-lasting then assumed (Ibid: 23).

Besides Vertovec there are other scholars who try to create a theoretical framework for transnational studies. Portes offers a middle range theory of transnational migration (Kivisto, 2001: 560). According to Portes et al., technological innovations in communication and transportation have reached a critical mass that provide the migrants with the means to stay in touch and get involved in home country issues and leads to intense long-distance exchanges and be embedded in two contexts (1999: 217). Portes et al. differentiate between transnationalism from above and below and argue that rather than transnationalism from above, transnationalism from below is the subject of migration studies, which could be studied in three categories: economic, political and socio-cultural (1999: 221). Within these three types depending on high or low level of institutionalization different institutional formations can emerge (Ibid: 222). Similar to Vertovec, Portes argues that socio-cultural transnationalism can not only work as a factor that integrates the migrant community to the system of the receiving country, but also provides the second generation with "cultural anchors" and economic and symbolic alternative resources against the challenges of the receiving society (1999: 472). Portes et al. argues that in the past assimilation into the receiving society was necessary for the migrant to be economically successful and have a higher social status, while today economic transnational migrant enterprises survive and grow through transnational links between the home and the host country (1999: 296-7). With his emphasis on transnational enterprises of migrants and economic transnational practices Portes differs from Glick Schiller et al. who regard daily agency of migrants as transnational practices.

Levitt et al. add a fourth category to economic, political and socio-cultural categories of transnationalim; the religious sector of transnational migration (2003: 567). Levitt's work (2001b) on the space between Boston and Miraflores, which she defines as "transnational village" and the experiences of Dominican migrants within this space, is one of the first studies that underscore the importance of religion in transnational migration and tries to trace how every day religious practices of transmigrants and transnational communities in institutionalized as well as uninstitutionalized settings bind sending and

receiving contexts together. Levitt introduces an intermediary level of community between transnationalism from above and below introduced by Smith and Guarnizo and high and low levels of transnationalism introduced by Portes et al. with her work on transnational villagers (2001b: 6). She also talks about the need to invent new conceptual and theoretical tools to make sense of different transnational processes (2006: 407) and suggests using transnationalism both as a perspective and a variable (Ibid: 396).

Thomas Faist makes an important contribution to the theory of migration through introducing the term "transnational social spaces", which transgresses national boundaries and allows for the circulation of ideas and cultural symbols (2000: 13). Faist argues that even though "[m]igration entails departure as well as arrival- exit from the old and adaptation in the new country" (Ibid: 3), the role played by transmigrants in the creation and reproduction of transnational social space through linking the receiving and sending end of migratory flows simultaneously blurs the boundaries between these two ends. While migration experience has implications for change in social status, class positions (Ibid: 6), life perceptions and plans of migrants through mobility of transmigrants and transnational flow of ideas, values and experiences creates links and patterns of constant exchange and interaction between sending and receiving ends. Blurring boundaries between the receiving and sending ends of migratory flows increases the importance of state policies, which have an important impact on the emergence, direction and "management" of migratory flows as well as on the lives of the migrants and migrant households. Faist defines transnational social spaces as "combinations of social and symbolic ties, positions in networks and organizations and networks of organizations that can be found in at least two geographically and internationally distinct places" (1999: 40). Similarly, Pries defines transnational social space as a "pluri-locally integrated contexts of social interaction" (1999: 11-2). Itzigsohn et al. define transnational social field as "a field of social interactions and exchanges that transcend political and geographical boundaries of one nation and have become the relevant field of action and reference" for people in their country of origin as well as those in diaspora (1999: 317).

Despite growing interest in transnational migration studies, not all the migration scholars are eager to embrace new transnational migration paradigm. Main question asked by those critical of transnational migration studies is to what extent transnational migration is different from other types of migration; simply put, to what extent it is new. Waldinger and Fitzgerald argue that connections between the home and host country is intrinsic to migration (2004: 1178) and it is not something suggested only by transnational migration studies. Its close connections or overlappings with different migration patterns, forms and systems also raises criticisms regarding the novelty of transnatioal migration studies.

These criticisms stem from the fact that transnational social spaces encompass different migratory networks and circuits and theorizing on the issue is also nourished by different theoretical approaches about networks, different forms of migration and globalization. While migrant networks are instrumental in creation of transnational connections, transnational migration influences, redirects, intersects or shapes migratory flows and networks. Contemporary migration studies see migration through the prism of "border-crossing social networks" (Vertovec, 2007: 2), which give regularity to the migration experience and are irreducible to individual migrants' decisions and objectives (Tilly, 1990: 88). Tilly argues that it is not migrants or households that migrate; it is rather groups of people connected to each other through different forms of social relations and networks. Moreover, the networks that immigrate create new categories or modify the existing ones in the receiving setting. While networks help migrants to prepare for the migration journey and settle in and adjust to the receiving setting, individual migrants' activities reproduce and reinforce networks. In time networks change shape, course and scope (Ibid: 84-85). Similarly, exchange-network system foresees that migrant groups do not simply transfer their human capital and resources to the receiving country from the sending end, but rather create new ones depending on the circumstances and networks (Yans-McLaughlin, 1990: 12).

Different forms of migration are transmutable into each other or may intersect and grow together in certain cases. Circular migratory circuits can grow in parallel to transnational flows and/or can be maintained within transnational social fields. Tilly defines circular migration as "the creation of a regular circuit in which migrants retain their claims and contacts with a home base and routinely return to that base after a period of activity elsewhere in the circuit" (1990: 88). In this type of migration some members of the household stay at home to maintain the base, while predominantly one sex, engages in circular migration depending on the sectoral demand in the receiving end. As migratory systems develop, circular migration may turn into chain migration, while those involved in circular migration might help develop local networks at the receiving end, establish business and social links (Ibid: 89-90).

Blurred conceptual boundaries also lead to confusions regarding what is transnationalism and what renders it different. Transnationalism and diaspora are two key concepts in global theories of migration. There is the tendency to define diaspora as "communities with transnational networks" (Schwalgin, 2004: 73). Olwig while arguing that research on diaspora and transnationalism have opened new venues for migration research (2004: 56), is critical of the tendency to narrow down the research field, which makes it difficult to grasp the experience of migrant communities and dimensions of sociocultural systems linked with migratory movements (Ibid: 53). She differentiates diaspora from transnationalism arguing diaspora requires a mental state of belonging that can be extended back in history, while transnationalism works through the actual political, economic and social networks between at least two nation-states (Ibid: 55). While in Olwig the difference between the two is very clear, in Brettell the distinction is blurred. He argues that transnational communities are building blocks of potential diasporas that may or may not take shape. Diasporas are formed out of the transnational communities spanning sending and receiving countries and out of the real or imagined connections between migrants from a particular homeland who are scattered throughout the world (2006: 328).

To what extent transnationalism and globalization overlap or are different is another point of contention. Some scholars explain the emergence of transnationalism and transnational communities with the economic, social and cultural global integration and time-space compression (Castles, 2002: 1158) or with the globalization of capital (Portes: 1997:4). Faist's formulation of transnational social space is in contrast with this approach, since his theory of transnationalism discusses the reconstruction of social space at a more limited extent as compared to globalization theory. According to Faist's formulation there are two distinct processes at work, which influence each other. While globalization leads to de-territorialization, transnationalism leads to de-nationalization (Kivisto, 2001: 566). This argumentation is similar to that of Levitt's. She argues that even though globalization plays an important role in furthering migration and transnational migration is embedded in globalization, transnational migration cannot only be explained by globalization. Moreover, while globalization means increased interconnectedness through de-territorialization, transnational migration increases connections among two or more nation-states (Levitt, 2001b: 14).

In addition to criticisms regarding novelty and distintivenness of transnational migration, some critics tend to see transnational migration through – what Vertovec defines

as - a false dichotomy of transnationalism vs. assimilation, while some others explain it only with technological developments (2003: 3). Kivisto defines transnationalism as a subcategory of assimilation theory (2001: 551) and argues that there is nothing new in contemporary migration. He argues that not all the migration today could be categorized as transnational and suggests that identifying what could be defined as transnational migration in the past and today should be the main concern of the theorists of transnational migration (Ibid: 556). According to him transnational migration can be defined as a variant of theory of assimilation, since transmigrant, while articulating ties with home tries to get incorporated into the receiving society. Moreover, he argues that even within the context of transnational migration studies the importance of place is not denied and most of the transmigrants spend most of their lives predominantly in one place; the receiving country (Ibid: 571). Waldinger and Fitzgerald express similar views, since they do not differentiate between assimilation and transnationalism, which they define as interlinked social processes (2004: 1193). They also criticize transnational migration studies scholars for disregarding the regulatory role of states in migratory systems, practices and processes (Ibid: 1178; 1193).

It is true that not all contemporary migrants can be defined as transmigrants (Levitt, 2001b: 21) and transnational migration is not "a general paradigm applicable to all migrant groups" (Armbruster, 2002: 17). Those who can be defined as transmigrants get involved in transnational activities at different levels and depth or they may choose to get involved in certain spheres of transnationalism, while conducting their other activities within the receiving context (Levitt et al., 2003: 569). In other words, transmigrants can get involved in "comprehensive" or "selective" transnationalism and selective transnational activism may take the form of continuous or occasional involvement (Ibid: 570). There are different forms and ways of being transnational for the migrants and migrant religious organizations with their agency at home space, public space and discursive space (Smith, 2002: xii). Following Mahler's work (1998) Itzigsohn argues that different forms of transnationality emerge on a continuum between "narrow" and "broad" forms of transnationality depending on the degree of institutionalization, the extent of migrants involved and degree of mobility along the transnational space (1999: 317). Narrow transnationalism consists of regular flows and involvement in transnational practices, and high level of mobility and institutionalization, while broad transnationality captures occasional and selective

involvement, irregular material and symbolic practices and low level of transnational institutionalization process (1999: 323).

With regards to the criticisms regarding the novelty of transnational migration, it needs to be underscored that even though transnationalism existed in the past, it was very limited and was maintained in a piecemeal fashion. Enormous increase in the migrant population and developments in communication and transportation technologies render contemporary transnational migration different. However, the difference cannot only be explained with technological developments. Nadje and Koser argue that the contribution of the transnational perspective on migration is in the form of bringing new ways of seeing and analyzing historical as well as current migration and constantly and critically analyzing and redefining the concept of transnational through empirical research (2002: 1). With the transnational migration perspective the focus of analysis shifts from motivations behind migration to reconstruction of migrant's identity and agency and the processes that shape migration are seen in a new light. Transnational lens captures migration at an extended scale from the local to the global (Ibid: 2-3). Transnational migration opens old concepts to new definitions such as "home", which is redefined as a pluri- or trans-local and mobile place rather than fixed or tied to geographical location (Ibid: 6). Home is redefined as a place where identities are located (Armbruster, 2002: 22). Sending money to home and local parishes, visits to the local church or monasteries during holidays is a way of relating to home, while transnationalizing it. Thereby roots and routes are intricately linked (Ibid: 25).

Today's migrants emigrate from contexts where nation-building has been completed long ago or has taken deep root, which increases migrants' attachment to the home country. Today's migrants also live in a more globally interconnected world and (though debatable) live in societies that are more tolerant of or at least familiar with ethnic pluralism (Levitt, 2001b: 22-27; Levitt et al. 2003: 569), which facilitate articulation of transnational ties. Moreover, Levitt et al. argue that transnational migrant activism does not need to occur at the expense of assimilation or integration; they might occur at the same time balancing each other depending on the migrants' survival strategies (2003: 571). Transmigrants when they migrate do not shift their loyalties to the new context or cut their ties with the sending one. They integrate into the new society at varying degrees but engage in activities to be in touch with the home country and society (Levitt, 2001b: 5). What is important in transnational migration is the "simultaneity of connection" (Levitt, 2006: 396). Mobility is not the pre-condition of taking part in the transnational social space. Therefore, those who "stay behind" can be part of transnational space (Levitt, 2001b: 6), since the transnational activism of people from the sending local context has implications both on the context and their lives. In other words, aspects of life in the receiving and the sending end are complementary.

Receiving and sending state policies, legal-institutional structures and actions play an important role in the articulation of transnational ties. The transnational links of the transmigrants with their home countries and the remittances that they send back home as well as the attempts of the sending countries to reach out to their own nationals living abroad has rendered the sending countries as new actors in transnational migration. To what extent the sending government is involved and to what extent the institutional structure of the receiving country is open to integrate newly emerging migrant (religious) institutions matter in terms of impeding or facilitating transnational religious practices as well as transnationalization of migrant religions (Levitt, 2003b). The stance of the receiving context in terms of allowing or blocking transnational activism is an important factor that affects the articulation of transnational ties. Within an accommodating context, migrant transnationalism can play a positive role in terms of inducing integration and participation of migrant communities (Castles, 2002: 1161-1162; Portes, 1999: 473). Absence of migrant associations or well-institutionalized reception centers for migrants and restrictive policies can constrain the transnational social space (Danis: 2006: 9). The extension of political, social and cultural space beyond national boundaries might allow the nation-state with transnational agency and transnational activities of different sort can have important implications for future standing of the nation-state in the international arena (Portes, 1999: 475).

Transnationalism; however, creates fears on the part of nation-states, since they consider migrant mobility and activism as a threat to stability of the nation and challenge sovereignty of the state (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2003: 589). Transnational migrants also challenge the citizenship regime and clearly defined categories of belonging; since transmigrants claim to be the citizens of a country, they do not live and sometimes do not have the citizenship of the country they choose to settle. (Fitzgerald, 2000: 10 cited in Vertovec, 2003: 28). They belong to multiple polities through dual citizenship or political activism in different settings. Moreover, transnational migrant political, socio-cultural or religious organizations or associations also work as spaces for structuring migrant

transnationalism and open up new venues for migrant activism, while they turn into transnational actors themselves. Therefore, the policies that try to restrict migrant transnationalism may fail in the long-run. As Portes argues the tiger of transnationalization has left the cage and it will be futile for multinational elites or national governments to close the door after it (1997: 20).

In this section we have reviewed the emergence and evolution of the transnational migration studies as a research field, its main contours, basic concepts, issue areas, main actors, future prospects as well as its pitfalls through the works of transnational migration scholars and its critics. Transnational space brings together different localities, practices and flows (Anghel, 2008: 789) interconnected through networks and ties transgressing national borders. Migrants embedded in more than one setting, social networks, sending and receiving state policies and institutional mechanisms, agency of political, economical, socio-cultural, religious actors articulating new ties are elements that construct and shape the transnational space. Through their involvement and participation in the transnational migration process these actors, networks, mechanisms and ties are also transformed. Despite criticisms, many scholars acknowledge migrant transnationalism, which takes different forms in different contexts, as a new area of research. This discussion allows us to concentrate on the category of religion and its position within the transnational migration studies more in depth and transnational migrat religious institutions as one of the main actors in the transnational space in the next section.

**II.3.1. Role and Practices of Migrant Religious Institutions within the Transnational Space:** It is the task of this section to discuss the role of religious networks and organizations in different stages of the migration process, the construction, adaptation and evolution of migrant religious organizations within the receiving setting and transnational connections they establish. Migrant religious organizations emerge as a means to adapt to the new setting, while religious organizations have to go through changes in order to adjust to the new setting. Throughout the adaptation process religious organizations go through organizational changes, take on new responsibilities, turn into community centers, act as a social space for information sharing, provide access to networks vital for migrants' survival and adaptation and perform new activities different from the original setting. They are also one of the main actors that maintain and reproduce ethnic and cultural identity and establish transnational ties with the country of origin and

other parts of the world where the community members live. The change in the role of the religious organization also leads to changes in the roles and activities of the priests and laymen. The priest becomes the community worker and leader, while laymen might become more active in the administration and maintanence of religious organization. The construction of a migrant religious organization is a very innovative process and each migrant religious organization produces a distinct and new form; depending on the organizational flexibility of the religious organization, the capacity of the receiving context's institutional norms and mechanisms to accommodate and integrate new religious organizations, the array of migrant religious transnationalisms, and the extent and degree of transnational connections and flows of symbols, experiences and practices within the transnational space.

**II.3.1.1. Religion in Transnational Migration Studies:** Rudolph defines religious communities as "among the oldest transnationals" (1997: 1 cited in Schmidt, 2005: 576). Monothestic religions such as Christianity and Islam were already transnational before the establishment of secular nation-states (Haynes, 2001: 145). In the nation-state system immigration is one of the factors that is conducive to the establishment of transnational ties. Transnational migration extends the reach of religions, since besides their skills and work experiences; migrants carry their desires, aspirations, needs, religious beliefs and languages with them. Transnational migration poses the challenge to the religious organizations to take a broader context into consideration and form networks in a new territory (Vasquez, 2003) and to innovate and reinvent themselves in local, transnational and global contexts (Levitt, 2006: 397). As religions are carried to new contexts away from their traditional homelands, they go through an adaptation process, which to a certain extent transforms the way religion is practiced, since rather than being fixed set of rules, religion is "a dynamic web of shared meanings used in different ways in different contexts" (Gardner, 1995 cited in Levitt, 2003a: 869). Adaptive practices of religious organizations are crucial, since the way religion is organized has implications for how it is practiced and experienced and "[m]eaningful encounters require a cultural as well as an organizational fit" (Levitt, 2001b: 171).

Research shows that religion is one of the main resources that reproduce migrants' ethno-religious identity within a new country (Yang and Ebaugh, 2001: 269). Baumann argues that religion is so vital for the migrants that it is exceptional if migrants do not

construct a worshipping place or religious association in the receiving country (2004: 173). Rather than being self-exclusionary, religious transnational practices allow the transmigrant to "integrate" into the new setting, while keeping in touch with the sending context. Besides monetary remittances, transmigrants send home social<sup>16</sup> (Levitt, 2001b: 54) and religious remittances, which have an important impact on the religious organizations and how religion is practiced in the local context. Moreover, through religious remittances religion shapes and binds the sending local context to the receiving and global context. Therefore, religious organizations have the possibility to act transnationally, construct transnational space and succeed in integrating transmigrants into a strong religious institutional network and give them access to certain resources (Yang and Ebaugh, 2001: 160) and transnational membership (Levitt, 2003a: 849).

However, due to inadequate interest in the study of religion in sociology and due to the influence of secularization, individualization and increasing interest in ethnicity, religion did not get the scholarly attention that it deserves within the migration literature and is overlooked as one of the possible variables by the researchers (Bauman, 2004: 170-1). Furthermore, the dominance of the secularization theory estimating the decline of religion with modernization rendered the theorizing on migration ill-equipped to explain migrant religiosities and migrants' resort to religion throughout the migration process (Finke, 2000: 348). Even though there is revival of interest in religion within the migration context, it is not possible to talk about a critical mass of migration scholars working on the issue (Kivisto, 1990 cited in Ebaugh and Chatetz, 2000: 5) and the current research has a case-studies approach rather than a comparative one (Ebaugh and Chatetz, 2000: 6). Even transnational migration literature, which sets the aim to be more inclusive and study migrant transnationalism across borders in different spheres, overlooked religion as an important variable in research up until recently (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2002: 4; Levitt et al., 2003b: 574).

Recent research initiatives shed light on new trends, forms and activities in transnational migrant religious communites (Ebaugh and Chafetz 2000; Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2002; Warner and Wittner, 1998). Vivacity of migrant religions and religiosities in different transnational contexts lead migration researchers to take note of religion. Migrant

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> "Social remittances are the ideas, behaviors, identities and social capital that flow from host- to sending country communities" (Levitt, 2001b: 54).

religions bring the issue of religion on the agenda of the receiving countries, contribute to the religious pluralism in terms of quantity and quality (by means of revitalizing different religious traditions) and even impact church-state relations at the receiving end. As migrant religions carve out "new sacred spaces" within the receiving context, scholars of religion tend to recognize the importance of migrant religious organizations in facilitating migrant integration to the new context and increasing role of religion within the public sphere (Vasquez, 2003).

Research on religion within the migration context tend to concentrate on the American context,<sup>17</sup> given the fact that it is not possible to study the American history without referring to the immigration into the US and the American context provides religious liberties and motivates migrants to construct religious organizations. Moreover, the ethno-religious profile of American landscape is under constant change due to new migratory waves (Haddad et al., 2003: 16), which render the American context dynamic and inspiring to focus on. The European religious landscape, which is being redefined due to emergent migrant religious organizations and religiosities, is also going through important changes and there is growing interest in European and American context, since European states have different forms of church-state relations and citizenship regimes, which impacts the integration of immigrants and; therefore, their religions and religious organizations into the nation-states' institutional structures.<sup>18</sup>

Transnational migration studies have the potential to capture religious transnationalism within the migration context and can provide the venue for bringing religion back into the migration studies. Levitt as a prolific researcher is one of the first to initiate and contribute to the debate with her work on transnational political, religious and familal ties and lives of Dominican migrants from Milaflores in Boston. Another work is that of Menjivar's (2003, 1999), who discusses the transnational religious experiences of the Catholic and Protestant Salvodoran immigrants in the US from a comparative perspective. There are also attempts to broaden the research agenda in transnational

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> As Handlin states: "Once I thought to write a history of the immigrants in America. Then I discovered that the immigrants *were* American history" (1951: 3).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> In Protestant countries (in Scandinavia and UK) where there is state-church and religious pluralism is managed by multicultural citizenship. In Catholic countries, despite the fact that there is a church-state separation, the Catholic Church as the church of the majority has a privileged position. This leads to a hierarchical form of citizenship. Finally, in countries such as the Netherlands, Germany and Switzerland where there are Catholic and Protestant populations there is a corporatist-hierarchical citizenship regime (Spohn, 2007: 13-4).

religious migration. Ebaugh and Chafetz, who are involved in "Religion and Transnationalism" project, argue that transnational religious migration cannot be restricted to the receiving and sending countries. As their research in Houston congregations has shown, transnational migration networks and remittance patterns can be very diverse (2002: 7). In order to better analyze the diversity in transnational religious migration, they have concentrated on migrant communities that are different in terms of geographical proximity of home country to the US, immigration history, religion and socio-economic status. Similarly, Guest who is critical of the organizational and structural focus of transnational migration research, in his study on Fuzhou migrants, stresses the need for the future research to focus on transnational religious networks, which he describes as "independent, multifaceted, decentralized, and opportunistic" (2002:162) in connecting the sending and receiving contexts and instrumental in integrating migrants into the receiving context and channelling influences to different spheres of life in the sending context. In parallel to studies on religion within the transnational migration literature, religious studies increasingly focus on religion in transnational contexts. Drawing on Appadurai's -scapes emerging out of global flows, Mcalister suggests the term "religioscapes" to define emerging religious spaces of migrant, diaspora and transnational communities (2005: 251). As this brief review portrays, new recent research initiatives create more room for the study of religion in transnational migration contexts and transnational migration research agenda on religion is vibrant and growing.

**II.3.1.2.** Religion in Different Stages of Migration Process: As various research projects reveal that religion is present all throughout the migration process from the planning stage to the settlement and from integration to the second and third generations' sense of belonging. Religion may be an important variable at the initial stages of migration. People could decide to emigrate due to their religious affliations; escaping religious persecution could be the main motive of migration journey. Religious beliefs that lead to the discrimination or persecution of migrants in their homelands might provide migrants with access to resources and important channels to incorporate themselves into the host country setting. Iraqi Christians, who had suffered and escaped from persecution in Iraq to Turkey, could have access to a wider social network through their religious networks (Danış, 2006: 3). At the initial stages of migration from Romania, majority of the migrants

were from ethnic and religious minorities, namely ethnic Hungarian, ethnic German or of Roma origin (Sandu, 2005: 560).

For those running away from religious persecution at home, level of religious freedoms in another context has an impact on the selection of destination country. First Amendment guaranteeing the non-involvement of the state, which meant deregulation of the religious market, offered new freedoms for religious institutions to emerge within the American religious landscape (Finke, 2000: 339) and provided migrant religious institutions with their own free space for self-expression (Ibid: 242). Therefore, the US was the land of religious freedom for European migrants running away from religious persecution (Haddad et al, 1993: 1) and soon after they arrived they have established their own religious organizations in the new continent. Religion can also be used as a tool to facilitate migration. Akçapar (2006) discusses how transit Iranian migrants use conversion from Shi'a Islam to Christianity during their stay in Turkey as a strategy to increase their social capital and immigrate to the European countries. Conversion into Christianity was a strategy employed also by Koreans to be eligible for migration and join their counterparts in the US. Being Christian gave Korean migrants access to resources and allowed for their upward mobility in the US (Chai, 1998: 297).

The importance of religion is not limited to the preparation stage for migration. Religious resources empower migrants throughout their journey to a new country (Hagan, 2002: 75). Hagan in her case study on Guatemalan Maya transnational community in the US discusses the preparatory role played by the local evangelical churches and assistance given by the priests all throughout the migration process from the decision to emigrate to arrival at a new country (Ibid: 78-80) and by the migrant church in facilitating migrant settlement at the migration setting. Guest (2002) in his work on Fuzhou migrant churches in New York and transnational religious networks among Fuzhou migrants discusses the role played by the clergy as a bridge between the churches in Fuzhou and the churches in Chinatown in New York. While the Church in Fuzhou plays an important role in preparing the migrant for the journey and the new setting, the church in Chinatown helps the newly arriving migrants to familiarize and establish themselves in a new setting. Those who safely arrive remit some of their earnings as a show of gratitude to the local church in Fuzhou or to enhance theirs status within the community (Ibid: 156). The priests can play a mediating role in facilitating communication and contact by traveling in between the receiving and the sending ends. The Chaldean Iraqi priests of the Church in Athens keep traveling between

Chaldean community in Athens and Iraq (Danış, 2006: 6). Danış describes priests and religious leaders as the "transnational professionals" of Chaldean Iraqi migration, who construct transnational social space around religion through their practices and contacts (Ibid: 7). Similarly, the Romanian Catholic Church has sent "delegate priests" to countries where the Romanian Catholics migrate in order to provide material help and spiritual guidance (Stan, 2005: 9).

Migration journey does not end with the arrival to the destination country, nor does religion cease to be important, since migrants feel the need to have their own religious institutions in the receiving country to pray, and perform religious services and rites of passage.<sup>19</sup> In the case of Christian migrants going to the church is necessary to officially baptize their children or make them take the first communion or get support for the performance of funeral services for deceased family members (Levitt, 2001b: 169-170). It was the death of Romanian migrants at a hotel fire and difficulties encountered during the funerals that led to the establishment of the ROC in Istanbul.<sup>20</sup>

Warner argues that migrants in the US today are similar to the migrants in the past in terms of carrying their religious beliefs and identities to the US and in adapting their religious organizations and faith to the American context (1998: 3). He also argues that their religious faith often means more to them than it did in the country of origin, According to Williams, immigrants become more religious because religion acts as an "identity marker" (1988: 11 cited in Kurien, 1998: 45), while Smith defines migration as a "theologizing experience" because in times of radical change or anomie order provided by local priest or religious organization and religious explanations giving sense to life increases the religious commitment of the migrant (1978: 1174-5 cited in Kurien, 1998: 43). Different from Willams and Smith, Levitt argues that it is rather the receiving context that is conducive to migrant religiosity and religious activism (2000: 405), since it is possible to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Kertzer makes a distinction between rites of passage and rites of community. Rites of passage such as weddings or funerals signify important changes in human life and even though they have a community element, do still have an individual-focus, while rites of community have a community focus (1980: 135). In addition to religious education in the formative years of their lives, people get help from the priests during the time of crises such as death or the prospect of death (Ibid: 163). He mentions an incident in 1972, of a priest in Albora locality in Italy receiving a message from the factory workers, who were all Communists, asking him to bless the factory after a series of accidents (Ibid: 166). Therefore, he suggests, as long as the attachment of the rites of passage to the Church continues, the Church will remain as an important actor and continue to get people's allegiance. The experience from the Eastern European countries and the Soviet Union also testify the fact that the role of the churches or other religious institutions regarding rites of passage was not diminished, and even clandestinely they were conducted. Kertzer comes up with two possible reasons for this; the lack of appreciation of the political authorities in terms of creating a satisfactory symbol system or people's discontentment with the alternative symbol system (Ibid: 262).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Visit to the ROC in Istanbul on August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2006.

observe immigrant groups from the same country act in different ways in different contexts. For instance Italians that migrated to Argentina at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were actively involved in socialism and labor activism, while those who immigrated to the US resorted to the Catholic Churches. Similarly Casanova argues that religiosity of migrants should be seen as a means to adapt to the new setting (2005: 13) What defines the religiosity of the migrant is not the migration experience *per se* but rather the institutional context of the receiving country (Ibid: 14) and how religiosity is perceived by the receiving society.

The experiences of different migrant communities in the American setting and their adaptation processes reveal that the receiving context has an important role in shaping migrant religiosity and religious practice. Moberg argues that it is not possible to understand the American society without understanding organized religion nor it is possible to understand the church without reference to the society (1962: 2). Religion is an important element of the American culture and politics (Neusner, 2003: 105; Jasso et al., 2003: 217).<sup>21</sup> What Weber calls as "church-mindedness in America" (Gerth and Mills, 1961: 303) affected the migrant communities of the early  $20^{th}$  century in the US, which were mainly of European origin. 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act shifted the sources of immigration and new migrants from South Asia and Latin America flooded in and brought their religious organizations with them. Even though migrants were of different ethnicities and religions, the adaptation process of their religious organizations followed a similar pattern to that of previous migrant communities (Finke, 2000: 347). In today's America as well as in the past becoming American requires one to adopt American "patriotic monotheism" (Levitt, 2000: 405). Religious associationism is the dominant form of associationism in the US and members of the religious organizations are considered to be "good" citizens (Williams, 2002: 48). This pro-religious atmosphere, which turns the religious organizations into producers and main contributors of social capital in the US (Ibid: 49), shapes and deeply affects the migrant communities. Moreover, in the US religion serves as a channel to "mediate difference" (Warner 1998: 16). Migrants become more church-oriented in the US because their ethnic churches act as a legitimate channel for preserving and expressing their ethnic identity, culture and distinctiveness (Chai, 1998:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Religious organizations were part of the civil society due to a very clear separation of the state and religion. During the colonial era in New England state in the US, access to full citizenship rights required one to be part of a religious congregation (Gerth and Mills, 1961: 312). Having religious affiliation was a prerequisite for having good business and credit relations and has had consequences for social status (Ibid: 303) and becoming American (Hirshman, 2004).

299). Kurien argues that by "becoming Hindu" Indian immigrants can become American (1998: 37). Indians become more religious and more community oriented. Their religious organization, Organization of Hindu Malayalees, works as an "extended family" trying to provide its members with all kind of assistance (Ibid: 49). Similarly Korean Protestant migrants integrate to the American setting by reproducing their Christian and Korean identity in Korean churches in Hawai (Chai, 1998: 297). It is also possible to observe the impact of the receiving context on migrant religiosity within the European setting. Statham et al. argue that in Europe migrant integration schemes considered religion as a means to contain cultural differences of migrants (2005: 433); and therefore, resurgence of Islam among Muslim communities should be seen as a reaction to the European integration policies (Ibid: 432).

Besides the receiving context, the role played by religious networks and organizations during the migration process from the initial stages to the accommodation of migrants into the new context and to the articulation of transnational connections plays important roles in shaping migrant religiosity. Religion and religious organizations that reach destination countries through transnational migration establish new transnational connections with the sending context and other contexts, which allow for flow of migrants, remittances, religious symbols, experiences and practices. Different religions, religious organizations and networks follow a different pattern in articulating transnational ties. Levitt argues that some migrant religious institutions have more resources and capabilities for transnational activity and membership (2000: 399). She identifies three patterns regarding transnational religious organization; extended transnational religious organizations such as the Catholic Church allowing migrants to circulate in a network of parishes organized at a worldwide level, negotiated transnational religious organizations exemplified by the Protestant Churches, the decentralized structure of which renders it more flexible to fit in new circumstances and recreated transnational religious organizations established by the migrant communities when they reach the new setting such as the Hindu community in the US (Levitt, 2006: 400-402). The Protestant migrant religious institutions stand out in their capability to act transnationally. Menjivar (2003, 1999) in her research on the El Salvadoran Catholic and Protestant evangelical migrants that settle in Washington D.C. compares the different roles played by two different churches in terms of encouraging and furthering articulation of transnational ties. She argues that while the Protestant Churches actively encourage transmigrants to establish ties, the Catholic Church in

Washington is less enthusiastic about religious activism of transmigrants. The policies and active involvement of sending and receiving governments can also further religious activism and commitment as is the case with Turks in Germany. While Turkish governments provide resources for Turkish religious organizations in Germany, German governments financially support migrant religious organizations, which lead to increased transnational migrant religious activism (Levitt, 2006: 405). Therefore, migrant religiosity emerges and develops in transnational space with the involvement of different secular and religious actors and finds its most evident expression through religious organizations.

II.3.1.3. Adaptation Process and Change in Religious Organizations: While the migrant brings his/her faith, traditions and habits to a new country, he/she cannot bring the social organization of the country or the locality of origin. Even if the organizations of the old setting can be emulated in the new setting, it cannot have its full content and significance (Zaretsky, 1996: 108; Handlin, 1951: 129). The social organization in the receiving country even if is an imitation of the old setting is never the same thing (Ibid: 109). Furthermore, migrants' (and their organizations') assimilation to the new context is not totalistic but segmented (Portes and Zhou, 1993). Therefore, rather than transplants, migrant religious organizations are "arenas of change" (Kurien, 1998: 42). Change is also inevitable since it is mainly the task of migrants to recreate the religious organization in the new setting. Migrants have to put a lot of effort and energy into creating their religious institution with limited resources and in accordance with the new environment, its institutional structure and social norms and level of receptivity to new institutions and practices. Therefore, in order to respond to and cater for the needs of migrants and adapt to the new setting, besides their religious duties, migrant organizations fulfill different tasks in the new setting or take on new roles different from the ones in the original setting such as representation of the migrant community, community-building, reproduction of ethnoreligious identity and articulation of transnational ties with the sending context.

In the receiving setting migrants feel the need to carve out spaces to emulate some aspects of social life in the original setting, since the habitual order and abilities fitting the context one is born into and used to dissolves as one migrates.<sup>22</sup> The challenge of adjusting

 $<sup>^{22}</sup>$  As Handlin argues for migrants of rural origin, in the village they had a fixed position and their relations with the world were determined (1951: 8). "[T]he village was a whole" (Ibid: 9) and there was no big or radical change in this "whole" or stable order (Ibid: 13).

to a new setting places more burdens on the shoulders of the migrant straining his/her mental and psychological abilities, which makes one to long for the traditional order that one is used to (Zaretsky, 1996: 96). The immigrants try to ensure continuity with their lives prior to migration; however, this is "continuity within the context of disruption" (Orsi, 1985: 23). The hardships encountered throughout the migration experience create the need for the migrants to flock together with those who has come from a similar background and who has gone through similar experiences (Handlin, 1951: 170). When newcomers arrive in a new society, religion responds to the loss of previous common references and establishes new social bonds (Kastoryano, 2004: 1237) and through religious institutions migrants try to create the sense of familiarity in a non-familiar environment (Levitt, 2000: 397).

Religion is one of the most important components of the traditional order back home. Religious institution in the homeland is the symbol of security, stability and regularity and adherence to religion comes naturally by birth, rather than as a result of individual rational search (Handlin, 1951: 120). Therefore, religion, which is taken for granted, is challenged in a new setting. The new environment might also intimidate migrants and lead them to set up their own churches. Many Indian Orthodox Christians that come to the US with the hope of becoming part of the Christian majority were alienated with what they define as the "immorality of the US", which urged them to protect their distinct identity and Indian Christian morality through the establishment of their own churches (George, 1998: 266). Migrants try to recreate religious organizations since as Moberg argues "[t]he religious system provides a significant framework for handling fundamental problems of social organization – reducing uncertainty and anxiety, increasing coherence of human relationships, assigning meaning to human endeavor, and providing justification for moral obligation" (Moberg, 1992: 136). Therefore, the religious organization can be seen as a "secure port in the tempest" (Orsi, 1985: 164) providing the migrant with a position of strength when trying to adjust to the new setting (Diaz-Stevens, 2003:70).

Migrants resort to religion also as a means of community building. As the classical work of Thomas and Znaiecki reveals, even though through migration old community ties and traditions dissolved, the role of the parish church among the Polish-American community became more important than it was in even the most conservative Polish villages. In the US the parish church fulfilled the functions of both the church and the commune. While its power to reach out to all adherents or control the lives of people was

weakened, it offered a broader array of activities and resources to its adherents (Ibid: 115-6). With the establishment of the parish church, the priest became the leader of the community and the church formulated "the ideal of the development of the community" (Ibid: 117). The priest motivated the establishment of new associations within the community and tried to control and link their activities and efforts with that of the parish in order to strengthen and advance the parish community.

The need for community in certain cases makes the sense of religious attachment stronger and the religious organization and community can function as "surrogate families" (Dumont, 2003: 374). The religious institutions can become the focus of all the hopes and energies of the migrants that want to hold on to what they could bring from their context of origin (Handlin, 1951: 117). Religion could act as a "driving force for entire groups or a significant symbol system of identification, demarcation and support" (Bauman, 1999). In a new context former religion could be re-discovered or re-invented as a way of overcoming marginalization and self-isolation and the religious organization provides the migrant with the chance to "reclaim the honor" lost or tarnished throughout the migration experience (Warner, 1998: 25). Therefore, religious practice in a migration context can be "uplifting" (Kurien, 1998: 49). Moreover, religious practices open up important channels for the immigrants to re-relate, while the religious organization functions as a "bridge to the local social system" (Okechukwu and Leman, 2005: 522) in the receiving country. The success of the church in attracting people to the church is dependent on the role and position of the church within the receiving local context.<sup>23</sup> "Thus" as Kertzer argues, "allegiance to the Church may be a more locally bound phenomenon than often thought, dependent on the social role of the church in the community rather than on a universalist ideology" (1980: 183).

Religious institutions play an indispensable role in reproduction of the community and continuity of practices in the new setting (Sökefeld and Schwalgin, 2000: 27) and they indulge in community building, which turn them into community centers (Hirschman, 2004: 1208). Migrants can resort to religious organizations for different reasons such as praying, seeking support or social assistance, improving social status, getting into networks,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> As an immigrant woman from Sicily, who has moved to North Italy has told Kertzer, she was a church-goer back home but in the new locality the services do not have the same vigor and the role of the Church is much less important in the local setting. While neither her nor her husband's religious beliefs seemed to have changed much, their religious behavior changed. They stopped attending the church services. Moreover, they have become members of the Communist Party branch in the receiving context (1980: 178-9).

attending Sunday schools and/or cultural activities. Levitt argues that resort to religion is one of the means of survival strategies of migrants in the receiving country (2003a: 851). Migrants have limited resources to meet their basic needs, which Hirschman defines as; "search for refuge, respectability, and resources" (2004: 1228). Migrants seek help in religious institutions, since they are "the gatekeepers of necessary resources" (Solari, 2006: 322). The Church acts as a source of information, while religion becomes a key for the membership to a social network (Danis, 2005: 7). The priests provide guidance to the community and offer services other than religious ones (information about jobs or how to get a work permit or how to buy a house). Migrant churches can serve as "nodes of access" (Guest, 2002: 162) to web of transnational relations between the sending and the receiving end. The migrant churches turn into loci for mobilizing social capital, since they allow for the "re-territorialization" of family and religious networks in the receiving context (Ibid: 151). Religious networking opens a social space at local and transnational level and offer mobility opportunities within the social space, which however, might constrain the participants through imposition of collective rules. Therefore, transnational religious space is a space that empowers and constrains; it is "a space of creativity and agency as well as conformity" (Levitt, 2005: 4).

Religion is not only an important means for migrant's survival strategy and "network formation" (Dumont, 2003: 369), but also for the reconstruction of migrants' identity and keeping it distinct in a new setting (Bauman, 2004: 172), and acts as a "solid base of cultural-religious identification" for the migrant community (Ibid: 181). Since in a more pluralistic or different context, reproduction of culture and religion cannot be taken for granted, migrants become more conscious of their identity and actively involved in religious organizations (Warner, 1998: 17). By preserving religious and cultural identity and values in the new setting, the religious organizations, rather than self-exclusion, try to open up a space for its adherents to participate into the receiving country social, economic and political life by giving them social recognition. However, the member is expected to participate into the new way of life in allegiance to his ethnic, religious and cultural roots (Zaretsky, 1996: 120). Migrants, as parents, resort to religion to transmit their culture to their children and for cultural reproduction. Since migrant parents cannot take the growth of their children acquainted with their religious tradition in a migration setting, they tend to be more religious or more involved in religious organizations (O'Brien, 2003: 22). The parochial school of the church of Polish-Americans not only taught religious and cultural

values to the second-generation, but also instilled respect for the parents' national and cultural identity, language and values (Zaretsky, 1996: 119). As Kurien's work on Indian migrants in the US reveals that protecting and guiding their children in the American setting, which is completely different from what they are used to in India, becomes their main concern (1998: 44). The means of reproducing ethnic and cultural identity are the formation of religious institutions, adding or emphasizing ethnic and cultural elements to the parish life, use of the native tongue in liturgy and in the church's social space as well as the instruction of the native tongue to the second-generation (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2000: 80). In gatherings or activities organized by the religious organization there are important elements such as native food, music, dress, which help to delineate the boundaries of distinct migrant ethnic or cultural identity (Ibid: 92).

Religion allows the transmigrant to have a space to be "different" and innovative within the receiving context, while the interaction and reciprocity between the sending and receiving ends have an important impact in local religious life in the sending context to prepare the potential migrants to a new religious reality in the receiving end (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2001: 6). As Guest in his study of Fuzhounese migrants in New York argues:

[...] the religious community serves as a liminal space, a transnational space, a place in between that touches both New York and China. It re-creates physical surroundings, kinship and village networks, ritual, language, and food that recall life in China. It reconnects to cultural and religious traditions back home, yet it is in the midst of America. Religious communities allow Fuzhounese immigrants to imagine themselves differently in the midst of a hegemonic discourse that describes them in unflattering and dehumanizing terms and to participate differently as well, moving beyond the circumscribed role of immigrant, undocumented laborers. (2002: 163).

Therefore, the community building role of the religious organizations does not only allow for adaptation to the new setting but also work to maintain and reproduce ethnic and cultural identity and keep ties vibrant with the sending context. In other words, religion and religious space act as a means for integration and resistance to transformative forces in the receiving setting (Levitt, 2005: 40).

Even though transnational communities mobilize resources in order to preserve their distinct ethno-religious identity, transplantation of migrant religious institutions and adaptation process to the new environment can lead to changes in religious organization and practices as well as definitions of identity (Yang and Ebaugh, 2001: 270). Adaptation to the new context may lead to borrowing practices from other churches as is the case in the

US among Christian migrant congregations in terms of time, procedures of gathering, religious education, and role of the clergy (Ibid: 276). Warner argues that it is not only Christian groups but also other migrant religions organize in accordance with the American congregational model.<sup>24</sup> One of the main reasons for adopting the congregational structure is the fact that migrant religious institutions are established and sustained by immigrants, who are ready and willing to devote time to the institution. The congregations also act as community centers, where people can get social, cultural and educational services to the members.

Through migration, religious life can become more "formal" and "church-based" both in the sending and the receiving end as is the case of Dominican migrants in New York (Levitt, 2001b: 179). Similarly, Mexican Catholicism, which is colored with indigenous rites through migration, fits into the mainstream Catholicism in order to adjust to the American setting (Moberg, 1962: 457). Another important example is the case of Italian Catholics (from South Italy) in the US, whose religious practices went through certain transformations within the American context. Even though the members of the Italian Harlem became part of the mainstream American Catholicism (Orsi, 1985: xvi), they tended to separate the church (institutionalized Catholicism) from popular religion (Orsi, 1985: xvii-xviii) or what Orsi calls as the "theology of streets" (Ibid: xxii) and they tried to reproduce their belief system and practices in New York. They brough their statute of Madonna and every year walked behind her in their *festa* and tried to socialize their kids into the popular religion. Through their devotion, Madonna had found a new home at the 115<sup>th</sup> street in New York. The *festa* allowed Italians of Italian Harlem to claim their share from the American space and time (Ibid: 189).

As the members of Italian Harlem moved to other parts of the city and as the later generations became Americans, the power of the Madonna has faded in time and even if the *festa* continued, both the participants and the *festa* have changed (Ibid: 72). Thousands of Haitians, who now live in the neighborhood, participate in the *festa* and keep the tradition alive (McAlister, 1998: 124-6). The Afro-Haitian Haitian religion is a syncretic religion mixing elements of Catholicism and Voodoo. Its followers perform Voodoo rituals in the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> The congregational structure is composed of a list of members, a local governing council, lay members committees; clergy elected by the local bodies and raises its funds from its members (Ebaugh and Chatetz, 2000: 49). It is different from the parishes that organize on administrative and geographical basis. Congregation is a local religious association leaving the organizational and discretional power in the hands of the local body and laypersons rather than bishops (Warner, 1998: 21).

Catholic Church; therefore, use the Catholicism as a means to adjust its practices into the new setting and religious landscape (Ibid: 131), since Catholicism is "socially appropriate" (Ibid: 153). Different from Italians, who shifted their focus from churches in Italy to American ones, Haitians practice their religion within the diasporic space and also go for pilgrimage in Haiti (Ibid: 133). New forms of Haitian religion that emerge in diaspora, multiply religious organizations and centers of the home country.

The organizational changes that religious institutions go through differ from religion to religion. Immigrants that have a similar religious faith and organization to that of the receiving country find it easier to accommodate themselves and their faith to the new setting than those with very different ones. The Romanian Baptists adapted more quickly to the new setting in the US as compared to the Romanian Orthodox migrants, since Baptism is closer to American Protestant pattern than the Orthodoxy, which is very much associated with the Romanian culture and identity (Moberg, 1962: 456). However, this does not mean religions different from the majority faith do not adjust themselves to the new setting. Since "Islam is flexible in time and space", Islamic religious organizations in diaspora are structurally flexible and adaptive (Abusharaf, 1998: 251). After its establishment migrant Islamic organizations continuously keep adjusting their structure to respond to the arrival of new members and changes in the external context (Ibid: 252). Muslim mosques in the US adopt parochial school model to give religious training to Muslim children and youth. Rather than on Friday, which is the holy day for Muslims, they hold classes on Sunday, since it is the day-off (Ibid: 257). Hinduism's organization in diaspora is another interesting example. It does not have a single book and prophet, hierarchy or central authority but many deities and congregation of religions, which allow it to adapt to different contexts and take new forms. Hindu temples incorporate different deities from different parts of India, which introduces members coming from different regions of India to new deities and religious practices (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2000: 96). Transplanting Hinduism to a context out of its homeland requires translation (Kurien, 1998: 55-7), while arrival of new Hindu migrants introduces novelties in terms of its organization and practice in diaspora.

Adaptation is an ongoing process, which renders migrant religious organization dynamic and sensitive to change in the receiving context as well as to the immigration patterns and waves. Each migrant congregation follows a different course in its evolution throughout time in a particular context. Abusharaf's work on a Muslim congregation that was established as a multinational congregation in New York by a Moroccan sheik reveals that the mosque went through an ethnicization process with the arrival of high number of Yemeni Muslims; therefore, the congregation, participation, activities and worship within the mosque were redefined (1998: 236). Furthermore, even within the same faith migrant communities can organize along different lines, which shows that religious forms, roles and organization are under constant negotiation (Ibid: 258). For instance some Muslim communities such as the Yemeni congregation discourage women's participation, while North Africans' Islamic centers encourage women to come to the mosque and give them responsibilities in teaching or at the administrative directors.

The need to protect and keep the religious identity distinct and to find responses to the change coming throughout the adaptation process brings with it the requirement to search for theological justifications and revisit the foundations of religion for accommodating change (Yang and Ebaugh, 2001: 278). Return to the foundations can increase room for social inclusiveness and universalism, which pave the way for ecumenical dialogue within a new context. The search for pan-Orthodox unity within America, overcoming ethnic differences and uniting under the Orthodoxy through common doctrine and ritual, is an example of this development (Ibid: 279-81). Within the new context, migrants can come across different interpretations and new sources, which also lead to search for a better understanding of the religious practice. The Buddhist migrants within the US define the changes in terms of organization and practice as a necessary outcome of the adaptation process to the modern US context and search for a purified form of religion (Ibid: 283).

Maintenance of religious, cultural and ethnic traditions, while adapting to the new setting might lead to the emergence of opposing dynamics such as the enhancement of patriarchy and empowerment of women in the same congregation (Warner, 1998: 24). Migration experience might lead to redefinition of roles and practices of the laity within the parish community. While originally there is no restriction on participation to caroling for girls in the Orthodox Church in India, the migrant fathers in the US do not want to allow their daughters to attend caroling services in the church, since men want to keep it as a male activity and preserve (George, 1998: 267). The Church provides leadership opportunities for economically and socially marginalized men,<sup>25</sup> which they jealously guard against

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Women were pioneers of Indian migration from Kerala to the US following the 1965 Immigration Act. Indian women arrived to work as nurses and later on their husbands and families joined them. The fact that women earned more created tensions within the households, as it challenged the traditional role of men as bread winners of the family (George, 1998:

women and do not want to share (Ibid: 289). Even cooking and serving food, which is traditionally a woman's "duty", is taken over by men (Ibid: 279).

Throughout the adaptation process, which goes beyond the first generation of migrants and extends to the second or third generations, some ethnic churches lose their ethnic element or emphasis in time (Mullins, 1987: 320-4 cited in Kurien, 1998: 63). The second-generation may become way too religious for their parents and religion may become more important than ethnicity for them (Chai, 1998: 309-10). If the migrant congregations become multi-ethnic; ethnic and cultural elements are also played down for the sake of unity (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2000: 84) and to separate the "cultural" from "real" faith as in the case of some Muslim congregations in diaspora (Ibid: 96). The transformation of the religious organization might lead to the rifts within the religious organizations between the conservative and reformist members (Baumann, 2004: 176-177).

Religion is not only about religious texts but also "living communities". Therefore, the study of migrant religions and religious organizations should take the construction, organization, contextualization and adaptation process of religious organizations within a new setting (Warner, 1998: 9). In this section in guidance with the migration literature we have reviewed the role of religion throughout the migration process and construction and adaptation processes of different religious traditions in particular migration settings, which are linked through transnational ties. In this transformative process religious institutions indulge in community building and reproduction of ethno-religious identity through transnational agency, ties and flows, while clergy and laity within the religious organizations turn into key witnesses and actors of continuity and change. The next section takes religion to a new level and discusses globalization of religions, emergence and functioning of global religious system and overlappings of transnational migration and globalization.

## **II.4.** Transnational Migration in Global Religious System

Even though they have geographical and cultural roots, religions with universal ambitions and claims tend to expand and carry their message across borders. Religion in the contemporary world reorders social borders in line with global forces and goes beyond the national boundaries (Levitt, 2006: 393). Religion becomes more transnational by spreading

<sup>270-1).</sup> The priests of the Kerala Syrian (Orthodox) Christian community also arrived to the US through their wives working as nurses.

to different places away from its geographical and historical roots (Agadjanian and Roudometof, 2005: 4). Transplantation of religious institutions into the destination countries initiates or contributes to the formation of religious networks at local, national, transnational and global levels (Yang and Ebaugh, 2001: 276). While transnational migration paves the way for the emergence and transformation of religious particularisms at global level (Levitt, 2001 cited in Spickard, 2004: 48), globalization provides the ground for religious activism in the public space, reinforces the role of religious institutions as transnational actors (Casanova, 1994: 225) and opens up new channels of expression that allow religious institutions to reach out to wider public (Juergensmeyer, 2002: 5). The crisis of the nation-state and ongoing construction of global civil society opens up new room for activity of religions as global and transnational actors (Casanova, 1994: 226-7)

In the global era, a global religious system emerges as an important socio-structural component of the world society (Beyer, 2006: 14). The global religious system is contingent (Ibid: 12) and in its current global form religion is both invented and real, Western imposition and rejection of it, in conflict with globalization and constitutive of it, a continuation of the past and a radically new form (Ibid: 115). Within the global religious system, religious organizations play an important role. It is possible to observe growing number and influence of different types of organizations varying in size and capacity in different dimensions of social life. Within the globalizing world, organizations play a defining role in all social function systems, since communication flows through the organizations (Beyer, 2006: 51). Through organization, religions can formulate responses to globalization blending local elements and universal aspirations (Ibid: 127). It is organizations that give religions its current form and its span from local to worldwide. Futhermore, religious pluralism is in fact organizational pluralism (Ibid: 109).

Global religious organizations rather than a center-periphery model work through multiple centers and particularizations of central authority. The global finds its expression in local and the local in global, which could also be defined as "the universalization of particular and the particularization of the universal" (Beyer, 2006: 24). Therefore, global and local are constitutive of each other. Even the Catholic Church, which seems be the main exception to this organizational model, works actively at local level with significant differences among different localities (Beyer, 2000: 417). Despite the centralized authority of papacy, the Church functions through a trans- and multi-local structure with universal

claims for two thousand years (Pries, 1999: 4), while the Pentecostalisms works globally through the principle of multicenteredness, different Pentecostal churches and organizations are manifestations of systemic singularity (Beyer, 2000: 418).

The construction of the global religious function system does not mean the creation of something new, but rather "reordering" of religious and cultural resources (Beyer, 2006: 82). Global religious system is composed of different world religions; however, it uses Christianity as a model (Ibid: 117). Expansion of European power to other parts of the globe after the 15<sup>th</sup> century paved the way for the formation of a global religious function system (Ibid: 74) and Christianity took the lead in it. However, the Catholicism, the Protestantism and the Orthodoxy followed different courses in constructing and becoming part of the global religious system. The model of religion put forward by the Vatican defines religion as "universal" and "Catholic" (Sjørup, 1999: 385). Different from other world religions, the Vatican in Rome is recognized by the sovereign states system (della Cava, 2001: 537). Originally, the supernatural and the mundane realm coincided and were not distinguishable and those who revered to the Church would also follow the decrees and actions of the Church in religious, political and social life (Ibid: 2-3). The Church did not face the competition or domination of a political institution in Western Europe that was equal in power or more powerful. The Protestant Reformation shattered the influence of the Catholic Church and the churches came under the authority of political forces. The Westphalian Treaty of 1648 strengthened the control of the states over churches in their territory. By the 18<sup>th</sup> century, national churches were legally established in the Protestant countries and represented the religious dimension of the national identity. Even though the Orthodox population in Eastern Europe did not experience the Reformation, by the 19<sup>th</sup> century national Orthodox churches emerged as new states gained their independence in the Balkans and in Eastern Europe.

However, the incorporation of religion into nation-building projects and the emergence of national churches did not mean the elimination of the religious space as a distinct sphere of activity and communication (Beyer, 2006: 69). The Catholicism has long resisted against modern innerworldly turn as well as differentiation of spheres of life. However, with the Vatican II it recognized the principle of religious freedom. Nevertheless, the Catholic Church resists against the privatization and while being innerworldly it keeps its claim to the public sphere (Casanova, 1994: 51). The Catholic Church chose to disestablish itself and passed from a model in which it was embedded in state to a one it is

embedded in civil society (Ibid: 62; Haynes, 2001: 151-2). Besides its support to reform movements in the struggle against the communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe, the Church got involved in transnational activities in Africa. Papal supremacy grew in parallel to transnational expansion of the Catholic Church. With the Vatican Council II the Church ceased to become only a European institution and turned into a global one and witnessed a rapid growth in the Southern hemisphere. With the Vatican II Council as the first global council of the Catholic Church, the Church recognized "nationalization" of Catholic churches and therefore centralization at the national level, while becoming more transnationally and globally oriented and engaged in secular and social spheres of activity (Casanova, 1994: 225-61; Haynes, 2001: 150). The emergence of new movements also coincides with the Vatican Council II. The Catholic Charismatic Renewal movement has originated in the Catholic Church in the US in the 60s, which combines elements of the Catholicism with the Pentecostalism, and has ecumenical tendencies. Its emergence led to a revival in the Church life (Csordas, 2007: 295-6). The movement spreaded to other countries and countries for instance to Kerala Catholic Community in India or Brazil (Ibid: 300) or Nigeria (Ibid: 303-6). However, in different contexts it took different forms by adapting to the context through adopting new elements. According to Csordas, the mode in which the movement was globalized is different from the way the Catholicism has globalized due to changes in communication and transportation but also increasing interaction between the local adherents and central leadership (Ibid: 309-310). The movement attracts new members through its enthusiastic worship and belief in miracles, particularly among many Latin American migrants in the US (Balmer, 2003: 57).

The Christianity is a missionary religion and tries to extend its message to the entire world (Moberg, 1962: 209), which also facilitates its globalization. Spread of the Catholicism was directly related with the European expansion through colonization and missionary activities in the colonized territories (Beyer, 2006: 136). In the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries missionary work helped indigenization of the Christianity in non-European territories. The Protestant missionary work started at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and grew in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Catholic and Protestant missionary movements played a critical role in the globalization of the Christianity. New indigenous Christian movements and churches emerged in non-European territories and they spread through transnational links (Ibid: 139-42). The African Christians following their conversion engaged in missionary work in Sub Saharan Africa, in Europe and America through immigration (Ibid:

144-6). The Christianity today spreads through missionary activities at global level (Haddad et al. 1993: 6).

Robbins describes the spread of the Pentecostal and the Charismatic Christianity, which originates from North America in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, to Africa, Latin America and Asia as one of the success stories of the cultural globalization (2004: 117). Referring to Casanova he suggests that the Protestant Christianity will become the dominant form of Christianity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century if worldwide conversion does not lose its pace (2001 cited in Robbins, 2004: 118). Through a wave of conversions in Africa, Asia and mainly in Latin America Protestantism<sup>26</sup> is gaining new adherents. The Pentecostalism spreads particularly among the poor segments of the societies, rural migrants to cities or marginalized people by the larger society (Ibid: 123; Hefner, 1998: 95).<sup>27</sup> Besides conversion, the acception and the approval of the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches by the traditional Protestant Churches in 1960s gave a new vigor to the Pentecostalism. With this approval, members of the traditional Protestant churches could receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit and form charismatic groups, but remain as members of their Protestant Churches (Robbins, 2004: 121). Multicenteredness and social movement characteristics of the Pentecostalism brought its rapid and world-wide success (Beyer, 2006: 147), while its fluidity and its emphasis on individual religious performance such as trance different from other forms of Christianity facilitated its spread to different parts of the globe (Ibid: 134). The Azusa Street revival, which is presented as the beginning of the Pentecostalism has a symbolic value, while it emerged at different centers simultaneously or one after another (Ibid: 148). The diversity within the Protestant world allowed it to adapt to different local contexts and spread rapidly. New Pentecostal churches open branches and globalizes local Pentecostalisms through translocal links.

What attracts many people to Pentecostalism is the enthusiastic style of worship as well as egalitarian nature of the belief and community, which is open to everyone willing to respond to the call of the Holy Spirit (Robbins, 2004: 120). All members are seen as

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Latin America was predominantly Roman Catholic. Through the Pentecostal missionary activity, the Pentecostalism became an important and indigenous element of Latin American religious landscape by the end of the World War II (Balmer, 2003: 55). It spreads rapidly particularly among the poorest segments of the society (Haddad et al. 1993: 7). The Evangelism was also more appealing to women than men due to its egalitarian message, which challenged the male-dominated Catholic tradition. While the Pentecostalism spread by being closer to people, the Catholicism was seen as the religion of Latin American elite (Balmer, 2003: 56). Not only in Latin America but also in the Philippines, the Pentecostal churches are growing in number and size at the margins of cities (Sjørup, 1999: 390).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Methodism spread among the poor classes of Wales, Scotland and Ulster not among the richer groups in English lands and those who adhered to the Methodism were in need of expressing themselves in a more egalitarian space (Hefner, 1998: 95). Today when the Protestantism is spreading it is following the same trend.

evangelists regardless of educational qualifications or social status (Ibid: 124). For many people, who find themselves in a new setting or in their hometowns, which went through sudden transformations, the Pentecostalism provides tight community ties, ascetic moral code, energetic and experiential religious services requiring full-engagement of the faithful to the services and community life as well as room for spirituality, dreams and visions in worship. Moreover, the movement spreads through local channels and converts from the local community act as recruiters of new members (Ibid: 124-6). The members work to respond to local problems through local run institutions and fund-raising (Ibid: 131). However, the Pentecostalism works spontaneously at the local and global level; since the conversion means rupture with the past life, and therefore the culture, which facilitates Pentecostalism's globalization (Ibid: 127).

In addition to missionary activity and networks, the Pentecostalism has spread and spreads through migration in the world. The Evangelicalism arrived in the US through European immigrants that settled in the east of the US. The second wave has also originated from Europe and brought the Pietism to the US. The Evangelicalism gained root in and came to dominate the American religious landscape starting from the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Balmer, 2003: 53-4). The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC) has seen the rapid growth of ethnic congregations, particularly of Asian origin (Ibid: 221), which obliges the PAOC to transform itself to cater for immigrants' needs. The Pentecostal churches in the US provide the migrants with housing, employment and daycare facilities similar to Catholic Churches' shelter and social assistance facilities (Haddad et al. 1993: 7). The Pentecostal Churches provide services to migrants (Balmer, 2003: 57), new networks and resources and the chance to upward mobility and access to middle-class status (Ibid: 58-9). The Haitian migrants in the US by converting into the Pentecostalism do not only seek a way out of poverty, but also establish connections at local, national and transnational levels with the Pentecostal networks and become part of the God's Kingdom on earth. Therefore, rather than returning to the Haitian homeland they long for returning to "Jerusalem" and their ties with Haiti, with their families and locality are redefined (Mcalister, 2005: 253).

The case of the Orthodoxy is discussed in detail in the next chapter. Suffice here is to say that communism has curbed the power of the Orthodox Churches within and out of the Orthodox heartland and missionary activity was very limited in scale during the Cold War years. Only after the fall of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe and Soviet Union, transnational migration carried it to different contexts and the Orthodox Churches encountered the global forces to its full.

Besides the Christianity, there are other religious systems within the global religious system. Some non-European populations adopted and adapted to the European function system, while others resisted against or rejected it or some accepted and rejected at the same time by creating a distinct sphere for religion, while rendering it ambiguous by defining it as a category of culture as in the case of Shinto religion in Japan. It was easier for Judaism to adopt and adapt to the European model (Ibid: 75-7). Despite the existence of inexorable theological differences, the Judaism went through similar processes with the Catholicism and Protestantism such as bureaucratization along rational lines and accommodation to secular way of life (Luckmann, 1967: 35). Buddhist monasticism has been the main source of continuity and singularity in the Buddhist tradition as well as nirvana as a central code and ultimate value referring to itself (Beyer, 2006: 83-4). Hinduism took its current and singular form after Hindu elite's and diaspora's reinterpretation of religious and cultural elements blended with new elements. This, however, does not mean what constitutes Hinduism is not contested (Ibid: 75). Besides ancient Asian religious traditions, new Asian religions have also become part of the global religious system. Sekai Kyusei-kyo is one of the 700 religions established in Japan in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and is hierarchically organized with missionary efforts and transnational ties with mainly the US, since it emphasizes the unification of spiritual strengths of both Japan and the US. However, the church has important activities in Thailand and Brazil and other places, which turns the institution into a global one (Spickard, 2004: 51-2).

For the case of Islam, it could be argued that it did not have to invent itself as a religion in the European sense. Islam refuses and resists against its definition as "a religion" among many and its restriction to the private sphere of life (Beyer, 2006: 6-7). However, starting from the 19<sup>th</sup> century it went through transformations and evolved through global orthodoxification (Ibid: 77). The 18<sup>th</sup> century reform movements in Islam were responses to local and regional developments rather than direct conflict with the European powers and its aim was to purify Islam and return it back to its original form (Ibid: 160-1). In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries Islam evolved and spread through the valorization of legalistic aspects of religion rather than salvation/damnation code, which is the primary code of all religions (Ibid: 83). It was through the organizational lines that Islam was globalized (Ibid: 166). Islamic social networks also help the spread of Islam to different parts of the world.

Mosque organizations, madrasas, Sufi orders, *tariqats*, migrant religious organizations and Islamic social movements are other channels that carry and reinforce Islam in different parts of the world (Beyer, 2000: 419; 2006: 180). However, even though Islamic organizations play an important role in global Islamic system, its decentralized form of organization renders Islam more distinct than other religions.

Apart from organized religion as denominations, churches and sects, religions gain different forms in today's world as social movement religion, which is episodic and lacking central organization; religion in societal function systems such as politicization of religion and social network religion, which is unformed religion taking place in interactions and encompassing the first three forms of religion (Ibid: 108). The "network religion" is organized on flexible and mobile ties extending beyond national boundaries and denominational loyalties (Agadjanian and Roudometof, 2005: 5). It is possible to observe individualization and privatization of religiosities breaking traditional hierarchical and collectivistic understanding of religion. Due to the emphasis of New Age on individual divinity and authority (Beyer, 2006: 280), new religiosities become more "complex, eclectic and highly contextual" (Agadjanian and Roudometof, 2005: 5) and more closely associated with identity. Global religious system also encompasses New Age religiosities, while transnational migration also carries New Age religiosities to new contexts, which in turn introduces new forms to it. However, global influence of New Age religiosities is limited, since it spreads through networks that are limited in scope and it is not intrinsic for the functioning of the system (Beyer, 2006: 284).

A religious system functioning through organizations, movements, networks and interactions at global scale becomes the arena for opposing trends; for harmony and contention, for collaboration and resistance, which are intrinsic to the functioning of the global religious system. While it is true that in global age religion is one of the very important means that we use to make sense of the world and to give meaning to what we do (Agadjanian and Roudometof, 2005: 1), religion is also a means of resisting against or questioning globalization. Hefner argues that globalization does not always lead to homogenization and ethno-religious resurgence at the global age is a sign of this "vibrant contestation and localization" (2000: 3). Moreover, modernization and globalization put religious tradition to test by challenging its communal and social foundations and force it to transform itself (Turner, 2006:440). Religions now face new challenges what della Cava

62

defines as "the new secularism" and rapidly growing "commodification" due to factors and forces of globalization (2001: 536).

However, resistance against global forces should not lead us to label religion as anti-globalization. According to Wittrock modernity "is a common condition on a global scale that we live in and with, engage in dialogue about, and that we have to reach out to grasp" (2005: 58). Therefore, rather than being an obstacle or enemy or victim of the modernity, religion is a precondition and contributor for the emergence of modern age just like the nation-state or capitalism (Ben-Rafael and Sternberg, 2005: 15; Beyer, 2006: 301). Religions become part of the global religious system through their willingness as well as resistance. The relationship between globalization and religion is not straightforward but a complex one. Even though religions work more at local level due to the orthogonal structure of the religious system, which gives it its atypical position in its relations with other systems, localization is part of the process of globalization. Moreover, this structure makes religion work well in voids left by other function systems (Beyer, 2006: 103). Globalization provides opportunities and challenges for different world religions as it gives them the chance to reach out to wider public, while forcing them to readjust to rapid transformations that it brings with it.

One of the main challenges that religions confront in the age of globalization is pluralism. The tension between pluralism-vs-homogeneity in modernity (Ben-Rafael and Sternberg, 2005: 18) becomes a global phenomenon in global age and religions, even if they resist, are asked to be "a religion among many" and coexist with others.<sup>28</sup> As individuals gain the freedom and capability to integrate themselves into the systems of "subjective significance" and as religious institutions fail to be monopolistic and coercive, religious freedom and pluralism are institutionalized, public institutions do not feel the need to maintain a religious worldview and modern societies need to organize as "churches" or moral communities (Casanova, 1994: 37; 47). The emergence of hybridity and syncretistic

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Certain important historical developments in the West paved the way for religious pluralism. Renaissance and Reformation, Enlightenment, nationalist movements provided for the ground for religious dissidence and pluralism in the West. While the Catholic Church came under attack, new churches and religious movements emerged in different parts of Europe and the US. American religious landscape went through significant changes at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century due to the Catholic and Jewish immigration, which while challenging the dominant faith – the Protestantism – paved the way for pluralization and competition among religious groups. While American society was being more "churched", the influence of religion was diminishing in Europe (Hefner, 1998: 88). Particularly after the 1960s there was a considerable decline in church-attendance and expression of religious belief in Europe (Ibid: 86-7). In parallel to decline in church-attendance, new religious movements and different forms of religiosities started to emerge in different parts of Europe. Urbanization and migration played an important role in opening room for the emergence of new religious forms and movements (Boddy, 1989: 157 cited in Hefner, 1998: 91).

tendencies within a religious tradition makes it difficult for religious authorities to control mass religion (Turner, 2006:440).

The fall of communism and the reemergence of different secularization patterns and collective identities, which add into the cultural pluralism in Europe, migratory waves leading to more religious diversity within the European religious landscape, globalization and increasing inter-civilizational and religious encounters lead to growing influence of religion within Europe and religious pluralism becomes an important reality of the European space (Spohn, 2007: 2). Transnational migration in a globalizing world adds into this plurality and diversity through transplantation of migrant religions in new contexts both in the US and Europe (Casanova, 2005: 2).

Religious organizations need to work in a changing and more pluralistic context due to transnational migration and globalization with new challenges in order to get the allegiance of the people and spread their message. Religious pluralism and the need to coexist and compete with different religious groups poses a challenge also to religions, since they have to uphold the religious dogma, tradition and worldview, while trying to reach out to people and become more socially engaged and cope with change in order not to lose their adherents (Hefner, 1998: 98-9). Despite its universalistic claims the Catholic Church has to live with religious pluralism both within and out of the Church (Casanova, 1994: 223). Churches in Europe had to grow to the idea of working together with a variety of different secular and religious actors. Therefore, religions are at the center stage of the tension between pluralism and homogeneity and this tension is heightened with globalization and transnational migration.

Religion and migration are interdisciplinary issues that permeate disciplinary boundaries. Therefore, studying religion and migration within the transnational migration context necessitates dialogue across disciplines and different area studies. Since immigration and religion are becoming inextricably related in different contexts, the new area of study creates more room for interaction between migration studies and sociology of religion and better tools to analyze religious organizations within transnational migration settings. Transnational religious organizations play an important role in globalization of religions and they provide the loci for transnational religious practices. Different religious organizations use different means to respond to transnational migration embedded in the globalization of religion, which takes place at different levels, pace and depth in different settings. In line with the framework set by the discussion in this chapter, the following two chapters evaluate how the Orthodox tradition in general and the ROC in particular respond to the challenges and opportunities posed by transnational migration embedded in globalization in the post-communist era.

## **Chapter III. The Christian Orthodox Tradition from Past to Present**

A historical account of the formation of the Orthodox Church(es) needs to start by answering how the Church that was one Apostolic Church was divided and fragmented into so many pieces. As Gillet argues, what creates the main difference and division between different Christian churches, rather than the dogmatic differences, are the political factors and the conception of society (1995: 360). Therefore, there is the need to understand how the mission and world view of the Orthodoxy was shaped through political, economic and social factors throughout the history, while touching upon how it affected its environment. With this goal in mind, the first section of this chapter is devoted to a brief history of the Orthodox Church(es)' evolution, mission and transformation in its traditional heartland, which informs the discussion in the next section on the challenges and opportunities posed by the post-communist and globalizing era to the Eastern Orthodox world and on the evaluation of its agency in the social sphere. The task of the last section is to discuss how the Orthodox tradition adapts and responds to the challenges and transformative forces posed by transnational migration in a globalizing world.

## **III.1.** The Organization of the Christian Orthodox Churches

The word "Orthodox" is of Greek origin and means the "right doctrine" (Pacini, 2000: 5), "right belief" (Ware, 1997: 8) and/or "correct worship" (Binns, 2002: vii). Starting from the first centuries of the Christianity, the term Orthodox were used for the adherents of the Church, who believe in the original evangelical message of Jesus Christ transmitted through the apostles (Pacini, 2000: 5). However, with the division of the Church and the emergence of doctrinal differences the use of the term "Orthodox" was confined only to certain churches.

In the Orthodox tradition, the Church is not defined as an institution or a collectivity of individuals. "It is a life, divine-human life, the continuation of the life of Christ, in believers who are in communion with Christ." (Enev, 2001: 133). The Orthodoxy adopts an organic approach to the Church defining it as the "body of Christ" that unites all the believers (Ibid: 133). The Orthodox Church regards itself as a charismatic organism, which reproduces itself through the apostolic succession that unites the Church with the Holy

Spirit (Ibid: 134). The Orthodox world does not have one unitary Church that is organized and administered from one centre or by a Pope (Volkov, 2005: 226). The Orthodox Church has a decentralized and flexible way of organizing. Rather than an institution, it is "Ekklesia", a spiritual unity and essence (Pollis, 1993 cited in Enev, 2001: 152). In terms of organization the trend in the Orthodox world has been "centrifugal" and towards the formation of churches at regional or national basis (Confino, 2005: 351). There are churches that recognize each other and form a communion; however, in terms of internal organization and administration they are autonomous (Pacini, 2000: 31). The Ecumenical Church in Istanbul has the honorary degree of being *primus inter pares*, which has certain rights and duties in terms of coordinating the working of the Orthodox Churches together. However, it cannot interfere in the internal affairs of the independent churches.

The Orthodox Churches in the world are divided into two categories: those belonging to the Eastern (Byzantine) Orthodox Churches, which have their traditional heartland in Eastern Europe and Russia, and those belonging to the Oriental (Neo-Chalcedonian) Orthodox Churches or Non-Chalcedonian Orthodox Churches<sup>29</sup> – since they do not recognize the dogmatic definitions of Council of Chalcedon, which have their traditional heartland in the Middle East (Krindatch, 2). Majority of the Orthodox population live in the Balkans, Eastern Europe and Russia and to a lesser extent in North Africa and the Middle East. Out of 226,500,000 of the Orthodox in the world the majority (209,000,000, which is 92% of the total) live in Europe today (Pacini, 2000: 22-3; Pacini, 2003: 168), mainly in Eastern Europe. The Oriental Orthodox Churches such as the Coptic Church in Egypt, the Assyrian Church in different parts of the Middle East, the Armenian Church in Armenia, in the Middle East as well as in Europe and the US form the Oriental Orthodox Churches (Pacini, 2000: 9-10). Therefore, the Orthodoxy has a very rich tradition with Greek, Arabic, Slavic and Latin elements (Ibid: 58).

In terms of organization there are two types of churches in Orthodoxy; autocephalous and autonomous. The term "autocephalous" originates from the Greek terms *auto* (self) and *kephale* (head) (Meyendorff, 1996: 130). The autocephalous churches have the authority to decide about all the internal matters regarding the Church and faith. They elect their own Patriarchs, bishops, priests and deacons. There are thirteen Patriarchates in the Orthodox world. Four of them are ancient churches; Istanbul, Alexandria, Antioch and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Since the focus is on the ROC, the Oriental Orthodox Churches are beyond the scope of this research initiative; however, their experiences will be touched upon when necessary.

Jerusalem and nine of them are national patriarchates; Russian, Serbian, Romanian, Bulgarian, Georgian, Greek, Albanian, Polish, and Cypriot (Macar, 2003: 23-4; Ware, 1997: 6). There are also autonomous churches. The Mount Sinai autonomous church<sup>30</sup> is under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, while Finnish and Estonian Churches are under the authority of Patriarchate of Istanbul, and Japanese and Chinese Orthodox Churches are under the jurisdiction of Patriarchate of Moscow (Pacini, 2000: 35-7).<sup>31</sup> The autocephalous status of the Orthodox Church in America is not recognized by all the Orthodox churches. The Autonomous Orthodox Church of Macedonia is also seeking independence from the Serbian Orthodox Church. However, it did not achieve recognition yet (Binns, 2002: 27). When a new church grows and seeks independence (Ibid: 10). However, the issue of recognition and overlapping jurisdictions is not a settled issue.

While there is no papacy in Orthodoxy, each Orthodox Church has its own organizational structure and organs to administer the Church and religious life. The administration of Orthodox Churches is the duty of the Holy Synod of the churches. Synod is the main administrative organ of the Orthodox Churches, which is composed of bishops. The bishops have equal power and the Patriarch has the honorary title of primus inter pares.<sup>32</sup> Since it is difficult to gather all the bishops for Synod meetings, a limited number of hierarchs of the Church comes together in Holy Synod to take decisions regarding the functioning of the Church. In certain cases such as the election of the Patriarch a National Council is convened to represent all the church members including priests as well as lay persons (Döpmann, 2003: 109; Clément, 2005: 79). The bishop has the supreme religious power in the Orthodoxy and the priests and deacons are under his authority (Döpmann, 2003: 110-111). The bishops are elected by the Synod or an assembly composed of the members of the Synod, representatives of clerics and laymen (Pacini, 2000: 35). Within the church organization there is a hierarchy of deaconate, presbyteriate and episcopate. The priest can perform all the duties apart from the ordination of another priest and the consecration of chrism oil. The deacon assists both the priest and the bishop in priestly

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> There are 20 monasteries at Mount Athos; 17 Greek, 1 Russian, 1 Bulgarian and 1 Serbian (Meyendorf, 1996: 134).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> In the four ancient churches and the Russian, Serbian, Romanian and Bulgarian Orthodox Churches the title of Patriarch is used. The Patriarch of Georgia uses the title *katholikós* (Döpmann, 2003: 111). The head of the Cypriot, Albanian, Greek and Finnish Churches use the title of Archbishop and the head of the Polish, Czech and Slovakian, American and Japanese Orthodox Churches use the title of Metropolitan.

 $<sup>^{32}</sup>$  However, the presence of church elite separate from the parish churches in practice challenges the ideal (Enev, 2003: 153-4).

duties, but he cannot hold services alone. Both married and unmarried men can become priests and deacons, however only unmarried priests can become bishops. The authority of the bishops is a sacramental one, rather than a juridical one as in the Catholicism.

The relationship between the local Church and the Patriarchate or Metropolitanate is not organized as it is in the Catholic Church. Different from the Vatican's "transnational, hierarchic, bureaucratic, and centralized" organization (Casanova, 1994: 222) with all the churches under the authority of the Pope, which is formulated with the Vatican Council I in 1869-70 (Pacini, 2000: 32), the Orthodox Churches organize in a horizontal way.<sup>33</sup> The local church in the Orthodoxy is not seen as part of the Mother Church but as the manifestation of the Church in its fullness. The Church is "one, sacred, catholic and apostolic" (Clément, 2005: 77). Since the Church is the body of Christ, it is indivisible. The priests are entrusted with the duty to ensure the unity of the local church, which they can accomplish only by forming and acting as an organism with the parish community (Ibid: 153). Each parish church becomes the Church in its fullness every Sunday during the celebration of the Eucharist (Ware, 1997: 13). However, there is a wider unity of the church that also encompasses the local parish.

In the Orthodoxy we can talk about a horizontal collectivism, since all the believers have equal status in front of God and the Church organization is somewhat more flexible and looser as compared to the Catholic Church (Enev, 2001: 204-205). The priests and faithful have the same dignity, and therefore, all are parts of the body of Jesus, while Jesus Christ is the head of the Orthodox Church. For the Orthodox Church, the laymen are an integral part of the body of Christ and their participation is indispensable (Bratsiotis, 1964: 27-8). However throughout history, the role of the laymen has been limited and now their participation and representation in the Synod are regulated by the statute of each Orthodox Church. Besides the Holy Synod, in almost all churches there is the General Council, in which clerics coming from different dioceses and laymen can participate (Pacini, 2000: 34). In the case of the ROC the layman constitutes the majority of eparchial councils and community meetings (Döpmann, 2003: 112-5).<sup>34</sup> Moreover, the priest or bishop cannot

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> When we are talking about the transnational actor status of the Church we have to be mindful of the fact that Catholic Church has a different and articulate organizational structure (For more information on the transnational actor status and organizational structure of the Roman Catholic Church see: (Vallier, 1972), while the Orthodox Church is fragmented and organized into separate patriarchates in different nation-states (Katzenstein, 2006: 6).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Articles 43, 44, 45 and 46 of "The Statutes for the Organisation and Functioning of the ROC General Stipulations" regulate the participation of the laymen into formation of parishes and eparches as well as eparchial councils in the ROC. <u>http://www.patriarhia.ro/\_upload/documente/121438488425759490.pdf</u>

work without the consent and participation of the community; therefore the laymen make the majority of the parochial councils in local churches (Clément, 2005: 75).

The Orthodox Church sees the Holy Scripture and the Orthodox tradition as the two main sources that preserve the Divine Revelation and sees itself as the guardian of the faith and tradition. The Holy Scripture includes the Old and New Testaments, without the Apocrypha (scriptural texts falling out of canon). The Orthodox tradition is shaped by the decisions of the seven ecumenical councils, which form the basis of the Orthodox faith and practice (Enev, 2001: 128) and the "immutability" of the Orthodox tradition is what makes it distinct (Bratsiotis, 1964: 25). Since the Orthodox tradition accepts the fallibility of people, priest or layman and asserts that the Church is the protector of faith and community and only it can introduce change (Niesel, 1962: 129 cited in Enev, 2001: 129).<sup>35</sup> In order to take decisions with regards to theological issues and Creed, all the Orthodox Churches have to come together and the Ecumenical Councils have to be convened. However, after the schism in 1054, the Council has not been convened. Starting from the 60s, the Orthodox Churches have started preparations for a Great Holy Synod of the Orthodox Churches, which however did not convene up until today (Ibid: 110). The Patriarch Bartholomew I of Istanbul is trying to bring the Orthodox Churches together through Pan-Orthodox Conferences. However, due to the fragmentation of the Orthodox world into national churches, which remains to be one of the main problems of the Orthodoxy of today (Clément, 2005: 83-4) is the main obstacle in the way of convening of the Great Holy Synod.

The current organization of the Orthodox Churches is shaped by ancient traditions and ecumenical councils as well as modern conditions. In fact it is the application of the ancient canon law to modern life, which renders the organization of the Orthodox Churches flexible and facilitates the establishment or abolishment of new parishes or episcopates and adaptation of churches to new conditions. This way of organization; however, makes unity

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> The Orthodoxy assigns no infallibility to any office, while for the Catholicism infallibility of the Pope is a fundamental dogma (Enev, 2001: 129). The Roman Catholic Church does not see any other organization that is superior to it and deems itself the only interpreter of the teachings of Apostles and the tradition. It has the power to reinterpret issues regarding the teaching and once a new interpretation is adopted by the organs of the Church, lower levels of the Church hierarchy have to embrace the new understanding. The Orthodox Church instead sees itself as the continuation of the Apostolic Church and regards change in the other Christian churches as moving away from the ancient heritage (Ibid: 131-2). It was the reason why in 1848, as a response to Pope Pio IX's call, the Patriarchs of the East issued an encyclical to ask the Pope not to declare the infallibility clause, arguing only the ecclesial body can be the custodian of the Truth (Clément, 2005: 25).

of action among the Orthodox Churches difficult and creates divisions within the Orthodox world (Meyendorff, 1996: 130-31).

**III.1.1**. History of the Orthodox Church(s): One Church or Many?: Before the schism, both the Catholic and the Orthodox Churches belonged to the same Apostolic Church. The administration of the Church and the Christianity was based on the system of Pentharchy, the rule by five. It was the Council of Chalcedon in 451 that led to the creation of the Pentarchy system. The Patriarchates were at the capital of their provinces. Each Patriarchate was evangelized by one Apostle; Rome by St. Peter and St. Paul, Antioch by St. Peter, Alexandria by St. Mark and Istanbul by St. Andrew. The churches in Istanbul and Jerusalem were elevated to the level of Patriarchate with the Council of Chalcedon. Five churches, in Rome, Istanbul, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem were given the authority to administer the Christian Church. The canon 28 of the Council of Chalcedon decreed the status of Churches in Rome and Istanbul to be equal.<sup>36</sup> Even though the patriarchates were equal in status, Rome had the honorary primacy, followed by Istanbul, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem. The Patriarchate in Jerusalem was established not because of the province's political importance, but because it was the spiritual center where Christianity was born (Pacini, 2000: 7).

The role of the Church of Rome in the East was a limited one (Clément, 2005: 11) and it started to grow apart from the rest since the division of the Roman Empire into two at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, separating the lands to the west of the Adriatic Sea and Syrtis River from the lands in the East (Binns, 2002: 203). The Pentarchy system was confirmed at the Council of Constantinople in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, at a time when Patriarchates in Antioch, Alexandria and Jerusalem were losing their power and Rome was growing more and more apart from the other four (Ibid: 11-2). In 800 Charlemagne was enthroned as the Emperor of Holy Roman Empire and Rome oriented towards the new Empire (Ibid: 204). With the schism between the Catholic and Orthodox world, the honorary title of Rome passed to the Patriarchate of Istanbul (Pacini, 2000: 32) and it became *primus inter pares* (first among equals) (Ibid: 38).

While the Church in Rome was dominated by the Roman Empire and culture; therefore, is called Roman, the Byzantine culture has had a strong influence over the Orthodox Church in the East and its evolution (Meyendorff, 1996: 59; Binns, 2002: 3).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> This canon was not recognized by the Pope in Rome.

With Emperor Constantine's conversion, Christianity became the official state religion (Ibid: 4). The Byzantine Church (Patriarchate of Istanbul), which was formed through the reciprocal recognition of autonomous churches (Pacini, 2000: 6), became the Church of the Byzantine Empire and the State had the power over the Church (Macar, 2003: 37-8). The working of the Church and State together was based on the principle of *symphonia*, which meant the power of the Emperor and the power of the Patriarch have to balance each other and work in harmony. The ideal of *symphonia* was "a bipolar structure" (Clément, 2005: 15), which necessitated coexistence and complementarity of two powers. *Symphonia* was formulated under the rule of Emperor Justinian, which meant the Emperors were part of the state in implementation of its decisions within the Empire's territory and financial support (Confino, 2005: 341).

The Byzantine ideal of "symphony" did not manifest itself in one form, but in very different forms and even in distorted forms, including the caesaro-papist tendencies (*Il Regno*, 2001: 11). Throughout the Byzantine history there were many instances when the collaboration between the Church and the Empire fell short of the ideal of harmony (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 6).<sup>37</sup> After the dissolution of the Byzantine Empire throughout history despite the ideal of "humility and resignation" with regards to worldly affairs of the Orthodox Church, there were many exceptions to the ideal (Confino, 2005: 347). This has led to the identification of *symphonia* with caesaro-papism.<sup>38</sup> However, even though Emperor Justinian and some other Emperors took decisions regarding the theological issues, this did not turn into a state tradition in the Orthodox world (Confino, 2005: 342). Therefore, the intervention of the emperors did not have a lasting affect on theological issues, while in terms of the Church organization and religious activities, the Church had to work in collaboration with the state or ruler in power.

The involvement of the worldly authority in Church affairs to a certain extent stemmed from the organization of the Church, which had a non-theological base. The Orthodox Church within the Byzantine Empire adopted the administrative structure of the Empire. Since the Empire was an empire of cities, the Church organization followed this

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> Some Emperors went as far as calling for the Ecumenical Councils, signing Council decisions to make them valid, appointing the Patriarch or assuming priestly duties during religious services such as censing the icons or blessing the congregation (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 6).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> However, Eisendstadt prefers to define it as interdependence (Confino, 2005: 344) in accordance with the Byzantine ideal.

structure (Ware, 1997: 12-13). Romans used the word "diocese" for administrative units, while the Byzantines used *episkopos*, which means "bishop", "overseer" or "inspector" in Greek. In the ancient church, each city had its own bishop, who was responsible for all the pastoral services and administration of the church. With the end of the persecution of the Church by the Roman Empire, the boundaries of canonical administrative authority of the church and bishops were clearly defined. The boundaries of patriarchates were defined in geographical terms, not in ethnical, cultural or liturgical terms.<sup>39</sup> The senior bishop was called the Metropolitan, who had a see in Metropolis, the principal city.<sup>40</sup> The word Patriarch was first used in legal documents in the 6<sup>th</sup> century before it was adopted by the Church and starting with the Patriarch John IV, the Patriarchs of Istanbul used the title of Ecumenical (Universal) Patriarch (Binns, 2002: 12). This non-theological organization provides clues for us to understand how the Orthodox world kept its unity despite the emergence of independent Orthodox Churches throughout the history (Ibid: 11).

The Byzantine Empire ruled for 1200 years and its rule was extended over the Balkans, Russia, Caucasus, eastern Mediterranean and Ethiopia (Confino, 2005: 340). Therefore, when the Byzantine Empire grew in size and strength, the Patriarchate in Istanbul has extended its reach and emerged as one of the four patriarchates rivalling Rome. Moreover, Pontus and Thrace were given under the jurisdiction of Istanbul and the Church was given the right to establish dioceses in non-Christian lands (Macar, 2003: 33). The Byzantine Church was active in the missionary activity. It converted Slavonic people that came under the control of the Byzantine Empire. In the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries Bulgarians, Ukrainians and Russians entered the Christianity and became part of the Byzantine Church (Pacini, 2000: 12-13). The Byzantine liturgy was adopted by non-Greek churches in Egypt, Palestine, Syria and even in Georgia (Meyendorff, 1996: 55-6). Even though the Arab invasions in the 7<sup>th</sup> century have led to its withdrawal from Syria, Egypt and Palestine, it had Asia Minor under its rule until the 11th century (Binns, 2002: 4). When the Patriarchates of Antioch, Alexandria and Jerusalem fell under the Muslim rule, Istanbul became the only Church that can unite the Christians in the East. However, as the influence and power of the Patriarchate in Istanbul increased, the clash regarding the jurisdiction of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> "Territorial Jurisdiction According to Orthodox Canon Law. The Phenomenon of Ethnophyletism in Recent Years", Paper Presented at the International Congress of Canon Law, Budapest, 2-7 September 2001. http://www.ec-patr.org/docdisplay.php?lang=en&id=287&tla=en

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Canon 28 of the Council of Chaldeon entrusted the Patriarch of Istanbul to consecrate bishops and metropolitans (Meyendorff, 1996: 57).

the churches with the Pope in Rome became inevitable. Therefore, it is possible to argue that starting from the 7<sup>th</sup> century onwards the Eastern Orthodox and Catholic tradition that represent the two souls of the indivisible Church have grown apart due to historical developments (Pacini, 2000: 12).

It was not only the historical developments but also dogmatic issues that led to divisions within the Church such as Monophysite/Dyophysite divide<sup>41</sup> and "filioque clause"<sup>42</sup>. These dogmatic divisions within the Orthodox world and between Rome and the Eastern Churches solidified as churches grew apart due to the different political, economic and socio-cultural environment they have lived and evolved (Enev, 2001: 145). When the Byzantine Empire lost the control of the Western part of the Empire, the Pope became the monarch. Therefore, Roman Catholicism inherited an institutional structure, which blended Catholicism with Roman law. The rights and duties of the believer were expressed in legalistic terms. The Catholic Church preserved and maintained the Roman law and heritage and became the promoter of the principle of rule of law throughout the middle ages. While it is true that the Byzantine Empire also inherited the Roman law and institutional traditions, the Byzantine culture was more heavily influenced by the holistic and cosmic Greek philosophy. After the separation from the Western hemisphere, the Orthodox Church went through divisions within itself due to political reasons and did not organize around a single centre such as the papacy in Catholicism (Ibid: 146-8).

In order to resolve issues related with clashing jurisdictions, Pope Leone IX has sent an ambassador, Cardinal Umberto di Salva Candida, to Istanbul in 1054. However, when the ambassador wanted to impose the will of Rome to Istanbul, the talks were interrupted and the ambassador left the letter of excommunication on the altar of St. Sofia. In the letter the Byzantines have been blamed for excluding filioque clause from the Creed and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> At the Council of Ephesus in 431, different opinions regarding the two nature of Jesus Christ, divine and humane led to divisions within the Orthodox world. Monophysites (only one nature) (Ibid: 8-9) were arguing that Jesus' humanly nature has been absorbed by his divine nature; therefore, two natures have been united. The Pope Leo of Rome did not accept this decision and the 4<sup>th</sup> Council (Council of Chalcedon) was convened to condemn monophysitism in 451. From this council onwards, a division emerged within the Orthodox world between the Monophysite churches (Armenian, Assyrian, Coptic, Ethiopian, Indian-Assyrian) and Dyophysite (two natures) or Chalcedonian churches (all the churches under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate in Istanbul). After the 4<sup>th</sup> Council there were also churches that separated from the Patriarchates in Antioch and Alexandria. The Copts separated from the Alexandria Church and Nestorian and Maronites separated from the Church of Antioch (Macar, 2003: 32).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> After Rome introduced the "filioque clause" ("and from the son") to the Nicean Council decisions, the Patriarch of Istanbul protested and refused any additions to the Creed (Ibid: 36). According to the Creed decided by Nicean Council, the Holy Spirit proceeds from God. With the Chalcedonian Council in 451 the Christology has reached its ultimate form. Since Christ is "real God" and "real human", the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and Son (Clément, 2005: 11-2). However, filioque clause was not officially recognized until 11<sup>th</sup> century by Rome, while it did not receive recognition in the Byzantine Church and remained as one of the issues dividing the Christian world.

allowing the marriage of the priests (Clément, 2005: 13; Pacini, 2000: 16). In return, the Patriarch in Istanbul excommunicated the Church in Rome. This mutual excommunication set the two churches apart but the event that finally led to the separation came in 1204 during the 4<sup>th</sup> Crusade. The Crusaders invaded Istanbul and looted the city and the sacred sites. During this period – from 1204 until 1261 – Nicea became the interim capital of the Byzantine Empire (Macar, 2003: 35-6; Clément, 2005: 13). After 1204, the Byzantine Empire entered into an irreversible loss of power until the fall of Istanbul under the Ottoman rule (Binns, 2002: 5), while the ties were severed and the differences and problems between the two churches turned into a schism as both sides kept accusing each other with heresy (Pacini, 2000: 17).

There were also councils and efforts on both sides to reunite the churches, which however, did not succeed and schism continued up until today. Following the schism, which was exacerbated with political developments and the separation of the East and the West, both Churches went through different processes that shaped and changed them. The Eastern Orthodoxy did not go through the Western medieval and Reformation eras and it kept the characteristics of the primitive Church. Even after the dissolution of the Byzantine Empire, its institutions provided cohesion of the Orthodox world (Binns, 2002: 7).

With the fall of Istanbul under the Ottoman rule, the unification of two churches became more difficult. Sultan Mehmed II (*Fatih Sultan Mehmet*) after the conquest of Istanbul defined himself as the "New Roman Emperor" and he became the head of not only Muslims but also the Orthodox. Therefore, he decided to keep the Orthodox Church functioning and ordered the election of a new Patriarch, since Patriarch Anastasias II had resigned from his post. Gennadios II was appointed as the new Patriarch.<sup>43</sup> In accordance with the Ottoman *millet* system the new Patriarch was given spiritual as well as worldly powers and duties. The Ottoman millet system was based on the Islamic principle of *dhimma* (pact). According to this principle, the non-Muslims living in the "House of Islam" under the Ottoman rule were allowed to continue their religious practices and keep their institutions by means of paying the poll-tax and the land-tax (Panaite, 1995: 36). Within the Ottoman millet system the main division was between Muslims and non-Muslims (Murgescu, 1995: 97) and it was based on a communal framework. Therefore, the *dhimmi* 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Keeping the Church was also a strategic move on the part of the Ottoman sultan to keep the division alive within the Christian world (Macar, 2003: 39-40; Binns, 2002: 177), since the new patriarch was given certain rights and privileges; however, he was not allowed to seek unity with Rome.

were classified in accordance with their religious denomination, not ethnicity. Each religious community was a millet and the religious institution of the millet was in charge of the administration, education, social security of the community and well-functioning of the communal life. Each community had its own judges, courts and legal mechanisms. This system allowed different communities a certain level of autonomy and the possibility to preserve their religious identity.

The Greek Orthodox population became the first *millet* of the Ottoman Empire and the Patriarchate was given the right and responsibility to administer religious as well as worldly affairs of the Orthodox millet (Küçükcan, 2003: 4). Besides being a Patriarch of all the Orthodox in the Empire, the Patriarch became the community ethnarch. The new Patriarch was also given the statue of Ottoman *paşa* with an escort. Since he has also been given the status of the judge, there was a prison under his control. The Patriarchate also collected taxes from its own community. All these new regulations made the Patriarchate more powerful than it was during the Byzantine Empire. Moreover, as the Ottoman Empire grew in size, the Orthodox population of the newly gained lands fell under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate and extended the reach of the Patriarchate. It extended its jurisdiction over all the Orthodox population within the Ottoman Empire, even at the expense of the Serbian and Bulgarian Orthodox Churches, which came under the rule of the Patriarchate (Binns, 2002: 12).

However, the Orthodox *millet* was not only composed of Greeks as different Orthodox lands came under the Ottoman rule, they became part of the Orthodox *millet*. This increased the influence of the Patriarchate and the Phanariots; therefore, the Greek influence over the other Orthodox communities. The efforts of the Patriarchate to make Greek the liturgical language of non-Greek communities under its jurisdiction such as Romanians, Bulgarians and Serbs and the efforts of the Phanariots to Hellenize the culture led to bitterness against the Greek in these communities (Confino, 2005: 348). When the Bulgarians converted into the Christianity in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, they opted for the Byzantine Church as the mentor, which did not impose the usage of Greek, while the Roman Church asked for the use of Latin. The change in the Patriarchate's stance under the Ottoman rule was; therefore, unwelcome (Confino, 2005: 348, note 13).<sup>44</sup> The reaction against the Islamic rule under the Ottomans and increasing Greek influence strengthened the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Under the Ecumenical Patriarchate the Ochrid Church was suppressed and liturgy in Bulgarian was turned into Greek in 1767 (Gillet, 1988: 295).

nationalist element among different Orthodox communities (Pacini, 2000: 56-7). Under the *millet* system, language became the identity-marker for different Orthodox communities, which later on gained more importance through the nationalist movements. This explains the emphasis on liturgy in the national language and language education in the Orthodox Churches today that belonged to the Byzantine commonwealth (Binns, 2002: 177).

The fall of Istanbul brought a new division within the Orthodox world. As the Byzantine Empire started losing power, the tension between the Patriarchate and the Russians under the Byzantine rule started growing. From 988 up until 1240, the Russian Orthodox Church was under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate in Istanbul. The metropolitans and bishops, who were ordained by the Patriarchate, were of Greek origin. However, following the Mongol invasion, the Russian priests started taking up hierarchical positions and dependence on the Patriarchate was reduced. Then Russians started nominating their Metropolitans and were only getting consecration from the Patriarchate (Confino, 2005: 352). After the Council of Florence in 1439 the Russians blamed the Byzantines for deceiving the Orthodoxy. Starting from 1448, the Russian Metropolitans started to be consecrated by Council of Russian bishops and in 1459 the Russian Orthodox Church officially declared its autonomy from the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The Patriarch Jeremias II of Istanbul had visited Moscow to seek support for his own Church; however, was left with no choice but to recognize the autocephaly of the Russian Orthodox Church in order to be able to go back to Istanbul. In 1589 the Metropolitan Job was consecrated by the Patriarch Jeremias II as the first Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church and gained equal status with that of four ancient patriarchates (Karathanassis, 2003: 73). Beginning from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Moscow started considering itself as the "Third Rome" given the fall of Istanbul under the Muslim rule. After becoming independent, the Church grew in size and power.

However, divisions did not end there. At the Council of Brest Litovsk in 1596 almost all the Ukrainian Orthodox Bishops decided to unite with Rome in order to have autonomy and to distance themselves both from Istanbul and Moscow<sup>45</sup>, while the King of Poland has also forced the Orthodox to convert into Greek-Catholicism. In Transylvania, the Greek-Catholic Church was established in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The Orthodox Churches regarded (and still do) the establishment of Greek-Catholic (or Uniate) Churches as an

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> After the Union of Brest the Ukrainian Church kept the married priesthood (Clément, 2005: 21; Binns, 2002: 221; Ross, 2002: 28).

aggression and "negation of their ecclesiality" (Clément, 2005: 22; Pacini, 2000: 17). This was the main reason why Greek-Catholics went through a very bitter experience during the communist rule in Eastern Europe and Russia. They are still trying to recover from the damages the communist regimes have caused.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the unprecedented fragmentation of the Orthodox world based on political reasons rather than religious. As the Ottoman Empire started retreating from the Balkans, new nation states started to emerge and establish their own churches declaring their independence from the Patriarchate (Macar, 2003: 57). Greeks after independence from the Ottoman Empire established their own church –the Greek Orthodox Church in Athens – in 1833 arguing that the new Greek state could not depend on a Patriarchate that was under Turkish domination (Pacini, 2000: 58). The Patriarchate only 17 years after its establishment recognized the Greek Orthodox Church (Macar, 2003: 47). Then the Serbian Orthodox Church separated in 1879 and the Patriarchate recognized it the same year. While the ROC had declared its independence in 1865, the Patriarchate recognized it 20 years later in 1885 (Ibid: 57). In the case of Serbs and Bulgarians, the declaration of independence of their church from the Patriarchate was in fact the restoration of their medieval Patriarchates before falling under the Ottoman rule, while for Greeks and Romania it meant the creation of a new church, which delayed granting of recognition.

The case of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church proved to be the most problematic. When the Bulgarians were seeking independence, the Ottomans agreed to the creation of a Bulgarian ethnarchy with the hope of having some control over the Bulgarian lands (Binns, 2002: 184).<sup>46</sup> When the Bulgarian Orthodox Church declared its independence from the Patriarchate in 1872, the Patriarchate gathered a Council with the participation of the Patriarchs of Antioch and Alexandria, which refused to recognize the Bulgarian Church. The Council blamed the Bulgarian Church with ethno-philetism (breaking the organism of the Church in order to organize on the basis of nationality)<sup>47</sup> and schismatism and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> In 1839 the foundation of a Bulgarian Church with liturgy in Slavonic in Istanbul was proclaimed and at Easter prayer in 1860 the name of the Ecumenical Patriarch was not mentioned against the customs (Gillet, 1988: 295). Even in 1861 some Bulgarians have turned to the Catholic Church, which promised them the right to conduct liturgy in Bulgarian, which led to the creation of Bulgarian Greek-Catholic Church. In 1870 Sultan Abdul Aziz of the Ottoman Empire promulgated a *ferman* declaring the founding of the Bulgarian exarchate (autocephalous church) in Istanbul. The Ecumenical Patriarchate responded by convening the Council of 1872 to excommunicate the Bulgarians (Ibid: 296). With the end of the Balkan Wars in 1912-3 the Bulgarian exarchate was moved to Sofia. From this moment on being Bulgarian meant being Orthodox (Ibid: 300).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Ethnophyletism was condemned as the "the greatest enemy to the unity of the Church", since it was against the founding principle of the Church. The church established in a city was serving everyone living in that place without ethnic or racial discrimination and therefore was receiving the name of the city such as the Church of Rome, Ephesus, and Antioch etc. The ancient patriarchates that have survived to this day are in fact local churches and they do not have a

excommunicated the Bulgarians (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 43), since the Bulgarian Orthodox Church was basing its claims not on the basis of territory but nationality. Furthermore, the separation of the Bulgarians meant the loss of almost half of its adherents for the Patriarchate and there were many problems regarding the ownership of churches where Greeks and Bulgarians lived together. Actually, the Council was a response of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to nationalism. Its basic argument was that the Patriarchate had the ecumenical status according to Canon 28 of the 4<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Synod, which cannot be associated with a nation or an ethnic group (Anestidis, 2003: 16). However, finally the Patriarchate had to recognize the Bulgarian Orthodox Church in 1945 (Macar, 2003: 57-8; Clément, 2005: 23-4).

The World War I further weakened the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The Ecumenical Patriarch's seat remained empty from 1918 until 1921. In 1921 the Archbishop of Athens Meletios became the Ecumenical Patriarch (Spinka, 1935: 104). The future of the Ecumenical Patriarchate was discussed at the Lausanne Conference in 1923. The Turkish side agreed to permit the presence of the Patriarchate within its boundaries, while restricting its functions to only ecclesiastical ones and asking for the deposition of the Patriarch Meletios. As a result of the Lausanne Conference, the Patriarch lost his ethnarch status.

The population exchange between Greece and Turkey after the war reduced the Greek Orthodox population in Anatolia considerably (from 1,800,000 to 350,000-250,000), which was another factor weakening the power of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (Ibid: 105), while the Russian Orthodox Church gained a predominant role within the Orthodox world. Already before the World War I, out of total 144 million Orthodox population, 110 million were under the jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church. The end of the war brought new divisions and mergers leading to the regrouping of the Orthodox world under the nation-states in the Balkans. After the war, the Orthodox world became more fragmented and the number increased up to 21 autocephalous and autonomous Orthodox Churches (Ibid: 103).

national character. "Territorial Jurisdiction According to Orthodox Canon Law, The Phenomenon of Ethnophyletism in Recent Years", Paper Presented at the International Congress of Canon Law, Budapest, 2-7 September 2001. http://www.ec-patr.org/docdisplay.php?lang=en&id=287&tla=en

The evolution of the Balkan societies following the fall of the Ottoman Empire up until today played a determining role in defining the relations between religion and politics in the region (Gillet, 2004: 277). In almost all cases, the establishment of sovereign nation-states was accompanied or followed by the foundation of an autocephalous church (Gillet, 1988: 301). Ethnopyletism became one of the main characteristics of Orthodoxy in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, since the Orthodox Churches absorbed nationalism into their ecclesiology (Ibid: 294; Gillet, 2004: 273). Rather than contradicting with the principle of universality, ethnicity has been presented and legitimized as a complementary principle (Ibid: 304) and ethnicity has become a "constitutive element of the ecclesiastical institution" (Ibid: 300), while it became difficult to think of nationality without religious identity.

Fragmented Eastern Orthodox world faced a very serious challenge with the establishment of communist regimes first in Soviet Union after the Bolshevik Revolution and in the Eastern Europe following the end of the World War II. The communist regimes systematically suppressed religions and tried to impose secularization on people. It was in the Soviet Union that the religions went through the harshest treatment. The Soviet legislation regarding religious life stipulated the separation of church and state, suspended the state aid to the Orthodox Church, deprived the clergy from all the privileges, forced the religion to retreat to the private space, removed religious symbols and religion from the public space while the church property and lands and theological academies were nationalized (Spinka, 1935: 110-111). Patriarch Tikhon, who was of the view that the Bolsheviks would not last long, excommunicated the authors of the legislation and asked the people to disobey the rules.<sup>48</sup> In 1923, the Russian National Council gathered in Moscow and charged the Patriarch for policies and activities against the regime and deposed him. The Supreme Ecclesiastical Administration took the administration of the Church in its hands and declared its loyalty to the regime. The Patriarch was released only after he signed a document accepting his activities against the regime and promising loyalty to the regime. After his death in 1925 the regime did not allow the convening of the Synod for the election of a new Patriarch. It was only in 1943 the Patriarchate was restored (Confino, 2005: 357-8), while the Church administration could not function until 1927.<sup>49</sup> In

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> However, this only made things worse. In 1921 a famine in the Volga region brought another attack on the Church property. By using the famine, the state legitimized the confiscation of Church property to be used in famine-stricken areas. Resistance against the measures led to arrests and killing of many clergy, including the arrest of the Patriarch himself (Spinka, 1935: 112).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> In 1927 Metropolitan Sergius issued a declaration recognizing the Soviet regime and asking the clergy to express their loyalty to the regime (Spinka, 1935: 114).

the Soviet Union with the 1929 decree all kinds of activities of the religious associations and religious publications were banned and communist indoctrination of the people started. The religious liberty was reduced only to holding religious services (Ibid: 114-6) and throughout the communist rule persecution of religion is relaxed only for brief periods.<sup>50</sup>

In Eastern European countries the restrictions on religious institutions took different forms (from open hostility to strict control) but in all, there were serious restrictions in terms of practice of religion in public space. Communism disturbed the balance of *symphonia* and the state outweighed the religion and the Orthodox Churches, which have grown with their states, could not openly come against the communist state (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 7). The religion under the communist rule had to retreat to private sphere (Pacini, 2003: 165).

## III.2. The Orthodox World in the Post-Communist Era

With the fall of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe and Russia persecution on religions has come to an end. However, the Orthodox Churches in the post-communist era found themselves surrounded with new challenges. To what extent did the Orthodox Churches respond to these challenges in post-communist era and to what extent they failed? This section tries to answer this question in three steps. The first part reviews the geopolitics of Orthodoxy in the post-communist world, which brought further fragmentation and attempts at unification within the Orthodox world and resurfaced the jurisdiction issue on the agenda of the Orthodox Churches. The second part analyzes the encounter between the Orthodoxy and globalization, which has been delayed due to communism. The last part talks about the social challenges emerging within the Orthodox world after the fall of the communism and how the Orthodox Churches respond to them. Geopolitics, globalization and new spheres of activity for the Orthodox Churches as well as migration define the extent of the transnational agency of the Orthodox Churches within the post-communist era.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> The start of the World War II, the need to recruit people for the war and adamant belief of the Orthodox people led to relaxation of the ban on religion and particularly on the Orthodox Church (Bourdeaux, 1969: 419). Churches were reopened, the Patriarch was reinstated and priests in deportation camps were released. After Stalin's death for a short period of time the Church could continue its activities, which however did not last long and with Khrushchev era another era of persecution started for the Russian Orthodox Church (Clément, 2005: 27). Between 1961-4 around 10,000 Orthodox Churches in Soviet Union were closed down (Bourdeaux, 1969: 419).

**III.2.1. Geopolitics of Orthodoxy:** For the last 200 years, the Orthodox Churches have been influential actors in diplomatic and international relations in the Slavo-Byzantine world, had geopolitical ambitions within and outside their countries (Thual, 1993: 11). The Orthodoxy has played an important role in the formation of national sentiment in Eastern Europe and nation-building for the last 200 years (Ibid: 115-6). As Stan and Turcescu suggest "[t]he social reality of post-communism proved the authors sounding the death knell for traditional religion wrong" (2007: 3). The Orthodox Churches revered by the majority of the population of their nation-states emerged as important actors in the public space in the post-Cold War era and acted as reference points for people seeking stability and security in a period of political and economic crises and rapid change. The Orthodox Churches which as traditional institutions had the wisdom of centuries, survived the communist rule, had the potential to unite people and help the institutional reconsolidation of their states, had the means to deal with radical changes and have gained the trust of the Orthodox population (Bogomilova, 2004: 5-6). The political role of the Church in postcommunist societies also found support among some of the members of the political and cultural elite (Pacini, 2000: 21).

Knox argues that religion has been an important political force in the modern world and "as a vision of social order" cannot escape being political by its nature (2005: 26). With the fall of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe and Russia, the Orthodox Churches and nationalism succeeded in filling the political vacuum created with the collapse of communism and Marxist-Leninist ideology (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 4). Religion gained importance in post-communist societies due to its resources in terms of reformulating political and geopolitical identity at a time when other political entities and identities associated with communist era were losing ground (Borowik, 2006: 272). The close association between the church and the nation as well as the Orthodox Churches' success in using the nationalist discourse was the key behind their success. It was not a very difficult task given the fact that being Orthodox is closely associated with the national identity in majority of the Orthodox countries (Ibid: 270). Therefore, the end of bi-polar world has revealed the fact that the Orthodox Churches are part of the *realpolitik*.

However, being part of the *realpolitik* also meant more competition and divisions among the Orthodox Churches (Macar, 2003: 20). With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Russian Orthodox Church's authority in the newly independent ex-Soviet states started to be challenged. Even though it resumed its activities and indulged into a reconstruction

effort, the Russian Orthodox Church could not regain its pre-1917 status and power back in the post-communist era due to internal splits after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, unresolved property issues, lack of well-trained personnel and increasing competition from non-Orthodox churches and denominations (Borowik, 2006: 271). The Orthodox Churches under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate started to search for distancing themselves from Moscow's influence and they started to turn to the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

With regards to the Patriarchate in Istanbul, the current Patriarch Bartholomew was elected in 1991 at a relatively younger age, when the conditions were favorable for increasing connections of the Patriarchate beyond Turkey's borders. From 1992 onwards every 1<sup>st</sup> of September (first day of the year according to the Church calendar) the Patriarch started inviting all the Metropolitans that are under the Patriarchate's jurisdiction to Istanbul to underscore the ecumenical statute of the Patriarchate (Macar, 2003: 239-241). Therefore, the Patriarchate is eager to make the Patriarchate more active within the Orthodox world and an important actor within the global arena. While Patriarch Bartholomew states that he is not the second pope of the Christian world, he defines the Patriarchate in Istanbul as the "mother Church of the Orthodox Christian world and point of reference and coordination"<sup>51</sup>. Moreover, Patriarch Bartholomew denounces the theory of 3<sup>rd</sup> Rome of Moscow as "hubristic" and "blasphemous" arguing that these kind of claims coincide with caesaro-papistic and vaticanistic tendencies, which has no place in the Orthodox tradition.<sup>52</sup> Growing influence of the Patriarchate within the ex-Soviet sphere is creating tensions between the Patriarchates in Moscow and Istanbul.<sup>53</sup>

In the post-communist era, the first split in the Russian Orthodox Church took place in Ukraine. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church was under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate in Istanbul until 1686. Under the Soviet rule, it was tied to the Moscow Patriarchate. In 1989, the hierarchs of the Church have contacted the Patriarchate in Istanbul to ask for independence. The Russian Orthodox Church saw this move as an intervention in its

http://www.pontificalorientalinstitute.com/news/catholic-world/bartholomew-i-in-kiev.html

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> "Bartholomew I in Kiev", 21 July 2008.

http://kiev-orthodox.org/site/english/915/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> The tension between the two Patriarchates would not seem to die down easily in the future. The Metropolitan of Smolensk and Kaliningrad Kirill has recently became the Patriarch of Moscow and in the past he adopted a critical stance towards the Ecumenical Patriarchate. He reacted against the meeting of the Pope Benedict and the Patriarch Bartholomew in 2006 in Istanbul arguing that the Ecumenical Patriarchate does not represent all the Orthodox Churches. Bedia Ceylan Güzelce, "Fener Moskova'yı Sıkıştırıyor", *Newsweek Türkiye*, 21 December 2008, 45.

internal affairs and excommunicated all the Metropolitans, including the Metropolitan of Kiev. Even though the Patriarchate in Istanbul declared that this issue is an internal affair of the church and no other church has yet recognized the autocephalous status of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, there is a *de facto* independent church (Macar, 2003: 251; Binns, 2002: 187). Therefore, now in addition to the Greek-Catholic Church, there are two Orthodox Churches in Ukraine; one Russian and one Ukrainian (Binns, 2002: 27).

The division is exacerbated with the political tension between Ukraine and Russia. Recently tension arose once again between the Moscow and Istanbul Patriarchates due to the Ukrainian President's stance. Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko has invited Patriarch Bartholomew for the 1020<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of the Christianization of the Kievan Rus on July 28<sup>th</sup> 2008. While Russia tried to intervene arguing Russians are the ancestors of Kiev Kingdom, and therefore, the Russian Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew has accepted the invitation:<sup>54</sup>

Having evaluated the invitations of the Church, Nation and the Ukrainian people, and in honoring their feelings, the Mother Church – as the one who originally guided the Ukrainian people into baptism – decided to respond to the aforementioned invitations through the sending of a Patriarchal Delegation under the personal leadership of His All Holiness.<sup>55</sup>

During the ceremony, the President Yuşçenko told the Ukrainians, who gathered at the Saint Sophia Square in Kiev: "State and religion; protecting them should be more important than protecting your children".<sup>56</sup> The invitation of the Patriarch is part of the efforts to assert the independence of Kiev Patriarchate from the Moscow Patriarchate and is in line with the policy of distancing the country from the influence of Moscow. The tension was overcome before it led to a major crisis with the participation of the two Patriarchs in the ceremony.<sup>57</sup> With the death of the Patriarch of Moscow Alexy II the issue once again came on the agenda, since Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, who was

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> "Bartholomeos Kazandi", *Yenisafak (online edition)*, 26 June 2008. Downloaded 26 June 2008. <sup>55</sup> Press Release for the visit of His All Holiness to Kiev, Ukraine

http://www.ec-patr.org/docdisplay.php?lang=en&id=951&tla=en

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> Güzelce, 44; Sophia Kishovsky, "Russian Orthodox Church Elects Outspoken Patriarch", *New York Times Online*, 27.01.2009.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> "Patrikler Birlesti", Yenisafak (online edition), 28 July 2008.

elected as the new Patriarch of Moscow, is known for his tough stance towards Ukraine's search for the separation.<sup>58</sup>

The second post-communist division was in Estonia. Until the end of the World War II, the Orthodox Churches in the Baltic States were under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. With the invasion of the Red Army, these churches were tied to the Patriarchate in Moscow. The Estonian Church, which had an autonomous status under the Ecumenical Patriarchate, lost this status under Stalin. Following the independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, the Estonians contacted the Ecumenical Patriarchate and asked for going back to the pre-Soviet Union model. When the Ecumenical Patriarchate accepted this request, the Patriarch of Moscow protested and decided to freeze the relations. The Russian population in Estonia was also against this move. Finally an agreement was reached in 1996, which led to the creation of two Orthodox Churches in Estonia; one under the jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church revered by the Russians in Estonia and one (autonomous) under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (Macar, 2003: 251-252; Pacini, 2000: 40; Binns, 2002: 187). However, a recent incident showed that the problem is far from over. The Moscow Patriarchate has announced its withdrawal from the pan-Orthodox conference on the island of Rhodes, which was a preparatory conference for the synod that took place in October 2008 in Istanbul due to the participation of the Apostolic Estonian Church.<sup>59</sup>

The question of which Church has the authority to recognize the autonomous or autocephalous status of an Orthodox Church is not a settled issue. Since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Russian Orthodox Church deems itself to be the "Mother Church" (Pacini, 2000: 39).<sup>60</sup> The jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church extends to all the territories, which were part of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. Georgia is an exception to this, since it has its own Patriarchate (Ibid: 23). The Ecumenical Patriarchate also claims to be the "Mother Church". Since the Ecumenical Patriarchate as compared to the other Orthodox Churches is less associated with the ethno-national identity, the other churches confer to it the role of keeping the Orthodox world together with a universalistic

<sup>58</sup> Güzelce, 45.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> "Moscow Patriarchate Abandons Work for Preparation of Pan-Orthodox Synod"

http://www.asianews.it/index.php?l=en&art=12591, 24 June 2008

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> The order of precedence among patriarchates after the Patriarchate of Istanbul was determined as Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem in the 5<sup>th</sup> century. The Moscow Patriarchate, which is the biggest today, is at the 5<sup>th</sup> place and the rest of the churches are ranked in accordance with the date of their establishment (Meyendorff, 1996: 130). Despite the enormous reduction of territories and population under its jurisdiction with the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the Ecumenical Patriarchate still holds its traditional primacy among the Orthodox Churches (Ibid: 132).

and pan-Orthodox stance (Ibid: 41). It claims to have four powers with regards to all the other Orthodox Churches; to be a final court of appeal for any case, to call for a pan-Orthodox council, to have jurisdiction over the Orthodox population living in diaspora and giving its consent on the creation of an autocephalous church (Binns, 2002: 14).

There are different opinions regarding the future of the Patriarchate in Istanbul. While some Greeks (in Greece and the US) suggest that the Orthodox community in Turkey is a very small one (1,500)<sup>61</sup> and the fact that Turkish state sees the Patriarchate as a Turkish institution and does not recognize the ecumenical status of the Patriarchate, it cannot work freely. Therefore, while some Greeks argue that the Patriarchate should be moved out of Turkey,<sup>62</sup> some others suggest keeping the Patriarchate in and pressurizing Turkey to allow more room for the agency of the Patriarchate through diplomatic means and the EU organs (Macar, 2003: 253-4). Through the efforts of the Greek lobby in the US and Greece<sup>63</sup> in the EU, Western leaders showed more interest regarding the status and rights of the Patriarchate in Istanbul. The President of the EU Commission Jacques Delors has invited the Patriarchate to open a bureau in Brussels to represent the Orthodox world and the Patriarchate started working on the issue in 1994, while Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs intervened arguing that the Patriarchate does not have a legal personality and cannot open a bureau. However, after some time the Patriarchate opened the bureau (Ibid: 243-4).

Recently there were new developments regarding the status of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. After a meeting with the Greek Prime Minister, who visited Turkey, Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan has stated that the government is working on a solution to reopen the Greek Orthodox seminary in Turkey and facilitate the functioning of the Patriarchate. He also said that the ecumenical status of the Patriarchate is an "internal issue of the Orthodox Christian world". Two days after this statement, Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ali Babacan, has made statements in the same line. Even though these statements have not led to a policy change, they diverge from Turkish official stance.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> The population exchange between Greece and Turkey based on the religious belonging (Orthodox and Muslim) has led to a considerable fall in the size of the Orthodox community in Turkey. Throughout the years the fall in number has continued and currently there is a very small Orthodox community living mainly in Istanbul and two Aegean islands.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>62</sup> Since the Patriarchal Academy of Halki is closed down by the Turkish state in 1971 and the law requires the Patriarch to be a Turkish citizen, the Ecumenical Patriarchate is in difficulty of bringing up candidates for the post of the Patriarch (Binns, 2002: 13).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> Greek government keeps on asking the Turkish state to take measures to improve the conditions of the Patriarchate. The issue becomes more and more linked with the Turkey's candidacy to the EU. "Patriarch Turkey's best representative in EU", *Turkish Daily News (online edition)*, January 28, 2008. Downloaded 26 July 2008.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> Emine Kart, "Government Warm to Patriarch's 'Ecumenical' Title", *Today's Zaman* (online edition) 28 January 2008.

Ukraine and Estonia were not the only challenges for the Moscow Patriarchate. Another challenge came from Moldova regarding the jurisdiction of Orthodox Churches. The ROC even after more than hundred years after its independence is an important element of geopolitics of Romania and the conflict over the Moldovan Orthodox Church between the Patriarchates of Moscow and Bucharest should be seen within the light of religious as well as geopolitical interests of the two Orthodox Churches (Thual, 1993: 66). The Metropolitanate of Moldova was established in the 15<sup>th</sup> century and came under the Moscow Patriarchate due to Russian expansion and became a case of contention between the Romanian and Russian Orthodox Churches.<sup>65</sup> After the Republic of Moldova declared its independence in 1991 the church issue came to the fore again. In 1992 Bishop Petru, who was driven out of his post by pro-Russian faithful unhappy with his pro-Romanian stance, announced the establishment of autonomous Bessarabian Metropolitanate and asked Patriarch Teoctist of the ROC to recognize it. Without contacting the Moscow Patriarchate, Patriarch Teoctist recognized the Metropolitanate as an eparchy of the ROC (Turcescu and Stan, 2003: 455). Unclear status of the Metropolitanate urged the Romanian Patriarchate to contact and ask for a dialogue with the Moscow Patriarchate in 1995. However no compromise solution was reached (Ibid: 457-59).

In 1998 the Bessarabian Metropolitanate made a complaint to the European Court of Human Rights against the Moldovan government, since it refused to recognize the Metropolitanate. The court was of the opinion that the Moldovan government's stance is against freedom of religion and ordered the government to recognize the Metropolitanate within three months. On April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2002, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has issued a resolution to state that the authorities in Republic of Moldova are obliged to recognize the Metropolitanate of Bessarabia until July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2002 if it does not

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>65</sup> Since Russian expansion meant expansion of the Russian Orthodox Patriarchate, when Russians gained control over Bessarabia after 1812 Russo-Ottoman War, Moscow Patriarchate established the Metropolitan of Chisinau and Hotin. Following the death of the Metropolitan Gavriil Banulescu-Bodoni, the Metropolitanate was downgraded to archbishopric and Russia pursued the policy of Russification of the new territory through the Orthodox Church (Ibid: 445). After the unification of Moldova and Wallachia under Cuza, in 1881 the Bessarabian counties fell under the rule of Russia and the Russian Orthodox Church once again. Until 1913 Bessarabian priests were not allowed to celebrate liturgy in Romanian. In 1918, Bessarabian National Assembly voted for independence from Russia and unification with Romania. As Bessarabia became part of Romania, the Bessarabian churches were taken under the jurisdiction of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate in 1919 (Ibid: 446-7) and in 1928 the Bessarabian Church gained its Metropolitanate status back (Ibid: 448). In 1939 Bessarabia was ceded back to the Soviet Union and the Church came under the Moscow Patriarchate's jurisdiction once again. The Metropolitanate again was downgraded to a bishopric and a Russian bishop was appointed. Even though for the period between 1941-4 Bessarabia came under Romanian rule, with the end of the war it became part of Soviet Union once again. The Bessarabian Metropolitanate was dismantled and many of the members of the clergy and adherents had to run away to Romania (Ibid: 449). The Church property was given to the Russian Orthodox Church, while many churches were demolished.

want to risk being sanctioned (BOR, 2005, CXXIII, 1-3: 159). Finally, the government passed the legislation for the registration of religious organizations and registration of those who have already applied (Turcescu and Stan, 2003: 459-62). As a result in the Republic of Moldova, which is predominantly Orthodox, there are two Orthodox Churches; one under the jurisdiction of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate, other under the Moscow Patriarchate.

As a "source of national ideology and collective legitimization", the Orthodoxy is an important element of geopolitics in the region (Thual, 1993: 122), which turns claim to autocephaly, which is primarily a religious issue into a political issue as well (Borowik, 2006: 274). Recurring jurisdiction issues among the Churches increases the need for more dialogue within the Orthodox world. Many Patriarchates that remained isolated from each other due to political developments need to emphasize contact and pan-Orthodox cooperation (Ware, 1997: 186-7). However, this is not an easy task given the "loose federation" of Orthodox Churches (Binns, 2002: 10) and "the shape of world Orthodoxy [that] is constantly shifting as the external organization of the Churches develops to accommodate new political and social realities" (Ibid).

**III.2.2. The Orthodox Tradition in a Globalizing World:** While it is true that in the post-communist era the Orthodox Churches are more powerful and active in the public sphere and politics, in terms of their encounters with globalization we have a different picture. Different religious traditions have different ways of dealing with global factors and forces. We can identify two main factors that can define the possible responses of the Orthodox world to the forces of globalization: "the legacy of communism" and the "institutional culture" of the Orthodoxy (Agadjanian and Roudometof. 2005: 9).

Regarding the legacy of communism, Agadjanian and Roudometof argue that the Orthodox world adopted a conservative stance towards globalization:

[...] Eastern Orthodoxy came out of the communist ghetto with a circumscribed ability to respond to rapid restructuring, with no elaborate forms of social and political involvement, with a narrow intellectual outlook and ability to grasp the new geopolitical realities-including the "condition of globality" (Ibid: 12).

Regarding the institutional culture, there is no central papal authority in the Orthodoxy and the state-church relations is based on the principle of *symphonia* between religious and secular institutions, which gives the Orthodox Churches important moral

control over the state (Ibid: 10). Throughout time, the Orthodox world became more fragmented as new nation-states and new autocephalous churches and patriarchates emerged as the "national churches" and belonging to them came to mean belonging to the nation. This fragmentation and transformation period led to the formation of two main characteristics of the Orthodox Churches; emphasis on unchanging tradition and interdependent relationship with the national identities.

The challenges posed by globalization to the tradition, national identity and nationstate boundaries have important implications for the Orthodox Churches. While notions such as "local" and "national" go through important redefinitions in the post-Communist and global era and the Orthodoxy spreads to distant lands away from its traditional heartland, it faces the need to go through readjustments. Tradition, which holds the Church, ethnicity and nationality together in a single collective Orthodox identity (Ibid: 9), has been under constant reconstruction by the Orthodox Churches for centuries. The Orthodox Churches in the post-communist era are faced with the task of renewing and reviving the faith and the Orthodox tradition in their societies that have endured the communist repression and currently going through rapid change. This requires the Orthodox world to be proactive to maintain and reproduce its "unbroken tradition" (Ramet, 2005: vii) in a globalizing world in which change is the order of the day.

The collapse of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe led to transition to a new political system and creation of a new institutional structure, which worked with a new value system different from that of the communist world. The new values of the new system are individualism, self-reliance, success, meritocracy, pluralism and tolerance (Sztompka, 2005: 541). Weak welfare state regulations, uncontrolled consumerism within the post-communist societies, processes of secularization and globalization threatens the tradition by weakening people's commitment to it and require the Orthodox Churches to develop a response to rapid transformation (Binns, 2002: 235; Sztompka, 2005: 541). Rather than individualistic values, the Orthodox Churches have put more emphasis on tradition and communitarian values and turned out to be more socially conservative (Makrides, 2005: 183-4). Moreover, even though the Orthodox tradition is part of the European culture and heritage, Orthodox world wants to preserve the Orthodox tradition and does not want its total absorption by what it calls as "the Western civilization". This creates the skepticism on the part of the Orthodox Churches and communities towards liberal values and modernity (Pacini, 2000: 21). Many Orthodox philosophers, particularly

the Russian ones, tend to separate the Orthodox zone from the Western civilization, attributing the Orthodoxy a higher spirituality (Bogomilova, 2004: 3-4). Patriarch Daniel of the ROC argues that the communist experience has left deep traces on the ROC and made the Church suspicious of any ideology that is not inspired by the Gospel. Therefore, he argues, mentioning the advantages of globalization would not convince the Church to change its mind. The Church itself needs to discover what role spirituality and morality would have within the context of globalization and develop a response (Metropolitan Daniel Ciobotea, 2003: 328).

The skepticism of the Orthodox world towards the Western values and globalization leads to its categorization within the anti-modern and anti-global camp. Ramet defines the Romanian and Russian Orthodox Churches as conservative forces working against secularization, Westernization and globalization (2005: xi). In a similar tone, Didier, Balme and Wright present the ROC as the main obstacle in the way of Romanian modernization (2002 cited in Carp, 2007: 2), while Barbu argues that modernity is not part or product of the Orthodoxy's historical tradition, which leads to tendencies against modernity and globalization.<sup>66</sup> Huntington, instead, places the Orthodoxy in the non-Western category and defines the Orthodoxy as a distinct civilization under the leadership of Russia. (1996: 162).<sup>67</sup> He states the difference of the "West" from the "rest" as: "In Islam, God is Caesar; in China and Japan, Caesar is God; in Orthodoxy, God is Caesar's junior partner" (Ibid: 70).

However, despite its critical stance towards the West and modernity, the Orthodoxy is part and parcel of it. The identification of modernity with Westernization and Western modernity as the only "authentic" form of modernity has been challenged by multiple modernities approach. The approach acknowledges that the Western modernity has the precedence as the main reference point for all the modernities (Eisenstadt, 2005a: 2-3) with distinct cultural roots and institutional structure (2005b: 31).<sup>68</sup> The characteristics of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> Daniel Barbu. "Religion and modernity in the Romanian public space"

http://www.ku.dk/satsning/religion/sekularism\_and\_beyond/pdf/Paper\_Cordoneanu\_and\_Velica.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> Huntington defines religion as the most important element that defines civilizations (1996: 42), and therefore, uses it as the main criteria in defining the boundaries and names of civilizational categories he creates. He argues that with the end of the Cold War the dividing line between two blocs has moved a few miles to separate the West from the Orthodox Christian and Islamic civilization (Ibid: 28). It starts from the border between Finland and Russia goes down through the border between the Baltic states and Russia passes through western Belarus and Ukraine separating Greek-Catholics from the Orthodox east and through Romania separating Transylvania, where Hungarian Catholics live, from the rest of Romania, moves further to include Croatia and Slovenia leaving Bosnia, Serbia, and rest of the Balkans on the eastern side of the border (Ibid: 158-9). Therefore, he separates the Catholic and Protestant West from the Orthodox East (Ibid: 160).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> Two basic premises of modernity is the conception of autonomous human agency, which was emancipated from and challenged the order of things, since human agency and potential opened up the world for variety of possibilities; and the reflexivity, which would lead to questioning, exploration and setting up of human mastery over nature (Eisenstadt, 2005a:

modernity that stems from protest, institution building, contestation to define centre and periphery have been part and parcel of political movements and traditions of different societies in the world (Ibid: 14-15). Therefore, multiple modernities are in constant evolution and there are different ways of interpreting and experiencing modernity in different parts of the world (Ibid: 24). As Eisenstadt argues, even the movements in the non-Western world that were inspired by anti-Western and anti-modern convictions and ideas or ambivalence towards modernity, were all modern (2005a: 2; 15). Many contemporary religious movements, including the fundamentalist and communal ones, reject the identification of the West with modernity and adopt globalization and modernity on their own terms and adapt it to their goals and needs, while cherishing their own traditions (Ibid: 21-22). Transnational processes play an important role in this evolution by providing the means for meeting of different modernities through flows of people, capital and information and creation of multicultural societies as well as manifesting convergences and divergences among different modernities (Tambiah, 2005: 180; 190).

The modernization theory that takes the West as its reference point underestimates the modernization process of the Southern and Eastern Europe. In addition to the religious schism and political developments that led East and West of Europe to evolve in different ways, the recent experience of the Eastern Europe with communism can explain this neglect to a certain extent. Collapse of communism is seen by many as the victory of modernity over communism, which they consider to be anti-modern (Burawoy and Verdery, 1999: 1). Within this context, post-socialist theorizing re-presents socialism as a negation, while liberal capitalism is turned into an ideal type (Burawoy, 1999: 309). Therefore, the assumption that the communist experience of the Orthodox world has kept it away from modernization gains popularity. While communism is identified as pre- or anti-modern, Arnason defines it as a "distinctive" but a "self-destrucive" version of modernity and part and consequence of global modernizing process (2005: 61).<sup>69</sup> The Soviet model combined political, economic and ideological powers and extended control over all aspects of life, which turned it into a totalitarian project (Ibid: 72), and even though it was a response to

<sup>3-5).</sup> Modernity privileged human reason over emotion and aestheticism (Eisenstadt, 2005b: 40), while reflexivity provided the vision for the human agency to act upon and materialize the possibilities (Ibid: 33).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> Communist regimes adopted and implemented main principles of modernization theory such as rapid industrialization, establishment of modern-state apparatus and control of the state authority over the society and modernization of education (Arnason, 2005: 66-68). The Bolshevik project blending the Marxist ideals with Russian traditions developed a response and alternative to Western capitalism, democracy and science with command economy, party-state and totalizing ideology and made the claim to "universal, exclusive, and definitive truth" (Ibid: 87). The communist version of modernity in developing the alternative borrowed main elements of organization from the Western modernity.

the crisis of the Western modernity, it ended up reproducing the crises leading to its own self-destruction (Ibid: 76). Despite its critical stance, it was part of the European modernity just like the Eastern Orthodox tradition.

Another important issue that the Orthodox world has to respond in the global era is religious pluralism. Religious pluralism and the need to coexist and compete with different religious groups poses a challenge to all religions, since they have to uphold the religious dogma, tradition and worldview, while trying to reach out to people and become more socially engaged and cope with change in order not to lose their adherents (Hefner, 1998: 98-9). Berger argues that religious pluralism has become a global phenomenon, which has repercussions at institutional and individual level of consciousness (2005: 439). Religious pluralism brings competition among religious institutions and guarantees for freedom of religion and paves the way for subjective religiosities. This is worrisome for the Orthodox Churches that has been the Church of the majority in their countries. Being an inseparable part of the national identity has strengthened the anti-individualist doctrine of the Orthodox Church, while making its relationship with pluralism a problematic one (Enev, 2001: 160). New religious movements, which are trying to find a base in post-communist societies and which are considered "foreign" are not welcome by the traditional churches as well as national-political forces (Merdjanova, 2000: 253). Many missionaries from the US and some from Western Europe came to the region with the belief that the exposure of the region to the communist-atheist propaganda requires its re-evangelization (Ramet, 1998: 200). Moreover, they believe that the Orthodox Churches fail to make the Gospel relevant today. Therefore, they consider Eastern Europe as "terra missionis" that needs to be Christianized (Metropolitan Daniel, 2001: 163).<sup>70</sup> In the post-communist lands unexpected fall of the regimes and long and complicated transition period to liberal economy and democracy led to for socio-economic crises, psychological stress and search for new answers, which prepared the ground for conversion to new different religious denominations. The Eastern Orthodox Churches are concerned about proselytism and activities of the American and Japanese sects that have material resources (Clément, 2005: 28-9). In 1993 Russian Orthodox Church tried to convince the government to pass a law to restrict the activities of foreign Christian associations in the Russian land (Ramet, 1998:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> Even though their efforts and activities intensified after the end of the Cold War, neo-Protestant sects and non-Christian religions started to appear in Soviet territory in the 70s, which had more "modern" and hostile ways of religious organization with regards to the traditional Russian Orthodox Church (Ramet, 1987: 8) speaking to one's conscience or asking obedience to a charismatic leader rather than to the Church's institutional authority (Ibid: 9).

273). With its "Fundamentals of the Social Concept" the Russian Orthodox Church calls on the state to work together against the "pseudo-religious structures presenting a threat to the individual and society" (Borowik, 2006: 271).<sup>71</sup>

Re-emergence of the Greek-Catholic Churches in Eastern Europe and Russia in the post-communist era is another cause of concern. Missionary activities of the Catholic and Protestant churches in Russia is seen by the Moscow Patriarchate as the biggest impediment to ecumenical dialogue (Ibid: 271) as well as the expansion of the Greek-Catholic Church, which made the Patriarchate reluctant to accept the Pope's visit just "for the sake of visiting", while the main problems are not resolved (Ibid: 272). The issue of Greek-Orthodox churches caused problems also between the Vatican and the Ecumenical Patriarchate asked the Vatican not to support the Greek-Orthodox Churches and the problem led to the freezing of relations between the Vatican and the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 1990. However, the two churches have overcome the problem with the meeting of the Pope and the Patriarch in Vatican in 1995 (Macar, 2003: 245).

Apart from the issue of the Greek-Catholic Churches, the relations and ecumenical dialogue between the Vatican and the Orthodox Churches is at an unprecedented level since the schism. Improvement of relations between the Catholic and the Orthodox Churches through the ecumenical dialogue in the 20<sup>th</sup> century started in 1967, when the Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Atenagora of Istanbul have reciprocally withdrawn the excommunication of 1054 (Pacini, 2000: 18). The Pope's visit to the Orthodox countries starting with Romania in 1999 is another indication of improving relations. During the Pope's visit to Istanbul in November 2006, Pope Benedict XVI and Patriarch Bartholomew expressed their determination and "commitment to work towards the restoration of Full Communion between the two Churches" with a joint declaration.<sup>72</sup> With the Protestant world, the Orthodox world developed collaboration and the experience of working together in international organizations. Moreover, through the extension of the Orthodox diaspora to Western Europe, the US and Australia, the Orthodox Churches collaborate and establish transnational ties with different Christian churches. Furthermore, the fact that the Orthodox Churches

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> Non traditional religions chose Poland and Russia and, to a lesser extent, Romania as their main bases to act (Ramet, 1987: 309). American evangelicals shipped 50,000,000 bibles to Ukraine and Russia in 1993 (Ibid: 266) and 300,000 copies to Bulgaria in 1990 (Ibid: 267).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> "Summary of Joint Declaration by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and Pope Benedict XVI", November 30, 2006 <u>http://papalvisit.ecupatriarchate.org/</u>

allows room for diversity arguing they all belong to the "family of Christ" (Danielou, 1967 cited in Enev, 2001: 134). Therefore, the cure for tendencies against religious pluralism can be found through being in dialogue with different religious traditions.

Even though the Orthodox world emphasizes preserving the Orthodox tradition in a global era, this does not mean that it has not entered into a dialogue with globalization (Makrides, 2005: 201-2). With its "Fundamentals of the Social Concept", the Russian Orthodox Church indulges in developing a response to the phenomena of globalization. The Church states that it adopts a critical and prudent position regarding the process of political "internalization" and reminds to those in charge their responsibilities to well-inform the public opinion and take people's support for their policies. While accepting the fact that globalization is "inevitable" and "natural" and emphasizing its positive aspects such as increasing communication among the people, diffusion of information, more efficiency and productivity, the Russian Orthodox Church warns against internal contradictions of the process and asks for institutionalization of global control over transnational companies and finances. It argues that against the totalistic tendencies to form a uniform culture the churches, states, civil society and international organizations should work together to ensure cultural exchange. The world order and international relations should be based on justice and equality and help the spiritual growth of the people (*II Regno*, 2001: 39-40).

Patriarch Bartolomew I of the Patriarchate in Istanbul at an inter-Orthodox meeting in Patnos in 2001 stated that the debate on globalization and the Orthodoxy is very important as the world witnesses profound economic, political and social change, which requires a new perspective and new activism (BOR, 2002, CXX, 1-6: 162). At the latest Inter-Orthodox Meeting in Rhodes, Greece on June 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>, 2008 the heads of the Orthodox churches came together to address issues such as the irrational exploitation of the environment, the respect for life, the dangers of globalization, the relativization of faith, proselytism and marriage. Even though the Orthodox world has reservations against globalization and urging for precaution, it is not condemning it and is trying to develop a proper response to benefit from the advantages and to lessen the negative influences that comes through it.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> "The ROC Participates at the Inter-Orthodox Meeting in Rhodes"

http://www.basilica.ro/en/news/the\_romanian\_orthodox\_church\_participates\_at\_the\_inter\_orthodox\_meeting\_in\_rhodes.h tml

The Orthodoxy has the means to come up with its own response to globalization as it "promotes direct, mystical, deeply emotional relations of each individual with God and allows substantial independence of the different elements of the church" (Enev, 2001: 270). This can both work as a weakness and strength. It is a weakness because it makes the Church dependent on the political system. If the state is a repressive one, the Church withdraws from the political sphere, while in a democratic system the Orthodox Church has the potential to provide a wider space for new ideas, reinterpretations and innovation for its believers. In the post-communist era, the Orthodox Churches have more room to put their potential into use to come up with the means to adapt to change and confront new problems.

**III.2.3.** A New Role for Orthodox Church in the Social Sphere?: With the end of the Cold War the Orthodox Churches in Eastern European countries and former Soviet Union states have faced the challenge of reconsolidating themselves within societies caught up in rapid transformation due to the transition to liberal democracy and market economy, opening up to European institutions and European and global influences. Economic and political crisis following the fall of the communist regimes led to the impoverishment and immigration of different segments of the population, while rampant consumerist culture has widened the gap between the rich and the poor. The Orthodox Churches faced the task of responding to different social problems with limited resources and personnel. Even though there were important initiatives, the Churches are expected to put more emphasis on the social sphere. This is an important challenge given the fact that the Orthodox Churches have been less active in the social field as compared to the Catholic and Protestant Churches.

The Catholic Church was very much influenced by the Renaissance and the notion of individualism. Then it had faced the challenge of Reformation, the Enlightenment era and capitalism. Therefore, it always had to strike a balance between preserving the faith and tradition and accommodating change. The Catholic Church confronting the challenge of different ideologies such as nationalism, socialism and liberalism and witnessing the economic and social change through capitalism came up with a new social doctrine in 19<sup>th</sup> century, namely *Rerum Novarum* in 1891.<sup>74</sup> Another encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno* 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> The Pope Leo XIII addresses major social problems of his age and criticizes both socialism and liberalism for their extremist proposals for solutions. He sees solutions proposed by socialism as against justice and supports the right to private property. The document discusses the worker rights and how the relationship between the employer and the worker should be from a Catholic perspective. In tackling poverty, he sees an important role for the Church. He argues

1931,<sup>75</sup> was issued, which was addressing Christians at the time of political and social turmoil after the devastating World War I. After this encyclical, many more encyclicals followed, which however show the shift of the Church's attention from workers' rights and social order to many other world's problems (Enev, 2001: 169). With the Vatican Council II as the first global council of the Catholic Church, the Church recognized "nationalization" of the Catholic Churches, and therefore, centralization at the national level, while becoming more globally oriented and engaged in secular and social spheres of activity (Casanova, 1994: 225-6).

Enev argues that the Orthodox Churches failed to develop "a modern social doctrine and an effective mechanism to elaborate on contemporary social issues (2001: 159). While Morini thinks that for the Orthodox tradition the fight against the evil in the hearts of the men comes prior to the fight against the problems in society (Morini, 2002: 10), Agourides objects this by arguing that it would be wrong to claim that the Orthodox Churches are not concerned about the social problems. Different from its counterparts in the West, it lacked the time, resources or independence to commit itself for making a contribution for the resolution of the social problems and due to the historical developments its involvement in the social sphere remained limited (1964: 219). Different from Western Europe, at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century the Orthodox societies were still agrarian societies and did not fully experience the industrial revolution; therefore, they did not go through the economic and social transformations that the West did. Being exposed to the transformative social processes of industrialization at a later age as compared to the Catholicism as well as close association with the national identity impeded the formulation of an Orthodox version of Rerum Novarum. While the Catholic Church considers itself distinct from and superior to secular authorities, the Orthodox Church and the state formed an organic whole and worked in collaboration with the state (Ibid: 156-7). The Orthodox world was fragmented and the

that the Church uses its resources through various organizations to improve the living conditions of the working man and supports state's intervention in due measure in order to ensure equality within the society. Therefore, he suggests that the Church is taking into consideration spiritual as well as temporal or earthly needs. *Rerum Novarum*, Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII on Capital and Labor: Rights and Duties of Capital and Labor.

http://www.vatican.va/holy\_father/leo\_xiii/encyclicals/documents/hf\_l-xiii\_enc\_15051891\_rerum-novarum\_en.html, July 8, 2008.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> Pope Pius XI suggests that private ownership should not serve only for the individual good but also for the social and common good; therefore, for the social justice. The state should work for the harmony between classes and to eliminate conflicts. The Christian moderation and universal charity are presented as the cure to all conflicts and problems of injustice in society and the Catholic Action is praised for its work in this field. *Quadragesimo Anno*. Encyclical of Pope Pius XI on Reconstruction of the Social Order

http://www.vatican.va/holy\_father/pius\_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf\_pxi\_enc\_19310515\_quadragesimo-anno\_en.html, July 8, 2008.

authority of the churches was very much linked to the state. Moreover, since the emphasis of the Orthodox tradition was on the spiritual life, the presence and agency of the church within the social sphere, voluntary associations and missionary work remained very limited (Grovski, 1973 cited in Enev, 2001: 154). The communist rule curbed the Orthodox Churches' social activism (except the Greek Orthodox Church).

Some Orthodox theologians and intellectuals critical of the Orthodox Churches' stance regarding the social sphere urged for more involvement of the Church in the social sphere such as the Theological School of Athens. However, social assistance role of the Church was seen as a sign of the secularization of the Orthodox Church by the hierarchs of the Churches and some intellectuals. These movements failed because those defending active involvement of the Orthodox Church in the social sphere were either connected with movements in the West or they were living in and writing from the West (Agourides, 1964: 211). Therefore, while the Eastern Orthodox theology remained more speculative, mystical and theo-centric, the Catholic theology became more practical, moral and anthropocentric (Enev, 2001: 125).

In human rights sphere, the Orthodox world could not develop a stance against human rights violations (Ibid: 182), while the Catholic Church was broadening its vision and trying to address human rights issues through encyclicals such as *Pacem in Terris*.<sup>76</sup> The Orthodox theology's conception of man does not recognize individuality; humans become inseparable units of the religious community as they seek merger with the whole (Ibid: 137). Therefore, the emergence of the concept of individualism and liberal philosophy placing the rational individual at the centre of its worldview were not welcomed by the Orthodox Church. Even though human rights are inherent part of the Orthodox tradition (Ibid: 183), it was the rise of the communist regime in Russia and in other parts of Europe that alarmed the Orthodox Churches, which led them to adopt 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Harakas, 1982 cited in Enev, 2001: 183).

http://www.vatican.va/holy\_father/john\_xxiii/encyclicals/documents/hf\_j-xxiii\_enc\_11041963\_pacem\_en.html

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> The encyclical *Pacem in Terris* basically talks about the rights and duties of man. It talks about the right to life, freedom of conscience, economic and political rights, the right to emigrate and immigrate, refugee rights. It is also a discussion of the current state of affairs, relations between states, main problems and suggestions for solutions. Basic concern is how to ensure the universal common good and a universal political authority with world-wide sphere of activity that does not impose its will but work through common consent is the suggestion. This encyclical and following ones formed the human rights doctrine of the Church and paved the way for the Church's support for democratic revolutions in different parts of the world, especially in Poland and Czechoslovakia (Enev, 2001: 172). Pacem in Terris Encyclical of Pope John XXIII on Establishing Universal Peace in Truth, Justice, Charity, And Liberty, April 11, 1963

Following the fall of the communist regimes, the Patriarchate in Istanbul has become more interested in the environmental issues, which it considers as a theological issue, and started to organize international meetings to raise consciousness (Macar, 22003: 244). The Russian Orthodox Church is also emphasizing the importance of the role of the Church in the social sphere. The Russian Orthodox Church has formulated the "Fundamentals of the Social Concept" in order to reassert the principles of the relationship between the state and the Church and to address certain social issues (*Il Regno*, 2001: 1). The document calls the Church to participate in the organization of the human life and work in collaboration with the secular forces and entities (Ibid: 14) arguing that working together entails "reciprocal collaboration", "reciprocal support" and "reciprocal responsibility" (Ibid: 11). The state gets spiritual support from the Church, to work for the well-being of its citizens. The state and the Church are like the body and the soul (Ibid). For the resolution of the social problems encountered in this age the Church evokes the Christian values and seeks recognition of the role of the religious bodies in order for them to make their contribution at social sphere (Ibid: 39-40).

The post-communist era provides serious challenges as well as opportunities for the churches in the social sphere. As Burawoy and Verdery argues that the "postsocialist moment means constant change", parameters of action, laws, norms and interests keep shifting in a short span of time obliging the actors to work with short-time strategies (1999: 2) and live with uncertainty (Ibid: 7). Metropolitan (currently Patriarch) Daniel of the ROC states that there are three main challenges facing the Orthodox Churches in Eastern Europe; the tension between the fall of communism and pluralist democratic systems, the tension between ecumenism and proselytism and the tension between secularism and spirituality (2001: 160). The competition the Orthodox Churches face from the Catholic as well as Protestant Churches is an important motivating factor for the Orthodox Churches. The Catholic Church has charity organizations that employ thousands of professionals to provide services. With the fall of the communist regimes, the Roman Catholic and Greek-Catholic churches in the West strengthened transnational ties and activities through the transfer of money, know-how and staff (Davie, 2001: 461). Among other things the ability of the Protestant churches, particularly of the Pentecostals, in responding to local social problems through local run institutions and members played an important role in the spread of the Pentecostalism to different parts of the world (Robbins, 2004: 131).

According to Metropolitan Daniel the new era requires the Orthodox Church to take more responsibility in training priests for religious education, social work and medical assistance, organizing facilities and canteens for the poor and conference centers for the layman and youth activity (2001: 174). The Orthodox theology is also supposed to address the issues to guide the churches working in different cultural and socio-political contexts (Ibid: 182); therefore, it should go through reorientation in order to formulate a vision for the future (Ibid: 185; Binns, 2002: 235). Only by getting closely involved, developing solutions for social problems of the contemporary world and using its theological as well as material resources for innovation, the Orthodox Church can provide guidance for people and be relevant.

In the post-communist era the Orthodox Churhes and populations are facing a rapidly changing world that is simultaneously leading towards fragmentation and unification. While the unresolved jurisdiction issues among the churches, communist legacy, wary attitude towards religious pluralism and the Western values and lack of experience within the social realm are the challenges, flexible institutional organization that can coordinate diversity, rich Orthodox tradition, growing power of Orthodox Churches within and out of their heartland, self-criticism and search for answers are the means for nourishing the transnational agency of the Orthodox Churches. The next section discusses the agency of the Orthodox Churches within the transnational migration context, which develops in parallel to the trends we have discussed in this section.

## **III.3.** The Orthodox Tradition within the Transnational Migration Context

Due to the historical developments "one state-one nation-one Church" came to characterize the Orthodox Christianity. Different from the Catholic Church, it is not possible to talk about one Orthodox Church. Therefore, transnationalism of the Orthodox Churches is different from the Catholic Church, since the Eastern Orthodox world is composed of independent national and regional churches (della Cava, 2001: 537). However, the emergence of national divisions within the Orthodoxy did not hinder its transnational character. The national Orthodox Churches never ceased to be part of the transnational Orthodox Church (Beyer, 2006: 131). The emergence of the Orthodox Church of America, which is a transnational church itself, is demonstrative of this fact and organizational flexibility of the Orthodoxy allowing for "self-described unity and independent diversity"

(Ibid: 127). This transnationalism was extended and, to a certain extent, transformed due to migration waves, as the Orthodoxy has been carried away from its heartland. With the spread of the Orthodoxy all around the world, it is not possible to consider it only as an Eastern religion any more (Ware, 1997: 172). The Orthodoxy spread around the world and the Orthodox diaspora went through changes throughout time. While in the past the diaspora was predominantly formed by Russians and Greeks, through different migratory waves it has become multi-ethnic (Ibid: 172). In addition to the Orthodox population that have settled in the US and in France, large scale migration from the Orthodox societies after the fall of communism is making the Orthodoxy an important element of religious landscapes of UK, Germany, Belgium, Italy, Spain and Australia.

The first main driving force that spread the Orthodoxy out of its traditional heartland was the missionary activity of the Russian Orthodox Church. The missionary activity of the Orthodox Churches that fell under the Islamic rule was very limited. Particularly between the 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, it was only the Russian Orthodox Church that went on with the missionary work. It carried the Orthodoxy to the east of Russia and the North of Asia and at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century to Alaska (Kesich, 1961: 185).<sup>77</sup> The Russian explorers Bering and Chirikov have discovered Alaska in 1741 and conducted the first Orthodox liturgy in Alaska on the board of the ship St. Peter on the Feast of the Prophet Elijah (Ware, 1997: 173). The Orthodoxy started spreading in China through Cossacks that were hired to protect the Chinese Emperor in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>78</sup> The Orthodoxy started spreading in Korea in the 19<sup>th</sup> century through the Russian missionaries. However, later on the churches came under the jurisdiction of the Greek Archdiocese in the US (Meyendorff, 1996: 166). At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Russians established the Japanese Orthodox Church (Clément, 2005: 18) through the Russian missionary Father Nicholas Kasatkin (Meyendorff, 1996: 166). The Orthodoxy also emerged and grew as an indigenous movement within Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. Since it was not associated with colonialism, the Orthodoxy spread rapidly and in 1946 the Greek-Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria recognized these African churches and increased the missionary work in Africa (Pacini, 2000: 28-9; Ware 1997: 189; Binns, 2002: 14: Meyendorff, 1996:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> Before Russian monks arrived at the Kodiak Islands of Alaska in 1794, there were already traces of the Orthodoxy, which was brought through fur traders who settled in Alaska (Binns, 2002: 23-4).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> Following the Russian Revolution with the arrival of the Russian exiles from Siberia the Orthodox population grew in size. Under Mao Tse-tung all the churches including the Orthodox Church had to send its foreign clergy out; therefore, a Chinese priest was consecrated as a bishop (Meyendorff, 1996:166).

171). Starting from the 80s, the Ecumenical Patriarchate intensified its missionary work in Indonesia, the Philippines, Hong Kong and South Bengal (Ware, 1997: 189). It is now possible to see the Orthodox Churches in Asia and Africa due to the missionary work.

The second driving force was the immigration, which led to the creation of the Orthodox diaspora. The term diasopora within the Orthodox world is used to refer to "the dispersion in time and space of the Orthodox communities, which settle in regions different from where their Mother Churches are located, keeping with them the ultimate canonical dependence relation or spiritual ties, but progressively searching to organize themselves in an autonomous way" (Bobrinskoy, 2003: 303). Therefore, Western Europe, the US and Australia are seen as lands of diaspora (Pacini, 2000: 25).

The establishment of the Orthodox parishes in the US goes back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Greeks started to immigrate to the US<sup>79</sup> and the first Greek Orthodox Church in the US was established in New Orleans in 1864. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Romanian, Slavic, Greek and Arabic Orthodox communities started settling in the East coast of the US, which later on moved westwards (Ware, 1997: 181). Even though immigration and settlements started earlier, it was only in the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Orthodox diaspora reached a considerable size and influence. Within the American context, the Orthodoxy became a visible element of the American religious landscape only after the World War II (Krindatch). Due to different waves of immigration from the Soviet Block and the Middle East the Orthodoxy in the US has a multi-ethnic nature. There are more than 8,000,000 Orthodox living in American continent, 6,650,000 in the US and Canada, 2,000,000 in Latin American (Pacini, 2000: 26-7). The largest group in the US is the Greek Archdiocese with 475 parishes. The Orthodox Church in the US (OCA) is the second in size and the Antiochian Archdiocese is the third (Ware, 1997: 182). In Canada, the Ukrainians form the majority, which in 1991 came under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul (Ibid: 183). The Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas has autonomous status under the jurisdiction of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate since December 12<sup>th</sup>, 1974. In Australia the diaspora gained root after the World War II and Greeks are the majority with 121 parishes and a theological college in Sydney. There are

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> Greeks arrived Florida in 1768 and established the colony of New Smyrna, which however did not last long (Ware, 1997: 173)

also Russian, Arabic (Ware, 1997: 183) and recently the Romanian Orthodox parish churches in Australia.

Even though the Orthodox population in the US is ethnically diverse, Greeks make up the majority. Greek immigration, which started in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, continued during and after the World War I. The Greek American Progressive Association in collaboration with the Church was actively organizing courses and schools for maintaining the Greek language and identity as well as the faith among the Greek communities that have arrived just after the World War I, whose patriotic sentiments were quite strong (Saloutos, 1973: 395-6). The establishment of churches was a manifestation of their strong commitment to the Greek nationality, which worked to strengthen their national identity and traditions as well as faith. Loss of something very dear to them was the main motivation for their efforts and active involvement in church-building and parish life. After settling down they were contacting the Ecumenical Patriarchate or the Holy Synod in Greece to appoint priests for their communities. The priests, who arrived did not speak English, which was another factor strengthening the national element. Besides, the Greeks were marrying with partners from their own community, which kept the community spirit alive for the first-generation (Ibid: 397).

As the number of parish churches increased and communities grew in size problems related with the church organization started to emerge. One of the main problems was the lack of coordination among the churches. The Greeks had churches under the jurisdiction of either the Greek Orthodox Church or the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Bishop Meletios, who fled from Greece, united independent Greek churches into a diocese. When he was elected the Ecumenical Patriarch of Istanbul, he transferred the diocese under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (Binns, 2002: 158).<sup>80</sup> The Greek Orthodox Churches came under the Patriarchate of Istanbul in 1918. More than 30 years after the Greeks started settling in the US, the Archdiocese of North and South America was established in 1922. Moreover, the communities and priests were affected with the political developments and divisions within Greece. The St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church in Houston (which became the See of the Eight District Archdiocese in 1967) avoided a division within the congregation due to the political developments in Greece after the World War I by keeping politics out of the church life (Gasi, 2000: 258-9).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> Both Archbishop Meletios Metaxakis and Athenagoras served as archbishops in the US and then became the Patriarch of Istanbul (Wiest, 1964: 6). This shows the importance of the Greek diaspora in the US for the Patriarchate in Istanbul.

At the earlier stages of the establishment of the Greek Orthodox parishes, the parish councils were much more influential in the organization of the parish life and the priests were administering religious services and needs. The attempts of the bishops and clergy to have more control in church administration created conflicts with the laymen, who were actively involved in the parish life. As the Greek Orthodox Churches were organized systematically in the 1920s and starting from 1931 the Archbishop started appointing priests for the local parishes, while the parish councils lost power (Ibid).

In this period two associations; the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association and the Greek American Progressive Association, formed by the Greek Orthodox members of churches, played an important role in reproducing Greek ethnoreligious identity (Saloutos, 1973: 397-8). In 1937 the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Theological School was established in Connecticut for training new priests for the communities. After the World War II, the School was transferred to Brookline, Massachusetts (Ibid: 402). This was an important step for training clergy in accordance with the needs of the new setting the churches and priests were working, since new developments made the pastoral work of the priests harder such as the Immigration Acts of the US that restricted the Greek inflow to the US, return migration, disillusionment with the Greek loss of war in Anatolia in 1922 and plans for Greater Greece, absorption into the American way of life and increasing mixed marriages, lack of resources to maintain Greek language schools, Great depression and weakening of some congregations made it more difficult for the churches to cope with the challenges they faced in the US (Ibid: 399-400). In the 60s unification with other Orthodox Churches came on the agenda, which was another important challenge for the Church administration and the priests (Ibid: 403).

New inflow of Greeks after 1965 Immigration Act created new problems for the Greek Orthodox congregations. The main members of the churches were second and third generations, who were opting for liturgy in English, while newcomers could hardly speak English, were used to Greek Orthodox liturgy and very much attached to Greek national identity (Ibid: 401). The newcomers united with the first generation worked against the de-Hellenization of the Church. This led the Church authorities to hold the biennial Congress of the Clergy and the Laity in Athens in 1968 in order to strengthen the tie between the Church in the US with the Church in Greece. However, this move did not bring the expected outcomes. Finally after the Congress of the Clergy and the Laity in 1970 the Greek Orthodox Church in the US started using English for the liturgy on the condition that

it is necessary.<sup>81</sup> The 1970 Congress also decided that the Church should be more socially engaged and active (Ibid: 404-6).

The Greek Orthodox Church in the US, which for a long time resisted against assimilation and kept its commitment to the Greek national identity, had to revise its position and grew to the idea of becoming an indigenous one in the US with the younger generations, who grew up to be the Greek-Americans (Ibid: 395). Younger generations, who do not speak their parent's language, also opt for a Protestant style worship based on Bible studies rather than liturgy-based worship, which contributes to the creation of an American Orthodoxy. Furthermore, the younger generations are less willing to be under the jurisdiction of a Patriarchate that is very far away from the US and the American reality (Macar, 2003: 284).

The issue of jurisdiction of the Greek Orthdodox Churches in diaspora is not a settled matter. Currently, the Greek-Orthodox in the US, Australia, New Zealand Western Europe, Crete and Dodecanese Islands, Mount Athos as well as the Korean Orthodox Church fall under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (Ibid: 270-74). Howerver, there are challenges to this arrangement. After the election of Bartolomew I as the Patriarch of Istanbul in 1991, the Metropolitan of the Northern and Southern America Iakovos, who was hoping to become the new Patriarch, took steps to unite the Northern and Southern American churches and sought independence from Istanbul. His argument was that the Orthodox communities were willing to organize under the American identity, not immigrant identity. However, the Patriarchate in Istanbul did not accept this initiative and Metropolitan Iakovos had to retire and Metropolitan Spiridon of Italy became the new Metropolitan in the US. Moreover, all the Metropolitans in the US became directly connected to the Patriarchate in Istanbul and the monetary resources of the Metropolitan Church of America was put under the control of the Patriarchate. Metropolitan Spiridon could stay in power until 1999 and had to retire because of the administrative issues and protests of the Greek Orthodox community in the US and Dimitrios became the new

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> An example to this case is the Greek community in Houston. The Greeks that have arrived in Houston before World War I were using Greek for religious services. However, as the Greek community became more absorbed into American way of life and identity, the Greek Archbishop allowed liturgy in English in the 1950s only for the sermons. In mid-60s the National Clergy-Laity Congress allowed for repetition of some parts of the liturgy in English. It was in 1970 that the Congress allowed each parish to decide whether they will use English or Greek as the liturgical language. Huston congregation decided to have one liturgy in English and one liturgy half in Greek and half in English. Later on Greek was totally replaced with English to keep the new generations coming to the church, while the emphasis shifted from the Greek Orthodoxy to the Orthodoxy (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2000: 105).

Metropolitan (Ibid: 287). Even though the Greek Orthodox community remained under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, it is conscious of its importance and power, which was proven with the suspension of the Metropolitan Spiridon (Pacini, 2003: 182). Moreover, it is the major contributor to the maintenance of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (Pacini, 2000: 45).

Another big Orthodox community in the US is the Russian diaspora. However, up until very recently fragmentation was an important problem for the Russian Orthodox Church(es) in the US. During the Cold War years, the spread of Russian diaspora proved to be "counter-productive", while transnational links were severed or at least "inadequate" (della Cava, 2001: 539). There are three Russian Orthodox Churches with three different jurisdictions within the US (Krindatch, 2002). The first group of churches is under the jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church, the second group is under the jurisdiction of the Orthodox Church in America and the third group is part of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (which in 2007 re-established communion with the Russian Orthodox Patriarchate in Moscow).

When the Russians sold Alaska to the US in 1867, most of the Russians and Russian missionaries have left. The community that stayed had nine churches, which later on moved to San Francisco. It conducted liturgy in English and after its transfer to San Francisco, the Church grew rapidly. In 1898, the Bishop Tikhon has arrived in the US and established a multi-ethnic church structure, a Russian diocese in New York, an Arab diocese in Brooklyn, a Serbian diocese in Chicago. There was also a Greek diocese and later on Romanians and Albanians joined the Church. In 1907, the Church held its "All American Council". However, the same year Bishop Tikhon was called back to Moscow and became the first Patriarch after the restoration of Patriarchate in 1917. In 1925 he died under house arrest (Binns, 2002: 157).

After the Bolshevik Revolution, the Russian Communist sympathizers in the US tried to take control of the Church. In order to protect itself from intrusion it declared all the dioceses as independent and itself as voluntary federation of dioceses. Since it was established by and through immigrants rather than the intervention of Mother Churches it emerged and evolved independent from any Orthodox Church (Ibid). The voluntary federation soon disintegrated. Some dioceses (Greek, Bulgarian and Macedonian) established communion with the mother churches.

However, dissolution did not mean an end to the Church's activities. Bishop Tikhon, when he became the Patriarch of Moscow issued a decree in 1920 allowing independent organizations within the Russian Orthodox Church on a temporary basis in case it becomes difficult to maintain contact with the Patriarchate. It was not clear if this decree also applied to the diaspora communities, but the decree was put into use (Ware, 1997: 176). After Patriarch Tikhon had been arrested, the Church had come to the conclusion that it is difficult to maintain ties with the Moscow Patriarchate. Metropolitan Leonty has continued the missionary diocese of Bishop Tikhon and continued its work in the American religious landscape. In 1967 it changed its name from the "Russian Greek-Catholic Church of America" to the "Orthodox Church in America". Besides Russian, it has Romanian, Albanian and Bulgarian churches under its jurisdiction (Binns, 2002: 159). In 1946, majority of the community voted for coming under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate on the condition of having complete autonomy. However, it had to wait until 1970 for the Moscow Patriarchate to grant not only autonomy but also autocephaly. Apart from the Moscow Patriarchate; Bulgarian, Georgian, Polish and Czech and Slovakian Churches recognize the autocephalous status of the Orthodox Church in America (OCA)<sup>82</sup> (Ware, 1997: 178; Binns, 2002: 25). The OCA has 700 parishes, monasteries, and institutions in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. In addition to the parishes of the former "Metropolia", there are the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate, the Albanian Orthodox Archdiocese, and the Bulgarian Orthodox Diocese. Moreover, the OCA has established over 220 new parishes in two decades, which are non-ethnic in origin and using English as the liturgical language. The Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America is also a diocese of the Orthodox Church in America.<sup>83</sup> It has six deaneries in the US and one in Canada.

In addition to the OCA and churches under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate, there is also the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCOR). After the civil war of 1919-21 in Russia, many Royalists who have been defeated at the war took refuge in Europe. First they met in Istanbul in 1920 and then with the support of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Khrapovitskii held the Council of the Bishops of the Church Abroad in Karlovtsy, Serbia in 1921. After the World War II, the church headquarters were first transferred to Munich and in 1949 to New York and the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (or Outside Russia) was established. Because of the dependency

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>82</sup> <u>http://www.oca.org/</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>83</sup> http://www.roea.org/

of the Patriarchate of Moscow on the communist regime, the Church in New York broke ties with Moscow in 1927 and refused to submit to the Patriarchate's authority (Binns, 2002: 25; Ware, 1997: 176). In 1990, the ROCOR has established two bishoprics in Russia, which strained the relations between the two churches (Ware, 1997: 176-7). With the fall of the communist regime, the reunification talks between the Russian Orthodox Patriarchate and the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad has started in 1991. In 2000 the Moscow Patriarchate has given Tsar Nicholas II and his family that were executed after the Bolshevik Revolution the status of sainthood and has allowed the remains of the Tsar's mother to be reburied in St. Petersburg. The reunification agreement was signed at the Christ the Saviour Cathedral, which is seen as the symbol of religious rebirth in Moscow. With this "Act of Canonical Communion"<sup>84</sup> the Church in exile (which is based in New York and has 500,000 members) kept its property in the US, Europe and Israel and the right to appoint its own priests.<sup>85</sup>

When the transnational ties are established, the flows between the sending and receiving ends become more complex and take different forms. While at the beginning diaspora is peripheral to the homeland, the relationship between the diaspora and homeland can change and take different forms in time as is the case with the Greek community in the US with the Ecumenical Patriarchate (Schmit, 2005: 217). Diaspora communities can even have an impact on the religious life and organizations back home as could be seen in the case of Russian diaspora in the US and Russia. The case of the Albanian Orthodox Church is also very interesting showing to what extent the diaspora can influence the sending context.

The Albanian Orthodox population under the Ottoman rule was under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. In the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries there were efforts to translate scriptures to Albanian. The first translation of New Testament in Albanian with Greek alphabet was made in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by Bishop of Euroia, Gregory Argyrokastrites. Even though not all the Orthodox population was of Albanian origin (there were also Greeks, Vlach-speaking and Slav-speaking) and the Orthodox community was only 23% of the population. With the emergence of independent Albanian nation-state in 1912, the search for an independent Albanian Orthodox Church intensified. However, rather than the

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>84</sup> http://www.russianorthodoxchurch.ws/synod/engdocuments/enmat\_akt.html
 <sup>85</sup> "Russian Church Ends 80-Year Split", *BBC News Online*, 17 May 2007;

http://www.russianorthodoxchurch.ws/english/pages/history/briefhistory.html

Albanian Orthodox within Albania the Albanian diaspora in the US and Europe played a decisive role in independence. The multi-religious (Orthodox, Catholic, Sunni Islam, *Bektaşi* sect) character of the Albanian nation hindered the emergence of a national model for an independent Albanian Orthodox Church, which was stimulated by the Albanians in the US who have massively emigrated in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (Thual, 1993:75-6). In Bucharest the *Drita* (Light) organization established in 1886 was working for the independence of the Albanian Orthodox Church, but it was the efforts of Fan Noli in the US that was decisive for the emergence of the autocephalous Albanian Orthodox Church.<sup>86</sup>

The Orthodox Albanians started to arrive in New England in the US from 1886 onwards. However, up until 1908 they did not have an Orthodox Church. In 1907 when a young Albanian patriot, who was considered an excommunicant of faith, died in Hudson, Massachusetts of influenza, no Orthodox Church agreed to perform the funeral services for him and he was buried without any service. This incident led the Albanians in Massachusetts and Fan Noli to organize their own community. The Archbishop Platon, head of the Russian Orthodox Church in the United States, ordained Noli on March 18<sup>th</sup>, 1908 at the Cathedral of St. Nicholas in New York City and he became the head of the Albanian Orthodox Mission in America. On March 22<sup>th</sup>, 1908, Father Theophan Stylian Noli (later Metropolitan Theophan) celebrated the first Divine Liturgy in the Albanian language in the history of the Albanian Orthodox Church and established the Church of St. George. Since the majority of the Albanian migrants were single males they were staying together in dorms and they were trying to support the new Church with their little earnings. Until 1922 the community did not have a church and prayed in rented halls and carried the icons and other holy relics to their houses in order to rebuild the church for Sunday prayer every week-end. In 1922, the community bought a church.<sup>87</sup>

After the formation of the first congregations, the Orthodox Albanians directed their efforts for the independence of Albania from the Ottoman rule. Under the leadership of Father Fan Noli, different Albanian associations and intellectuals united their forces. Father Noli traveled within the US and to Bulgaria, Romania, Russia, Italy, England, and France to help organize Albanian communities for independence. Albania became independent in 1912; however, during the World War I it was under invasion. Father Noli

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>86</sup> Archbishop Anastasios of Tirana, Durrës and All Albania "The Church of Albania: History and Spiritual Tradition" <u>http://www.orthodoxalbania.org/</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>87</sup> "History of the Parish" <u>http://www.saintgeorgecathedral.com/history.html</u>

campaigned and was able to reach President Wilson. With the Paris Peace Conference Albania was free of foreign rule once again. Father Noli's efforts got Albania into the League of Nations.

The Synod of Berat made the declaration for the autocephalous status of the Orthodox church of Albania in 1922, despite the refusal of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to recognize it (Spinka, 1935: 121) and the Albanian state recognized the decision. Father Noli was consecrated as the Primate of All Albania in 1923. Father Noli's and his Cathedral's contributions played a pivotal role in the formation of an Orthodox Autocephalous Church in Albania. The Cathedral was also the source of books and publications in Albanian not only for the Albanian congregations in the US but also newly formed Church in the homeland. In 1929 the Holy Synod of the Albanian Orthodox Church was set up. The Ecumenical Patriarchate did not grant recognition but agreed to the use of Albanian in worship and training of priests. In 1937 the Ecumenical Patriarchate had to recognize its autocephalous status (Meyendorff, 1996: 161).

Noli's involvement in politics and peasant uprising in Albania carried him to the Prime Minister post for a short period. When the Conservative government was reinstated, Foli had to escape from the country to Germany. Since he could not get an American visa, he had to stay in Germany until 1932, while the number of the Albanian Orthodox congregations in the US and the Church was growing in size and influence.<sup>88</sup> After 1934 Noli indulged in translating the Albanian liturgical books into English and worked for the formation of the American Orthodox Church.<sup>89</sup> The Albanian Orthodox Church was divided into two groups. The ones under Metropolitan Theophanes were under the jurisdiction of the Church in Albania, while the congregations led by Bishop Lippa were under the Ecumenical Patriarchate. After Noli's death there were initiatives to unite the two

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>88</sup> While the Church in the US was growing in size, the Church in Albania went through a long period of stall. In 1939 Albania was incorporated into Italy, which led to the influence of Catholic missionaries in the country as well as efforts to establish Uniate church. While the Italian and German troops withdrew in 1943 and 1944 respectively, the communist regime was established, which meant persecution of all religions in Albania. The Orthodox priests and hierarchs suffered imprisonment and death, while the churches were destroyed. In 1967 Albania was officially proclaimed an atheist state. In 1991, the Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrios has appointed the Bishop of Androusa, as Patriarchal exarch and the Patriarchate decided to reestablish the Autocephalous Orthodox church of on June 24th 1992. These initiatives were not welcomed by the Albanian government and the President openly stated that they would not allow all the Metropolitans to be of Greek origin. There was also opposition from within the Church. Despite the opposition, the Patriarchate consecrated four bishops in 1996 in Istanbul. However, Albanian state did not recognize them. Therefore a compromise solution was reached by forming a synod of two Greek and two Albanian metropolitans. His Beatitude Anastasios Archbishop of Tirana, Durrës and All Albania "The Church of Albania: History and Spiritual Tradition" http://www.orthodoxalbania.org/. Today the Church serves both Greeks and Albanians in Albania (Binns, 2002: 18).

<sup>109</sup> 

groups, which however, did not succeed.<sup>90</sup> Today the St. George's Cathedral conducts liturgy in English and Albanian and its congregation is composed of the Orthodox people of different origins.

The discussion on the establishment of different Orthodox Churches in the US so far reveals that the churches were founded with the initiatives of immigrants, who after getting settled in the new continent channelled their efforts and resources to churchbuilding and contacted the Mother Church to ask for the priests. For the first generation the local parish in diaspora was the main link with the country of origin and a social space where national language and traditions were reproduced.<sup>91</sup> Therefore, the ethnic element was present and constitutive of the first generations' churches in diaspora (Ware, 1997: 174). Rather than becoming an integral part of the American religious establishment, being ethnically, culturally, linguistically and religiously distinct from the American society was very important for the first generation migrants. The initiatives of the US-born<sup>92</sup> Orthodox population and American converts<sup>93</sup> through marriages for furthering integration into the American mainstream in the 70s was reversed by the migratory waves in the 80s and 90s that revitalized ethnic identities (Krindatch). The ethnocentric character of the Orthodox churches impeded their assimilation into the religious pluralism and ecumenical initiatives in the US and was detrimental to the unity of the Orthodoxy within the US (Krindatch, 2008: 94-95). Besides ethnocentricism, one of the main reasons working against unity is the fact that Mother Churches in traditional homelands of Orthodoxy are not willing to give up their rights and power over their communities in the US and the Orthodox bishops are not enthusiastic about seeking unity.<sup>94</sup> The transnational links of the Orthodox communities

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>90</sup> <u>http://www.orthodoxalbania.org/</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>91</sup> The case of the Coptic Church in diaspora is a good example to this attitude. Pride in their cultural and religious heritage both of clergy and the laity is a very distinct feature of the Egyptian Coptic immigrants abroad (Botros, 2006: 179) and immigration experience leads to further emphasis on this ethno-religious identity (Ibid:181). Close guidance of the Mother Church in cultural production and transnational agency of the Coptic Church abroad (Ibid: 182) and the need to explain the young generations why they are different keeps the memory, renders the history and tradition alive within the Coptic migrant communities (Ibid: 187).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>92</sup> The amount of the Orthodox clergy born in the US is very high; three quarters of the Greek Orthodox priests and 90% of the Orthodox clergy of the OCA are American born (Krindatch, 2006: 6). The rate of the American born laity both within the GOA and OCA parishes is very high (9 out of 10) (Krinidatch, 2008: 6).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>93</sup> The largest group of the converts to the Orthodoxy is Roman Catholics followed by the Evangelical Christians (Krindatch, 2006: 6).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>94</sup> Besides divisions among ethnic Orthodox churches, there are divisions within the churches themselves. Problems between the clergy and the laity may lead to splits as in the case of Keralan Orthodox Churches in the US. (Kerala Syrian Christian community was under the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Antioch since the 7<sup>th</sup> century. The name Syrian stems from the Syrian rite in conduct of liturgical services. In 1912 Orthodox Church in Kerala broke ties with Antioch and currently it has its own Patriarch (George, 1998: 271). With the immigration of Orthodox Indians from Kerala to the US, the churches they established in the US came under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate in Kerala. Currently there are 59 Kerala Orthodox parish churches in the US (Ibid: 271-2) and the Bishop, rather than trying to reconcile differences is

with their homelands negatively impacts the unity and collaboration among the sister Orthodox Churches within the US. According to Aristotle Papanikolau more fragmented picture of the Orthodoxy in the US also stems from the failure of the American Orthodox community to adjust to cultural pluralism in the US. (2008 cited in Krindatch, 2008: 179).

Currently four types of "orthopraxy"<sup>95</sup> define the stance of the Orthodox laity and clergy adopt within the American context, which are conservative (rejecting change), traditionalist (accepting evolutionary form of change), moderate (reformist) and liberal (reconstructionist and innovative) stances (Krindatch, 2008: 4). However, those favoring change still remains a minority. The "ethnarchy" combining religious and social leadership in the person of the priest is still a very important characteristic of American Orthodox Churches (Krindatch: 14) and the Orthodox clergy could be defined as the "bearers of the ethno-cultural identity and heritage" in the US; therefore they are not willing to make any changes in the style of worship (Ibid). Moreover, Krindatch's research reveals that there is less room for democracy and pluralism within the Orthodox churches. The Orthodox clergy in the US are not in favor of giving more freedom to parishioners to interpret scripture, the Orthodox tradition or the liturgical life themselves or allowing the parish community to elect their own priest and the bishops (2006: 5, 67).

This, however, does not mean that there is no room for change within the Orthodoxy in the US. While preserving their distinct identity, the American Orthodox Christians try to be part of the American mainstream society (Krindatch, 2008: 123). Being members of the migrant church both the clergy and the laymen had to put more time and effort into preserving faith in a pluralistic as well as predominantly Protestant environment of the US (Kesich, 1961: 188). As Fr. Thomas FitzGerald states the Orthodox Christians show more interest in the social issues facing the American society and realities of modern life (1998: 128 cited in Krindatch, 2008: 71). The Orthodox Christians in the US are trying to overcome self-exclusion in order to avoid marginalization from the American society (Krindatch, 2008: 55). The proportion of US-born clergy and US-born parishioners as well as mixed marriages had also allowed for the incorporation of different Orthodox communities in the US and usage of English as the language of liturgy (Krindatch). The

encouraging splits. Since he is seeking independence from the Mother Church in Kerala, it increases the number of parish churches under his authority (Ibid: 278).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>95</sup> Krindatch argues that religious values and beliefs of the Orthodox laity and clergy affect their social attitudes and life choices, which he calls as "orthopraxy" (2006: 12)

Orthodox laity supports the servant-leadership model of priesthood (Krindatch, 2008: 67)<sup>96</sup> and hopes for increasing the role of the laity within the Church (Ibid: 109). Approximately half of the Orthodox laity is in favor of allowing the parishioners to choose their own priests (Ibid: 116). Interestingly while the Orthodox identity is of central importance for 87% of the Orthodox laity (Ibid: 134), the laity defines a good Orthodox in terms of personal belief and practice rather than church attendance and obeying the priest (Ibid: 156).

It could be argued that despite the divisions within the Orthodox population in the US, adaptation to the American context and growth in the number of the US-born Orthodox Christians in the US started erasing some of the cultural or national markers, which leads to the search for pan-Orthodox unity (Volkov, 2005: 241). In fact, doing away with divisions and overlapping jurisdictions has always been on the agenda. Writing in the 60s, Kesich argued that using English for liturgical services is indispensable for pastoral work and the Orthodox unity and is not against the Orthodox tradition, since whenever the Orthodox missionaries arrived into a new region, they have used the local language (1961: 186-7). Moreover, Kesich was against the creation of different Orthodox congregations even within the boundaries of the same city due to nationalist feelings and identities, which is contrary to the Orthodox tradition (1961: 186) and argued that the divided church organization would not be able to cope with the problems encountered by the community members (Ibid: 188). As returning back is constantly postponed, the search for breaking away from the homeland started in diaspora (Schmit, 2005: 218). A considerable amount of the Greek Orthodox in the US sees the American Orthodox identity as the identity that will survive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and tend to define themselves as Orthodox Americans rather than Greek Americans (Kourvetaris, 2005: 264-5), which leads to the search for autocephaly,<sup>97</sup> while the search for pan-religionism bears the seeds of future tensions within the Orthodox congregations (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2000: 99). The confusion over the status of different Orthodox Churches with overlapping jurisdictions is not a settled issue yet and the complex picture raises questions whether these churches and communities are national, transnational or pre-national (Roudometof, 2000: 368-387 cited in Volkov, 2005: 230) or we are

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>96</sup> The "cultic" model defines the priest limits the priest's main mission to the conduct of religious services and provision of sacraments, while keeping the priest away from the social life. The priest mediates between the faithful and the God. The "servant-leader" model defines the priest as both the servant and the leader and emphasizes collaboration between the laity and the priest (Hoge, 2003: 10-11 cited in Krindatch, 2008: 50).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>97</sup> For a detailed account of the "crisis" over the status of the Greek Orthodox Church in the US, which is under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul see: Kourvetaris, 2005.

witnessing a new community in the making that is neither assimilated nor transplanted (Volkov, 2005: 242).

The challenge that the Orthodox Churches face in the US is not limited to change that comes with adaptation and pan-Orthodox initiatives. The main concern of the Orthodox communities and the clergy is to attract the Orthodox youth to the Church (Krindatch, 2006: 4; Krindatch, 2008: 69). Ware argues that in order to attract the Orthodox youth to church the clergy should use the local language rather than the language of the Mother Church and raise its own clergy, rather than inviting priests from the country of origin. Moreover, he criticizes the clergy for putting more emphasis on the protection of the national culture and language then preaching the Christian faith (1997: 184). Therefore, change becomes necessary in order to maintain the Orthodox tradition within the American setting.

In terms of size, the largest Orthodox community in diaspora is in the American continent and since the experience of Orthodoxy in the US inspires the Orthodox diaspora in the making in other parts of the world. Due to new migratory waves the Orthodox diaspora is now extending all over the EU space (Pacini, 2003: 172). First Orthodox immigrants in Europe were the Greeks. The main destination for the Greek diaspora, when the Greeks were under the Ottoman rule, was Southern Italy. Starting from the 18<sup>th</sup> century they moved towards the Northern and Eastern Europe. However, significant changes in Greek migration patterns came with the independence of Greece from the Ottoman rule in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Hassiotis, 2004: 96-7). While there was significant amount of return migration, the destination countries also changed towards the Eastern Mediterranean, Russia and Trans-Caucasia and the US (Ibid: 97). From mid-1940s onwards up until 1980s, many Greek workers immigrated to Western Europe as guest workers (Ibid: 97-98).

The first Greek Orthodox Church that was opened in London in 1677 could only survive the restrictions imposed by Anglican Bishop of London, Henry Compton for seven years (Ware, 1997: 172). The Greeks had to wait until 1838 to open a new Church in London, this time without any restrictions from the Anglican Church. However, in the meantime the Chapel of the Russian Embassy in London, which was opened in 1721 not only served the Russian community but also Greeks and English converts (Ibid: 172-3). The Greek immigration to UK continued through waves following the Greek Revolution in 1821, the World War II, and partition of Cyprus in 1974. By 1998 the number of the Orthodox churches reached 209, majority of which belonged to Greeks (Binns, 2002: 24).

In addition to the Greek Orthodox, at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century many Russian, Romanian and Slavic Orthodox people settled in London, Paris and Berlin in search of jobs and better life standards (Smith, 1969: 313). Second wave came when many Russians and Ukrainians fled 1917 Revolution and settled in the Balkans, Germany, France in Europe and in other continents such as the US and China. Following the Russian Revolution, Russian cultural elite took refuge in France and in Italy (Bari, San Remo and Florence) (Bobrinskoy, 2003: 303). Bolshevik Revolution has made many Orthodox to leave Russia, who belonged to the political and cultural elite. Different from the poor and working class the Orthodox immigrants of the previous era, this new group had the competence and resources to establish contact with the Western institutions and become prominent figures in the societies they have settled (Ware, 1997: 173-4). In a short period of time close to work places of the Russian community new Russian Orthodox Churches emerged becoming meeting places for the Russian community and providing assistance for the basic needs (Clément cited in Bobrinskoy, 2003: 304). In 1925 the Russian community of Paris has established the Orthodox Theology Institute of San Sergio by transforming an old German Lutheran Church into an Orthodox one. The main aim was to keep the Russian Orthodox theological tradition alive, given the fact that theology faculties in Russia were closed. The seat of the institute was also the Metropolitan Evlogij's Church. The Russian intellectuals succeeded in setting up religious and cultural institutions with the help of Bishop Eulogius and due to the Teological Institute of St. Sergius (Smith, 1969: 313).

The Russian Metropolitan Church in Paris was under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate; however, an incident led to separation and a new fragmentation in the Russian diaspora, this time in Europe. When Metropolitan Evlogii visited England in 1929 and attended prayers for Christian Russians under the communist rule, the Soviet regime pressurized the Patriarch of Moscow to ask for Metropolitan's resignation. The Metropolitan refused to submit to the authority of Soviet state through the Patriarchate in Moscow and chose being canonically dependent on the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul in 1931 (Bobrinskoy, 2003: 305). This led to a division in the Metropolitan Church of Paris. While the Metropolitan and the majority turned to the Patriarchate in Istanbul for support, a minority remained loyal to the Patriarchate in Moscow.

Stalin's declarations during the war regarding the role of religion in resisting Nazi attacks increased the hopes in the Russian diaspora in Paris for reconciliation with the

communist regime. With this hope Metropolitan Eulogius of Paris made peace with Moscow at the end of the war before his death. However, the community did not follow suit. They rejected the Moscow Patriarchate's efforts to nominate a bishop loyal to the regime over them. Rather they stayed loyal to the newly elected Metropolitan Vladimir and the Metropolitan See remained under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Metropolitan See has managed to survive up until today (Smith, 1969: 315-6; Ware, 1997: 177).

The case of Russians in Serbia was different. After the civil war of 1919-21 in Russia, many Royalists in Europe and with the leadership of the former Metropolitan of Kiev Bishop Anthony they have organized the Synod of the Russian Church in Exile in Sremski-Karlovci (Smith, 1969: 313). When the Metropolitan Sergius in the Soviet Union recognized the Soviet regime and asked the clergy to follow his declaration. Karlovtsi council outrightly rejected the declaration and cut ties with the Moscow Patriarchate. The advancing Soviet armies and Tito's victory was menacing their survival. Therefore, in 1944 they moved to Karlsbad and until the end of the war hid in isolated places in Austria and Germany. In Munich at refugee camps with the other Orthodox groups from Russia, Ukraine, Baltic region and Poland they have reorganized themselves under Bishop Anastassy into 38 parishes in Austria and 90 parishes in Germany (Ibid: 316-7). The hardships and deracination incurred by the Orthodox in wartime conditions and in refugee camps strengthened the bond between the people and the clergy and presence of bishops suffering and praying with them united doctrine and experience and consolidated their belief. Rather than the ethnicity, the territorial principle played an important role in the organization of parish churches. In UK and Belgium congregations were multi-ethnic, while in Germany, Austria and France the "Russian" became a synonym for the "Slav" (Ibid: 318-9). Besides the religious needs, psychological, ethnic and social needs of people in refugee camps led to the creation of parishes, which succeeded in establishing an elementary level educational system with big sacrifices. The clergy depended very much on the laymen, who were actively involved in the administration of the parish life (Ibid: 320-1).

However, there were also divisions within the communities. The same community was following different bishops, which was the case for many Ukrainians in different Western European countries. People maintained their languages and ethnic identity, which led to further divisions. Intense political emotions were another reason for division (Ibid: 324). Another important problem in the congregations was the instability of the parish community. There were newcomers as well as those who were being repatriated, emigrating or leaving the camps after finding a job. Not only people, but also priests were unsettled. Many after arrival were leaving for the US. The marriages with non-Orthodox partners was widespread weakening the ties of one with the congregation or adding a "foreign" element (Ibid: 323).

During and after the World War II many Orthodox fled to Europe. The war had a deep and devastating impact on many Orthodox Churches. Those who ran away from the Bolshevik Revolution found themselves under the Nazi occupation. Under the Nazi occupation many churches were closed down or their activities were restricted. Two million Orthodox migrants and refugees that spread to Europe after 1944 and had sudden and sharp political and religious break with their homelands had to settle in the new urban setting through adjustments in congregational structure, religious education and financial support (Ibid: 312-5). Throughout the communist rule in Eastern Europe and Russia, many people sought political asylum in the West.

Despite the suffering incurred by the Orthodox due to sudden break with the homelands, the immigration of the Orthodox people to Western Europe and formation of communities in diaspora paved the way for the encounter of the Orthodoxy with the West (Clément, 2005: 32). The presence of the Orthodox Churches led to the improvement of ecumenical dialogue with the Anglican and Protestant Churches, which later on turned into an institution in 1948 in Amsterdam in 1948, the World Council of Churches.<sup>98</sup> The Russian Orthodox churches in diaspora such as those in New York, Paris and Oxford despite symbolic unification had and have a different stance as compared to the Moscow Patriarchate. This is true for the other Orthodox churches as well. They are more open to ecumenical dialogue; adopt a pluralistic and liberal stance and try to become an important element in the religious landscape of the countries they are inserted in (della Cava, 2001: 540-1).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>98</sup> <u>http://www.oikoumene.org/en/who-are-we/background.html.</u> The Catholic Church is not a member of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and has an observer status, which makes the WCC a predominantly Protestant organization (Binns, 2002: 226). The ROC has been a member of the WCC since 1961. The Russian Orthodox Church's relations with the WCC have proved to be counterproductive in recent years due to important changes in the agenda of the WCC. The WCC has opened more room for issues such as women ministers and same-sex marriages and started using a new language in dealing with certain issues, which led to the reaction of some Orthodox Churches. At the 1991 Canberra summit of the WCC Patriarch Bartholomew asked the WCC to go back to its own vocation (Meyendorff, 1996: 234). In 1997, the Church of Georgia and Bulgaria left the WCC. The change within the WCC led the Russian Orthodox Church to come with a reform plan.

However, it was after the fall of communist regimes that a large scale Orthodox immigration started towards Western Europe (Pacini, 2000: 25) and the Orthodoxy became a religion of the diaspora (Martikainen, 2005: 118). Before the large scale migrations of the 90s, the majority of the Orthodox in Western Europe was composed of Russians, Greeks coming from Turkey and Serbs in France. With immigration the Romanian Orthodoxy became one of the main elements of the Orthodoxy in diaspora, while the Bulgarian, Macedonian and Moldovan Orthodox communities are in a process of settlement. There are also members of the Oriental Orthodox Churches coming from Lebanon and Palestine. Immigration makes the Orthodoxy a Western European religion as much as an Eastern European one. Similar to the experience of the Orthodoxy in the US, the Orthodox Churches are organizing along ethnic and linguistic lines in Europe.

Transnational migration can have important implications for local religious life (Ibid: 117) and lead to new arrangements in the parish life and church activities. The impact is not limited only to formation of new parish churches. Arrival of migrants can revitalize previously existing Orthodox Churches in non-Orthodox European countries. One interesting case is from Finland.<sup>99</sup> Within the Finnish context, the Orthodoxy has been a traditional element of the religious landscape. Under the Russian rule the Russian Orthodox Church has established Russian language the Orthodox Churches at different cities mainly in Turku and Helsinki, which were the main cities that were receiving migration. There were also some Russian language the Orthodox Churches at Southern parts of Kareli, while in the country side of Eastern Finland, the Orthodox Churches were Finnish language (Ibid: 119). When Finland became independent in 1917, the Finnish Orthodox Church under the Russian Orthodox Church and became the autonomous Orthodox Church under the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul (Ibid: 120).<sup>100</sup>

The Finnish Orthodox Church, which is the second largest religious organization in Finland with 57,000 members (constituting 1% of the Finnish population) (Ibid: 121), is experiencing a growth in last two decades due to international migration mainly from

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>99</sup> Until 1520 majority of the Finns were mainly Roman Catholics. Following the Reformation, many converted into Lutheranism (Martikainen, 2005: 119). In Finland the Evangelical Lutheran Church is the church of the majority, but only 1% of the population is registered members (Ibid: 118).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>100</sup> Since most of the members of the Church were Russian, the liturgy was in Russian in most of the parishes. Due to internal conflicts, some Russian believers left the Finnish Orthodox Church and set up their own churches under the jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church in 1945 (Heino, 1997: 68; Nevalainen, 1999: 173–178 cited in Martikainen, 2005: 120). After the World War II, major part of Karelia was lost to the Soviet Union and the Church lost most of its property and members spread all around Finland. Moreover, Finnish language became predominant.

Estonia, Russia and Ukraine but also to a lesser extent from Greece, Ethiopia and Romania. Newcomers form 7% of the Church's adherents (Ibid: 122). The largest parish in Finland is the Orthodox parish in Helsinki with 18,000 members. The number of the members has increased by 20% following the immigration since 1990. In 2000, the parish had more than 1,000 members of immigrant origin. Another parish in Turku and its membership has risen by 25% due to immigration from Eastern Europe. The parish community is formed by different nationalities. There are also the churches of the separate Russian Orthodox communities (Ibid: 128).

The community of St. Isaac of Niniveh – the International Orthodox Community of Helsinki Parish, which is founded in 1994, consists of 15 nationalities, and therefore, the Church holds liturgy in different languages such as Arabic, Amharic, Greek, Romanian and English. The Church organizes social and cultural activities, while the parish church in Turku is a small one and it does not have similar services to that of the one in Helsinki. However, it allows the members to organize activities if they are willing to. Greeks and Romanians organize courses for children and youth using the Church facilities (Ibid: 128-9). Many communities have started their own religion classes and summer camps to give religious education to their children. Since the Finnish Orthodox Church uses the Gregorian calendar and some immigrants use the Julian calendar, this has created problems initially; however, many Orthodox immigrants adopted the Finnish custom (Ibid: 131-3).

As the account of the experiences of the Orthodox diaspora in the US and Europea reveals, both in the American and the European context the jurisdiction issue seems to be the main challenge of the Orthodox diaspora, impeding unity of the world of Orthodoxy and postponing the realization of its potential to its full. However, as the communities of different Orthodox Churches emigrated from the traditional homeland, the Patriarchates started establishing their own dioceses in diaspora, which led to the issue of overlapping jurisdictions (Pacini, 2000: 42).

The Canon 28 of the Council of Chaldeon placed the missionary territories (non-Orthodox lands) under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate in Istanbul. Based on this canon some modern canonists claim that the Orthodox diaspora is under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (Meyendorff, 1996: 133). The Ecumenical Patriarchate states that according to the canon law of the Church, there cannot be two bishops in one city or two metropolitans in the same eparchy. However, today there are two or three metropolitans in the same eparchy. Moreover, Canon 2 of the  $2^{nd}$  Ecumenical Synod forbids the bishops from going beyond the boundaries of their own dioceses. As with immigration the adherents of one church spread around the world, so is their jurisdiction, which gives rise to the issue of having two or more bishops of the same faith in a city. Therefore, the principle of phyletism that led to divisions within the Church is now extended to diaspora, which according to the Ecumenical Patriarchate leads to canonical disorder and consolidates the nationalist element. The Ecumenical Patriarchate is of the view that when an Orthodox immigrates to a new land, he/she no longer belongs to the diocese or patriarchate of his homeland, but he becomes a member of the diocese or church in the new land. However, this tradition is not implemented due to the principle of ethnopyletism.<sup>101</sup>

The Head of Public Relations Office of the Ecumenical Patriarchate summarizes the issue of jurisdiction and state the Patriarchate's stance on the issue as such:

[...] now how do we understand the issue of ecumenical status, or how should we understand it. It is like this: During the Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman Empires the Orthodox living away from their motherland, if their mother land was within the Ottoman Empire and if they were living in for instance in France, these diaspora were dependent on Istanbul. And this continued like this for years. Then, came the Soviet regime. The Soviet regime and the Soviet cabinet were established and the administrators said that the Moscow Patriarchate is a church loyal to the regime. I don't know if it is true or not...After the dissolution of Soviet Emp...Union some local churches such as the Estonian Church etc. regained their autonomy and declared their loyalty to Patriarchate...We did not do this, we did not ask for this, they wanted. Moscow did not want to accept this but Moscow recognizes this principle. It recognizes the meaning of ecumenism. Yes because of this the relations are a little distant but it is not a problem that cannot be resolved. I mean Russia accepted the dependence of those from the Orthodox Estonian nation in today's Estonia. However, the archbishop of Russians living in Estonia is under Moscow's jurisdiction. Now you would say if it is like this how can the Patriarchate of Istanbul talk to Pope, what is the role of the Church? The Patriarchate of Istanbul has the role of the coordinator; it does not have any other role. Sometimes they say Patriarch of Istanbul is head of 300 million Orthodox, this is not true. It is not possible to say such a thing because in Orthodoxy there is no head. Each Patriarchate has its own Patriarch and that Patriarch is the Patriarch of that nation or people. Nevertheless, there are 17 different autocephalous Orthodox Churches in the world. There is the need for a Synod to coordinate these 17 churches. This is the Synod here. They all accept this. Therefore, in our Patriarchate the ... themes, topics of Synod's dialogues that it has or will have with the Pope are discussed with other churches. I mean for instance a theme that the Russian or African Church does not want cannot be on the agenda, the Patriarch cannot discuss this. Therefore, there is consultation or a concept is defined and we think in accordance with that concept.<sup>102</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>101</sup> "Territorial Jurisdiction According to Orthodox Canon Law. The Phenomenon of Ethnophyletism in Recent Years", Paper Presented at the International Congress of Canon Law, Budapest, 2-7 September 2001. http://www.ec-patr.org/docdisplay.php?lang=en&id=287&tla=en

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>102</sup> Interview with Dositheos Anagnostopulos, Head of the Public Relations Office of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul on August, 19<sup>th</sup> 2007.

[...]for instance let's think about a Romanian community living in Portugal. The community has a priest. I think it is possible that this priest will be under Bucharest's jurisdiction in the future. It is not only possible, it is natural. However, the coordination of representation of different Patriarchates Romanian, Bulgarian, Serbian etc. at EU level will be done by our Patriarchate. Our duty will be only this; it cannot be more than this. But this is not true for Europe only, we have duties beyond Europe, we have duties in America. Not only in the EU but also we are in Australia. We are in New Zealand. I believe that our duty in Europe in the future will be to bring them together as an Orthodox community, not as a head or president but as a coordinator. I mean the issue evolves in this direction. I mean for instance when there is an issue regarding the Orthodoxy within the EU, they don't ask to Russians, Bulgarians, Romanians but they ask us. However, our response is not the response of a dictator. In agreement with them, moreover using them as consultants we get closer to the EU.<sup>103</sup>

Even though the ecumenical status of the Istanbul Patriarchate is accepted by all the Orthodox Churches, the Mother Churches still prefer to assign their own clergy for the representation of their churches to the state and other institutions, rather than being represented by the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The resolution of the jurisdiction issue is one of the priorities for the Orthodox Churches in the West (Binns, 2002: 242). There were initiatives to solve the problem of overlapping jurisdictions. In 1933 the autocephalous churches have convened to discuss the organization of the church in diaspora and have decided to form Episcopal assemblies headed by a representative from the Patriarchate of Istanbul. The Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA), which was founded in 1960, is one of these initiatives, which proved to be less successful than it was hoped (Ware, 1997: 185).<sup>104</sup> Even though the decentralized system of organization provides the church with a highly flexible structure that can adapt to changing conditions (Ibid: 7), the Orthodox Churches cannot resolve the jurisdiction issue. The hierarchs of Orthodox Churches convened at the Episcopal Assembly on the Orthodox Diaspora in 1993 in Switzerland and fixed eight regions where assemblies could be organized: North and Central America, South America, Austria, Great Britain, France, Belgium and Netherlands, Austria and Italy, and Germany. At the meeting participants recognized the existence of national diasporas under the jurisdiction of Mother Churches and defined this period as a transition period for the formation of one Orthodox Church in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>103</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>104</sup> The SCOBA is not more than a forum where the Orthodox bishops can come together and express their beliefs. However, it falls short of creating room for more cooperation among different Orthodox Churches at local or national level within the American context. Furthermore, the SCOBA is nowhere close to the creation of an American Orthodox Church, since the issuing of the 1994 Ligonier meeting declaration of 29 Orthodox bishops expressing their intention for the creation of a unified church. (Krindatch, 2008: 91).

diaspora (BOR, 1995, CXIII, 7-12: 64-5). In 1997 in France a full-fledged Episcopal assembly was established (Clément, 2005: 33). In Belgium the assembly of the Orthodox Churches comes together to discuss the problems and prospects for the Orthodox communities under the Archbishop of the Patriarchate of Istanbul and the state recognizes him as the official representative of the Orthodox Church (Pacini, 2000: 44). However, the issue is not settled yet.

In addition to the jurisdiction issue, the transmission of the Orthodox tradition and values to the second-generation was and is one of the basic problems of the Orthodox diaspora. The Orthodox diaspora in the US has incurred great loses during the transition to the second generation but managed to survive, while the diaspora in Western Europe is going through the transition. Ware argues that despite all the problems the diaspora encountered, the dispersal is the *kairos* for the Orthodox world, a moment of opportunity (Ibid: 186), which it has to strive more to seize. The extension of the Orthodox Church out of its traditional homeland in Europe and the US gave the Church the possibility to express the universality of the Orthodox tradition as well as to state that they are not "religious foreigners" in the West (Kesich, 1961: 193). The Orthodox diaspora communities with their faith and tradition and with their experience of living in the West can offer solutions for the problems and challenges of the modern and global world (Clément, 2005: 139). However, in order to make a better contribution it has to overcome its own divisions and achieve unity.

This chapter tried to describe the evolution of the Orthodox Church(es) from the past to present day and evaluate the agency of the Churches in the post-communist and global era within their homelands as well as in diaspora and in the social sphere. The chapter reveals that the organization of the Orthodox Churches both in their homelands and in diaspora is a result of the ancient Orthodox tradition as well as historical developments and modern conditions. The section on the Orthodox diaspora shows that with the spread of Orthodox diaspora, the Orthodoxy ceases to be only an Eastern religion and has transnational and global claims. However, as divisions within the Orthodox world are reproduced in new contexts through transnational ties between the Mother Churches and their branches, the potential for collaboration among the Orthodox Churches is weakened and transnational agency of the Orthodox Church in communion is hampered. In the light of this discussion, we can now move on to the ROC to discuss its evolution, reconstruction in the post-communist era in Romania and its transnational agency in diaspora.

## Chapter IV. From the Past to the Present: Evolution of the Romanian Orthodox Church

## IV.1. The Romanian Orthodox Church: Historical Background until 1989 Revolution

The ROC, as the only Orthodox Church that has neo-latin language and tradition (Introvigne, 2001: 112; Pacini, 2000: 59) has declared its autocephalous status in 1865 following the unification of Romanian principalities, which gained their independence from the Ottoman rule. It was recognized in 1885 by the Patriarch of Istanbul (Tappe, 1977: 288) and became a Patriarchate in 1925 (Bria, 1995: 12). Even before it was an independent church, it went through different transformative processes and had to work under different rulers and regimes until it took its current form. During interwar years it was under fascist rule. By 1948, the Church came under strict communist control. During the communist rule, despite the repression from the regime, religious institutions had a certain level of autonomy. Following the fall of the Ceausescu rule it emerged as one of the most powerful institutions in Romania. It is a Church revered by 87% of the population in Romania and it is extending its reach beyond the borders of Romania through transnational Romanian migration and European integration.

The end of the Cold War, while presenting many opportunities and liberties, poses many challenges to the ROC. Besides the main challenge of competing with the other churches, religious groups and new religious beliefs for the allegiance of believers in postcommunist Romania; the Orthodox Church faces challenges from factors and forces of globalization, the EU-membership and transnational migration, which lead to the transformation of the Romanian society, obscure the boundaries between internal and external and create a transnational space that extends far beyond the borders of Romania. These factors and forces, while providing the Church with the possibility of access to and agency within the newly created transnational space, raise critical questions for the Church to answer.

There is the need to put more emphasis on the broader context that the Church is situated in and factors that present challenges to the ROC to better understand and evaluate the agency of the Church amidst national, regional, transnational and global forces and factors of change in the post-Cold War era. In order to understand the current status, role and agency of the ROC there is the need to see how the ROC has evolved throughout

history. Therefore, the first section of this chapter focuses on the history of the ROC until the fall of the communist regime in Romania. The next section is devoted to the discussion of the ROC's status and the reconstruction efforts after communism as well as the challenges it faces from and its stance towards globalization, the EU integration and transnational migration.

**IV.1.1. The History of the Romanian Orthodox Church until the Communist Rule:** Romanian people have its roots in the Dacian kingdom that has been conquered by the Romans in between 106-271 by the Emperor Trajan.<sup>105</sup> The Roman conquest brought Christianity and Latin language to the people of Dacia (Ross, 2002: 17). The Romanian population was among the first converts to Christianity under St. Andrew in 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (Tanasescu, 2005: 19; Clément, 2005: 16). St Andrews, who preached between Danube and the Black Sea, has Christianized the Romanian people. During and after the Roman conquest "informal missionaries" such as soldiers, merchants or slaves have played an important role in spread of the faith. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> century the missionary activity intensified. By the 4<sup>th</sup> century Church there were 15 episcopal sees on the Carpathian-Danubian territories. Between the 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> centuries massive Christianization took place. In the 6<sup>th</sup> century, Scythia Minor became the Metropolitan province with its 14 dioceses and came under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Istanbul.<sup>106</sup>

After the Romans left in 271 due to political instability in Rome and up until 1241 the Romanian lands were subject to invasions from the Asian steppes. In the 9<sup>th</sup> century Romanian fiefdoms were established defending themselves against invasions, while Transylvania, which became a principality in 1176, was under the Hungarian rule (Ross, 2002: 18). According to the Romanian history writing,<sup>107</sup> the blending of Roman and Dacian people and cultures led to the construction of the modern day Romanian nation. Romanian people lived in three separate medieval principalities, Wallachia, Moldavia and Transylvania, which were reunited in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

With the collapse of the Byzantine Empire, the Romanian Orthodox population became subordinated to the dioceses of Vidin and Silistra in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. At

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>105</sup> Dacians were the northern branch of the Thracian people and their king was Decebal, who was defeated by Emperor Trajan's armies and lost his life in the battle in 105-106.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>106</sup> Rev. Prof. Dr. Mircea Pacurariu, "Short History of the ROC". <u>http://www.patriarhia.ro/</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>107</sup> Another theory about the origins of Romanians states that they are the descendants of Vlachs, whose original homeland is the Balkans (Lakatos, 1998: 6).

the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century they become subordinates of the Bulgarian Patriarch of Tirnavo. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century, religious unification of Wallachia and Moldova took place. When the Romanian lands came under the Ottoman rule in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the Ecumenical Patriarchate established two Metropolitan churches; one in Muntenia and one in Moldova (Döpmann, 2003: 96). In 1359, the Ecumenical Patriarchate recognized the Metropolitanate of Wallachia with the See in Arges. The See was first moved to Targoviste in 1517 and then to Bucharest in 1688, which is its current location. However, the Patriarchate resisted against recognizing the Metropolitanate of Moldova, which was in Suceava. It was recognized in the 15<sup>th</sup> century and in the 17<sup>th</sup> century its see was moved to Iaşi, while Transylvania became a voievodeship by 1541.

The medieval period under the *voievodes* in the principalities of Wallachia and Moldova, even under the Ottoman control which was rather indirect, is seen as the Golden Age by the nationalists in Romania. The Ottoman rule in two Romanian principalities was indirect in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. When the risk of being under direct rule emerged, the Romanian principalities signed a treaty with the Ottomans accepting Ottoman suzerainty in return for full autonomy in domestic affairs, partial autonomy in foreign affairs, limited Ottoman presence in Romanian lands, respect for Christian faith and banning of Islamic presence in the principalities (Ross, 2002: 23).

Up until the 16<sup>th</sup> century, religion was the main cement that united people in the Romanian principalities (Murgescu, 1995: 196). Stephan the Great (*Ştefan Cel Mare*) succeeded in defeating the Ottoman army at the battle of *Podul Inalt* in 1475. Following the victory, he sought allies to form a holy alliance against the Ottomans arguing if Moldova, the "gate of Christianity" is lost to the Ottomans whole Christianity would be at risk. Pope Sixtus IV declared him as the "Athlete of Christ" for his success against the Ottomans, but he could not get any military support from the other European powers (Ross, 2002: 21). Religion consolidated the ties between the Moldovan and Wallachian elite, who saw themselves as the protectors of Christianity and sacred territories against the Ottomans (Tanasescu, 2005: 23). In the 16<sup>th</sup> century people of Wallachia and Moldova became *dhimmis*, the people of the pact, under the Ottoman rule (Panaite, 1995: 36). The participation of two principalities in the life of the Orthodoxy and the contributions of *voievodes* under the Ottoman rule was appreciated by the Orthodox ecumene (Alzati, 2003: 105). During his 47 years rule, Stephen the Great had built many monasteries in Moldova such as Voronet, Humor, Neamt and Putna and the monastery in Neamt became an

important religious centre (Döpmann, 2003: 97; Ross, 2002: 21).<sup>108</sup> For every battle he won against the Ottomans, Stephen the Great built a church and donated to the Metropolitanate of Moldova, which was set up in the 15<sup>th</sup> century (Turcescu and Stan, 2003: 444).

At the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century three Romanian principalities were united under Michael the Brave; however, the unification did not last long (Ross, 2002: 23). The Ottomans started intervening in the nomination of the Romanian princes or sending Greek Orthodox governors, who injected Greek influence in religious, economical and cultural life. This, in addition to religion, rendered another element of identity more important in the Romanian principalities. The Ottomans allowed the sale of Wallachian and Moldovan territories to Greek tax farmers (Tanasescu, 2005: 24). Especially in 1610 and 1620 Phanariot<sup>109</sup> influence grew, which led to resistance from the elite. Since Greeks were also Orthodox, the urge to defend the religion against foreign intervention could not be invoked to mobilize people. In order to muster support for their movement they have resorted to the concept of *pământean* (countryman) (Murgescu, 1995: 197-8).

The Golden Age ended in two Romanian principalities in the period 1711-1821. In 1714 the Prince of Wallachia Constantin Brincoveanu and his sons were executed by the Ottomans for their collaboration with the Russian Tsar Peter the Great during the Russian-Ottoman War in 1710-1711. Following this incident, Greek influence grew (Döpmann, 2003: 97). Even though disliked by the Romanians, the Phanariot rule in Moldova starting in 1711 and in Wallachia in 1716 was a "compromise solution" between the direct Ottoman rule and autonomy of the Romanian principalities (Ross, 2002: 30). The Phanariot rule had a deep impact in all areas of social and political life (Ibid: 31) and by the 19<sup>th</sup> century anti-Phanariot feeling was quite widespread in the Romanian principalities (Murgescu, 1995: 202). The rule ended in 1821 as a result of the Greek Revolution and Romanian uprising. After 1768 and 1821 Russo-Turkish wars, the Russian influence in Romanian lands grew (Ross, 2002: 32).

While Moldova and Wallachia was going through the Golden Age, Transylvania was following a different course. Transylvania had autonomous status under the Ottoman

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>108</sup> Many *voievodes* following his example also started building small monasteries in order to be commemorated and remembered through prayer in those monasteries for eternity (Tanasescu, 2005: 140-1). These local cults were later on incorporated into the Church structures. The monasteries in small localities led to the emergence of miracle cults. The Orthodox belief that salvation can be achieved with good works, led many *voievodes* to construct churches for the salvation of their souls (Crăciun, 1995:73). Another motive was the belief that good work would bring well-being and health throughout the life time (Ibid: 75).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>109</sup> The Phanariotes were the prominent Greek families residing in Phanar, which is the district, where the Ecumenical Patriarchate is located in Istanbul.

rule from 1526 to 1699 and then came under the Hungarian rule (Crampton, 1994: 25). Under the Hungarian rule the Orthodoxy was not the state religion. In early modern period, Transylvania was ruled by the "Union of the Three Nations", a political compromise between the Hungarian nobility, Saxons and military Szeklers. The Romanian peasantry, majority of whom were Orthodox, was not given the right to political participation (Fosztó, 2007: 74; Gyémánt, 1995: 276).<sup>110</sup> In 1698, Habsburgs backed the establishment of Greek-Catholic Church, which recognized the Pope's supremacy and filioque clause but kept the Eastern Orthodox rite (Lakatos, 1998: 26). The Jesuits played a key role in convincing the Romanian Orthodox clergy into accepting the Catholic dogma (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 91). Many Romanians converted into Greek-Catholicism in order to have equal status with the rest of the population (Fosztó, 2007: 76). However, according to the ROC sources conversion rate was very low and those who have converted were "obliged, through pressure and deceit".<sup>111</sup>

The unification with the Church of Rome allowed many of the Greek-Catholic priests to become part of the educated class and leading politicians and they played a key role in the national awakening and emancipation of Romanians of Transylvania (Mungiu-Pippidi, 1998). The Greek-Catholic priests supported the claim to Roman-Dacian – therefore Latin - descent of Romanians of Transylvania in order to underline the higher status of the Romanians vis-à-vis the Habsburgs (Tanasescu, 2005: 25; Clément, 2005: 22). After the Reformation in the West, the Slavonic texts were translated into Romanian in the 17th century. First books in Romanian were printed in Transylvania; which were two Lutheran catechisms (Ross, 2002: 24). In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Scoala Ardeleană (the Transylvanian School), which was influenced by the Enlightenment put emphasis on printing books, schooling and education, and led to the secular forces to gain root within the Greek-Catholic community (Gyémánt, 1995: 278-9). Just before the 1848 Revolution, there were both Greek-Catholic and Orthodox members of this school that promoted the idea of a single church for Romanians under a metropolitan bishop (Ibid: 282). The Transylvanian school was also pushing for the usage of Latin alphabet instead of Slavonic or Cyrillic script and emphasizing the Latinity of the Romanian people (Ross: 2002: 29; Stan and Turcescu, 2007:43).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>110</sup> In the 16<sup>th</sup> century majority of Hungarian nobility and some Szeklers have converted to Calvinism and Unitarianism, while Saxons have converted to the Lutheranism. However, this development did not change political marginalization of the Romanian Orthodox.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>111</sup> Rev. Prof. Dr. Mircea Pacurariu, "Short History of the ROC". <u>http://www.patriarhia.ro/</u>

After distancing itself from the Slavonic Orthodox world, the ROC adopted the Greek-Catholic Church's discourse on the Latin origin of the Romanian people and the language (Ibid: 200; Conovici, 2007: 177).<sup>112</sup> In his opinion the real actor was the Greek-Catholic Church, not the Orthodox Church. However, this role has been monopolized by the Orthodox Church, since it was already involved in the nationalist movement and it was the church of the majority. Moreover, the Orthodox clergy in Wallachia and Moldova were among the elite and they, as village leaders, played an important role in mobilizing people into "the nationalist-religious drive towards the modern state" (Barbu, 2004: 77 cited in Tanasescu, 2005: 28). The claims put forward by the churches formed the base for Romanian nationalists that argued for the reunification of these three principalities. Under the nationalist ideology, the language went through re-Latinization and standardization.

Different from the secular character of the 18<sup>th</sup> century nationalism in Western Europe, nationalism of the Central and Eastern Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was of secular-religious in nature (Merdjanova, 2000: 234). While in the West the religion was not the basis for nation-building, in the Orthodox world religious nationalism turned the Church into the bearer of national values and ideals. Greek nationalism was very much nourished with the ideal of recreating the Orthodox Byzantine Empire (Ibid: 247-8). Romanian case was no exception to this trend.

The ROC took an active part in the nationalist movement and was involved in the efforts for the definition of the "Romanian" citizen (Stan and Turcescu, 2000: 1467-68). It adopted and incorporated nationalist discourse into its own discourse and teaching (Gillet, 1995: 357). As is clear from the education system at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the nationalist ideology had a strong religious element (Murgescu, 1995b: 291). The school education, which has been the task of the Church, turned into a national melting pot with the nationalist ideology for the education of moral citizen in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Murgescu, 1998: 255). The emphasis was on Christian civic culture and bringing up good Romanian citizens, who are good Christians and who speak Romanian (Ibid: 286-7). Lakatos suggests that as the Orthodox Church's involvement in the nationalist movement, the nation gained a religious character and the national identity, rather than a frame of reference, turned into the essence and condition of the Romanian people (1998b: 1). The Church argued and argues

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>112</sup> Romanian researcher and lecturer Prof. Adrian Niculescu at National School for Political and Administrative Sciences, in Bucharest Romania also underscores the role of the Greek-Catholic Church in Romanian national awakening. Interview with Prof. Adrian Niculescu on April 6<sup>th</sup> 2007.

that Christianization of Romanian people start with the birth of the Romanian people, which means Romanian people are born as Orthodox (Metropolitan Daniel Ciobotea, 2003: 323; Sălcudeanu, 1995: 242; Gillet, 1995: 349). This gave a legitimate role to the Church as the defender of the interests of the Romanian nation (Gillet, 1995: 350), while Romanian Orthodoxy evolved under the supremacy of nationalist ideology (Murgescu, 1998: 262). Therefore, belonging to the nation and the Orthodoxy became inseparable and being Romanian came to mean being an Orthodox. According to Stăniloae, the leading Orthodox theologian of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Dacian, Latin and Orthodox elements form the Romanian neam (ethnic group with long established roots) and the Orthodoxy are the essential elements of Romanianness. Therefore, the Romanian national ideal can only be understood in reference to the Orthodoxy (1940 cited in Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 45). Similarly, Romanian intellectual Nae Ionescu was of the view that Romanians are Orthodox and in order to become Catholic they would need to go through a transformation and renounce their Romanianness, which means if a Romanian converts into the Catholicism, s/he ceases to be a Romanian (Gillet, 1988: 305). The emergence of the Romanian ethnicity is a divine intervention rather than a willingness of Romanian people to live together. Therefore, a Romanian can only be an Orthodox and not Greek-Catholic (Ibid: 306-7). This way of thinking, which was dominant among the founding elite, turned the Orthodoxy into a de *facto* state religion in Romania. Being part of the nationalist movement allowed the Church to claim to be the only real church of the Romanian people since the beginning. Despite its role in the nationalist movement the Greek-Catholic Church could not and still cannot make the same claim as being the Church of the nation (Gillet, 1995: 358).

The nationalist movement bore fruit and in 1859 Alexandru Ioan Cuza succeeded in uniting Wallachia and Moldavia and the modern Romanian state was formed (Crampton, 1994: 23). The emergence of the modern Romanian state had important implications for the Church. After unification, the Metropolitan Nifon of Wallachia with his seat in Bucharest took the title of the Primate of Romania. In 1865 the autocephaly of the ROC was proclaimed and in 1872 a new law was passed, which specified the rules for the election of metropolitans and diocesan bishops, created the Holy Synod of the Church and defined the duties and composition of the Holy Synod (Döpmann, 2003: 97; Ramet, 1998: 83).<sup>113</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>113</sup> In the 19<sup>th</sup> century two Romanian autocephalous churches emerged; one in Transylvania under Austro-Hungarian rule and one in the newly independent Romanian Kingdom. After unification of the Romanian kingdom with Transylvania, the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate reached unity and is recognized as such by the Ecumenical Patriarchate (Meyendorff, 1986: 149).

According to the ROC's official bulletin, during Alexandru Ioan Cuza's rule, a synodal authority of the Church has decreed the independence of the Church from "foreign" churches in 1864 (BOR, 2005, CXXIII, 1-3; 443). Therefore, emergence of the Romanian nation-state independent from foreign rule led to the emergence of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate independent from "foreign" churches, even though the independence was officially recognized on April 25<sup>th</sup>, 1885.

Starting from 1865 all religious services were translated and conducted in Romanian.<sup>114</sup> Moreover, Cuza nationalized the land owned or controlled by the foreign monasteries (mainly Greek), banned the transfer of funds abroad, took steps for better education standards for the clergy, supported the use of Romanian in religious services, adopted the Latin script and provided state funds for churches (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 19). With new legislation in 1862 and 1868 the state started paying for the priests' salaries, which continued up until today with no interruption even under the communist rule. He also brought the ROC under state control "free from all foreign leaderships" (Ibid: 19-20). During Cuza rule Ministry of Religious Denominations was created for the registration of other churches and denominations. This structure came to this day with some modifications (Ibid: 21).

Religious homogenization served for the unity of the nation, and therefore, "one country, one religion, one church" emerged as the formula for the consolidation of the nation-state (Turliuc, 1998: 289). After the foundation of the Romanian nation-state the rulers of the country were expected to be of the Orthodox creed and work with the Church in line with the *symphonia* principle for the well-being of the Orthodox society and culture (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 20). As Barbu argues, this development made the Orthodoxy an essential part of the Romanian state (cited in Tanasescu, 2005: 29) and Romanian historians underscored the essential role played by the ROC in the foundation of the Romanian national identity (Ioarga, 1908, 1966 and Sadoveanu, 1965 cited in Tanasescu, 2005: 31). The Church continued commemorating the rulers and army members. Interestingly, the hymn "Sing after me", which was sung in the church after the liturgy became the national anthem<sup>115</sup> of Romania after 1989 with the title "Awaken, thee Romanian" (Ibid: 33).

Cuza, who united Moldovan and Wallachian principalities, stayed in power from 1859 until 1866, when he abdicated under duress (Ross, 2002: 83). Liberals and

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>114</sup> The ROC used Slavonic in liturgy until 17<sup>th</sup> century (Binns, 2002: 22).
 <u>http://romania-on-line.net/essentials/anthem.htm</u>

conservatives in opposition to Cuza's rule brought Charles of Hohenzollern to Romania to become the king (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 20). With the new constitution, which gave the name Romania to the new state and failed to mention dependence of the state on the Ottomans, the Prince Carol I became the king (Ibid: 87; Crampton, 1994: 23).<sup>116</sup> Romania gained its independence from the Ottoman Empire with the Treaty of Berlin in 1877 and in 1881 became an independent kingdom (Fosztó, 2007: 76-7; Ross, 2002: 90-1). The Romanian National Party, which was calling for the autonomy of Transylvania, was also established in Sibiu in 1881 (Ross, 2002: 104-105). Following the establishment of the Kingdom, the Ecumenical Patriarchate recognized the Metropolitan of Romania in 1885 (Tappe, 1977: 288). The initiatives for the independence of the Church was very much linked and supported by the nation-building movement (Lakatos, 1998: 7).

The recognition of the autocephalous status of the Church following independence is a very crucial event, since it determined the political role and status of the Church up until today (Gillet, 1995: 349). Under King Carol I the cultural patrimony of Romania was taken under protection and the Orthodox sites such as monasteries and churches were an important part of this patrimony. With the establishment of the Romanian Kingdom, the state becomes the main depositor of nationalism. However, the collaboration of the ROC continued to be relevant and essential (Sălcudeanu, 1995: 341), which could be observed in the proximity of the Parliament building and the Patriarchate. The Patriarchate was using the Metropolitan See in Bucharest, which was situated on a hill seeing the whole capital. On the same hill, there was the National Assembly building. This symbolized the collaboration (*symphonia*) between the political and religious power in the service of the nation (Stan and Turcescu, 2006: 1124).<sup>117</sup>

In August 1916 Romania signed an agreement with the Entente powers and entered the World War I (Ross, 2002: 111). When the Russians withdrew from the war in 1917, it became very difficult for Romania to resist and in May 1918 it signed a treaty through which it gained Bessarabia but lost Dobrudja to Bulgaria, while Germans occupied Romanian oil fields. In November 1918 Romania re-entered the war on the allied side (Crampton, 1994: 24-5). The World War I helped the Romanian Kingdom to extend its rule

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>116</sup> Romania sought independence from the Ottomans through negotiation; however, when the diplomatic efforts failed Romania signed a pact with Russia in Crimea against the Ottomans (Ross, 2002: 90).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>117</sup> The Parliament kept on using this building until the end of the communist rule, while the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate is still using the same church. The Parliament building is now given to the Patriarchate, which uses it as a Press Conference Hall. The physical closeness was indicative of the close relations and collaboration also during the communist era. Interview with Prof. Adrian Niculescu.

to Bessarabia, Bukovina, Transylvania and Banat, since it was part of the alliance that won the war. The Romanians in Transylvania agreed unification with Romania in Alba Iulia Congress in 1918 with certain rights such as civil liberties, universal suffrage and local autonomy (Ibid: 108). While the foundation of the Romanian state was completed, the Romanian Kingdom reached its largest size, which was somewhat equivalent to the Dacian ancient homeland and was called *România Mare* (Great Romania) (Tanasescu, 2005: 30). Greater Romania became the second biggest state in Eastern Europe (Crampton, 1994: 107). The ROC's jurisdiction was extended with Greater Romania. Separate church organizations, Holy Synod of Bucharest, Holy Synod of Sibiu (Transylvania), the Metropolitanate of Bukovina (which was part of Austria) and the Metropolitanate of Bessarabia (which was under the jurisdiction of Moscow Patriarchate) were united under one Church administration (Spinka, 1935: 118). Even though Greater Romania became ethnically and religiously more diverse,<sup>118</sup> the state preserved the national character of the Church (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 21).

After unification, Hungarians in Transylvania became a minority in Romania and the efforts of the Romanian state to consolidate the nation-state have led to tensions between the Hungarians minority and Romanians. Under Ceausescu regime they were forced to immigrate to other regions, while more ethnic Romanians were settled in Transylvania. During and even after the fall of communism, the Romanian-Hungarian ethnic relations remained as an unresolved issue until 1996, when a treaty was signed between Romania and its neighbor Hungary allowing the creation of a political party representing the Hungarian minority in Romania (Dragoman, 2008: 68-69).

Following unification, there was a shift from nation-building to the consolidation of the nation-state. The nationalist movement gained a more xenophobic tone with the "generation of 1922" movement and turned into official fascism in 1930. The struggle between the Romanian rural culture and Western urban modernity was the main political struggle during the interwar years, which paved the way for the birth of extreme right in Romania (Dragoman, 2008: 67). The ideology of Romanian supremacy targeted ethic and religious minorities, while the Orthodox Church supported the fascist regime. The national

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>118</sup> Greater Romania was multi-confessional. In addition to the Orthodox, Catholic, Adventist, Baptist, Jewish and Muslim denominations, Greek-Catholic, Hungarian and Swabian denominations were added following the unification with Transylvania (Ramet, 1998: 185).

character of the Church was confirmed with the 1923<sup>119</sup> and 1938 constitutions, which shifted the political system to the right and in 1924 the Romanian Communist Party was banned (Crampton, 1994: 110).

In 1925 the ROC was recognized as the "dominant Church in the State" (Fosztó, 2007: 78) and the Parliament voted to create a Patriarchate in Romania. Since previously there was no Patriarchate in Romania, the claim to creating one had to be defended with the argument that the Moscow Patriarchate has lost its leadership and Romania as the second largest Orthodox community should have its own Patriarch. Another reason was the revival of the Serbian Patriarchate, which extended its reach with the territorial expansion of Serbia and reluctance of Romanians to take the second place in the Balkans after Serbia (Spinka, 1935: 119). With the recognition of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the ROC was elevated to the rank of Patriarchate in 1925<sup>120</sup> and Miron Cristea became the first Romanian Orthodox Patriarch (Bria, 1995: 12; Spinka, 1935: 119). Since the son of King Ferdinand, Prince Carol was exiled because of his unaccepted marriage by the royal family and Carol's son was very young, regency composed of Carol's brother Prince Nicolas, the Orthodox Patriarch Mircea Cristea and Head of High Court of Justice ruled the country.

In 1927 King Ferdinand signed the Concordat with the Catholic Church two months before his death, while the Patriarch tried to prevent the ratification of the Concordat. In 1928 a law was passed to regulate religious activities in Romania. It basically aimed at limiting sectarian activities and banning sects. The Baptists had their legal status already defined in Transylvania and the law did not change their legal status. The Evangelical and the Adventist Churches were registered as religious associations, while the Pentecostals, Nazarens, Bible Students and some others were banned (Cuctuc, 2001: 18 cited in Fosztó, 2007: 78-9).

In 1930 King Carol II returned back to Romania from exile (Crampton, 1994: 113). During the reign of Carol II, the authoritarian tendencies gained strength in Romania. Iron Guard's nationalistic, autocratic, anti-Semitic and anti-Western ideology (Ross, 2002: 131; Crampton, 1994: 114) mixed with the Orthodox spirituality and anti-Semitism has gained

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>119</sup> 1923 granted the Orthodox Church and Greek-Catholic Church national church status, while the Orthodox Church was the dominant church; the Greek-Catholic Church had priority over other denominations (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 44).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>120</sup> The Ecumenical Patriarch Basil III granted recognition to the Romanian Patriarchate with Tomos No. 1579 and the Tomos was proclaimed on September 27<sup>th</sup>, 1927 at the present-day Patriarchal Cathedral in Bucharest in presence of Patriarch Miron Cristea (*News Bulletin*, 2005: 11).

mass support in 30s.<sup>121</sup> In 1933, the Prime Minister Duca from the National Liberal Party has been assassinated by Iron Guard, leading to the rule of far-right coalitions. The King concerned about the growing popular support for the movement, tried to keep Iron Guard under control and finally banned the movement. Throughout 1930s, Romania saw 18 prime ministers due to economic depression and interventions of the King. After 1937 a few interim cabinets was established. The street fights between the death squads of Guardists and King's forces intensified in between 1938-1940 (Ross, 2002: 142). Finally the King suspended the constitution and constituted a ministry for his royal dictatorship.<sup>122</sup>

When the World War II started, Romania entered the war on Germany's side. Ion Antonescu established military dictatorship with the King's approval in 1940 and he forced King Carol II to leave Romania in September 1940. Mihai I was enthroned for the second time and Antonescu's military dictatorship ruled the country until 1944 (Gillet, 1995: 359; Ross, 2002: 153). The World War II had negative consequences for the Romanian Kingdom, since it was on the losing side. In 1944 came the *coup d'etat* bringing the communists to power. In 1946 elections, the Communist Party won the majority of the seats in the Romanian Parliament. One year later, a pro-Soviet government was established and the king had to leave the country (Crampton, 1994: 231; Ross, 2002: 174). Following the declaration of the People's Republic of Romania and the establishment of the communist regime in Romania, a new constitution was promulgated in April 1948 (Fosztó, 2007: 80), which would have important consequences for the ROC.

**IV.1.2. The Romanian Orthodox Church under the Communist Rule:** With the establishment of communist rule in Romania restrictions were imposed on religious life as in other communist regimes. However, the regimes did not treat all the religious denominations equally. While the communist rule meant important restrictions on religious life, especially for non-Orthodox groups, Article 27 of the 1948 Constitution guaranteed the ROC's autocephalous status (Tanasescu, 2005: 35). The communist regime did not issue a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>121</sup> The leader of Iron Guard, Codreanu claiming that a revelation came to him from Archangel Michael telling Codreanu to lead Romanians into harmony and purity, established the League of the Archangel Michael. However, the movement was known with the name Iron Guard, which was the youth movement of the League. Guardists succeeded in emerging as a political force using the deep economic crises and frustration of the population (Ross, 2002: 133).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>122</sup> Anxious about the Iron Guard, the King ordered the arrest of its leaders and Codreanu and 13 other Iron Guard members were shot dead. The Iron Guard movement came to an end. However, in fighting the Iron Guard, the King turned the state into a royal dictatorship (Crampton, 1994: 115-6). The royal dictatorship with 1938 constitution restricted democratic liberties and parliament's powers (Ross, 2002: 139).

law in Romania to separate (Orthodox) church and state affairs. Different from the Soviet Republics, Romania under the communist rule kept on paying the salaries of the priests and the Orthodox Church was relatively less persecuted (Thual, 1993: 66). However, a law in 1948 ended the Church's presence in education and increased the state's control over the Church (Meyendorff, 1986: 149). The Church had certain privileges as compared to other denominations at the expense of its freedom and with major compromises (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 7). The Holy Synod of the ROC continued its activities and canonization of saints under the communist rule. It was only the ROC that was allowed to send priests to study abroad, to maintain monasteries and it faced lesser restrictions in training new clergy (Lakatos, 1998: 13). In the period between 1948-1966 269 new churches were built (Tanasescu, 2005: 37), while the Church had to work under state monitoring and was forced to purge the dissidents from its churches. However, even under the communist rule the Orthodox Church remained as the symbol of the Romanian nation (Thual, 1993: 66).

It was the Greek-Catholic Church that faced the harshest treatment under the communist rule. Following the Soviet move to liquidate the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in 1946, <sup>123</sup> the Greek Catholic Church in Romania was incorporated into the Orthodox Church (Lakatos, 1998: 8). Four months after the promulgation of 1948 Constitution, a new law on religious denominations was passed, which outlawed the Greek-Catholic Church.<sup>124</sup> It was the Patriarch Justinian Marina, who has been appointed by the communist state<sup>125</sup> that approved the abolition of the Greek-Catholic Church in Romania. 600 Greek-Catholic priests that refused to convert into the Orthodoxy were put in prison and many died in prisons (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 91). The faithful shared the same fate. Many Greek-Catholics, who refused to convert into the Orthodoxy and those involved in "proselytizing activities", were put in prison or sent to camps in the first decade of the communist rule (Fosztó, 2007: 81). Up to 2,500 churches and property of the Greek-Catholic Church were confiscated and most of it was given to the Orthodox Church (Ramet, 2007: xv). According to Stan and Turcescu this is indicative of the fact that the state saw the Greek-Catholics as Orthodox, who were tricked into converting into a new faith by the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>123</sup> The Greek-Catholic Church in Czechoslovakia was shut down in 1950 (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 92).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>124</sup> The Council of Ministers Decision No. 179 of 1948 stipulated the conditions of the return of the Greek-Catholics to the Orthodox Church. Most of the properties of the Church were given to the Church and the rest became the property of the state (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 93).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>125</sup> Justinian Marina was a parish priest, who had hidden Gheorghe Gheorgiu-Dej when he escaped from Antonescu's prison (Ramet, 1998: 191).

foreign rulers (2000: 1470-71).<sup>126</sup> While some of the clergy and faithful joined the Orthodox Church, the Greek-Catholic Church went underground and around 600 priests continued their mission in secret (Lakatos, 1998: 26).

In 1948, 14 denominations were granted recognition, with the Catholic Church having a *de facto* recognition (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 22). Gheorgiu-Dej saw the Catholic Church as the main obstacle to communization in 1948 (Ramet, 1987: 29). The Concordat between the Catholic Church and the state was annulled by the communist regime and the number of the Catholic dioceses were reduced from five to two (Ross, 2002: 171). Since the communist regimes defined the concordats as foreign interventions in their sovereignty, the concordats with the Catholic Church were annulled in Eastern European countries (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 9). The Catholic Church had to work with *de facto* recognition in Romania, while its social institutions such as schools, hospitals and orphanages were nationalized (Lakatos, 1998: 24). 450 Catholic priests were taken to work for the Danube-Black Sea canal project, which has left half of the priests dead. 3 Orthodox archbishops suffered sudden death, 13 archbishops and bishops were imprisoned (Ramet, 1998: 191; Ramet, 1987: 25).

Other religious denominations also had to work under strict restrictions. Many Protestant leaders of the Churches were condemned for being disloyal to the regime. After 1948 many leaders of the Reformed Church, which was the largest religious denomination and composed mainly of Hungarians, were imprisoned; church schools, orphanages, culture houses, teachers' homes were closed and the Church was not allowed to perform any institutionalized social work (Lakatos, 1998: 19). The Lutheran community, which faced the same situation, was reduced in size after the 70s with the Ceausescu decree to allow 11,000 Germans to leave the country annually, as German authorities were paying 5,000-10,000 marks per German (Ibid: 22). The Baptist Union was established in 1919 in Romania. However, in 1942 the activities of the Baptists were banned. Even though the next government lifted the ban, after 1944 it had to work under serious restraint, since it was the fastest growing Baptist Church in the whole Europe (Ibid: 27).

The repressive stance of the regime lasted from 1948 up until 1964. The Soviet troops withdrew from Romania in 1958 allowing Romania to follow a more detached

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>126</sup> Moreover, while Orthodox people consider the emergence of the Greek-Catholic Church in Transylvania as a consequence of political pressure, the Greek-Catholics argue that it was a result of the free will on their part to join the Western Europe (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 91).

policy from the Soviets starting from the 60s (Lakatos, 1998: 10); however, relaxation period did not come up until 1964. In 1960, more than 4,000 Orthodox priests and monks have been arrested by the communist regime (Meyendorff, 1996: 151). Even in 1962-63 there were arrests and restrictions. Only 6 years after the withdrawal of the Soviet troops "ideological relaxation" period started with Gheorghiu-Dej, who distanced himself and the country from Moscow and tried to establish better relations with the Western bloc.<sup>127</sup>

After the consolidation of the regime, the restrictions on the Romanian Patriarchate were relaxed. The state started pursuing the policy of isolation and economic autonomy from the Soviet regime (Enev, 2001: 82), which allowed more room for the ROC to continue its religious activities. Therefore, starting from the 60s Romania has become an exception in the Communist bloc with relatively relaxed stance towards religious practice (Pacini, 2003: 166). The ROC also took steps to improve the dialogue by incorporating elements from communist ideology to its discourse. The Patriarch Justinian used Marxist-Leninist social discourse to complement the Orthodox theology in his "Apostolat Social" (Stan and Turcescu, 2000: 1468-1469). The friendly relations of the Patriarch Justinian allowed the Church some autonomy from the regime and during his term there was a monastic revival (Ware, 1997: 168). However, despite the improvements, the Church was excluded from the political and decision-making process and some theologians and priests who were critical of this formed the *Rugul Aprins* group, which urged the state and the Church to work together (Tanasescu, 2000: 36).

Ceausescu came to power in 1965 after Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej's death, who in the last years of his rule tried to distance Romania from the Soviet influence. Ceausescu's rise to power was considered as the second liberalization process of Romania from Moscow.<sup>128</sup> It was Gheorghiu-Dej, who started the policy of industrialization and using nationalism as a strategy to legitimize policies of distancing Romania from the Soviet Union (Crowther, 2004: 365) and national communism (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 46). In order to muster support for his new policy line, Ceausescu instrumentalized religious and nationalist sentiments and used a fervent nationalist discourse mixed with religious

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>127</sup> Interview with Prof. Niculescu.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>128</sup> Ceausescu started following an autonomous foreign policy from the Soviet Union. Following 1968 Soviet occupation of Prague he consolidated his anti-Soviet stance (Fosztó, 2007: 82) and the policy of autonomy from Soviet Union (Enev, 2001: 99). Ceausescu used the foreign policy as a tool to improve relations with the West and gaining some autonomy from the Soviet control and room for maneuver (de Nevers, 2003: 241). Ceausescu's condemnation of Soviet intervention of Afghanistan and Kremlin's foreign policies led to the granting of most favored nation status to Romania by the US. In 1971 Romania was admitted to GATT and in 1972 as the first East European state joined the International Monetary Fund (Crampton, 1994: 354).

elements (Crowther, 1998: 198 cited in Tanasescu, 2005: 38; Dragoman, 2008: 69). During his rule, the Church gained more room for religious activity (Enev, 2001: 101-2) on the condition that it kept silent about public matters (Heintz, 2004: 3). It was more than silent approval that the church was granting. Some Orthodox priests were taking part in the party affairs and assemblies, while the Ministry of Cults was managing the religious affairs and it was involved in choosing the priests that would occupy the higher ranks of the church hierarchy (Stan and Turcescu, 2000: 1469).

During Ceausescu rule, religion continued to be an important part of life. Between 1967 and 1989, 773 churches were built and 4924 churches were restored. Even the atheist Communist party members had baptized their kids and had religious burials. Ceausescu's parents were buried in accordance with the Orthodox rites (Gilberg, 1984: 186 cited in Tanasescu, 2005: 39). The personality cults of Ceausescu and his wife Elena was inspired from the Orthodox tradition (Crowther, 1998: 181 cited in Tanasescu, 2005: 147), while the posters were secular reinterpretation of religious icons (Petrescu, 2004: 206 cited in Tanasescu, 2005: 147). The mausoleums of communist heroes was also a reinterpretation of Orthodox shrines and the state sought to venerate national heroes, as was the case with Stephen the Great. The Orthodox Church played a role in the consolidation of the Ceausescu's personality cult, by publicly praising him (Stan and Turcescu, 2005: 675).

According to Gillet the submissive attitude of the ROC during the communist era can be seen as a continuation of caesaro-papism (2001 cited in Muntean, 2005: 86), while Barbu explains this with the lack of "a tradition of resistance against the state".<sup>129</sup> While, the Roman Catholic Church in Poland acted as the leader of the opposition to the Communist state and collaborated with the Solidarity movement, most of the Orthodox Churches under communist regimes have submitted to the authority of the state and rather than the civil society aligned themselves with the communist regime (Stan and Turcescu, 2006: 1120). The ROC agreed to work with a limited level of activism and submitted to the state in order to protect the religion and continue religious activity (Enev, 2001: 102; Stan and Turcescu, 2005: 675). In a certain sense, it has succeeded. According to 1988 figures, the ROC had more churches and priests per capita than all the other Orthodox Churches in the Balkans, Eastern Europe and Soviet Union (Heintz, 2004: 4).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>129</sup> Daniel Barbu. "Religion and modernity in the Romanian public space"

http://www.ku.dk/satsning/religion/sekularism\_and\_beyond/pdf/Paper\_Cordoneanu\_and\_Velica.pdf

The fact that Church had to submit to the authority of the communist state does not, however, mean that there was no resistance from the clergy or the adherents of the Church. There were many dissidents among the Romanian Orthodox clergy that fought against the communist regime (Muntean, 2001: 86). There were also many churches and monasteries that were destroyed and priests that were arrested during this period, which pushed the Church to make further compromises (Tanasescu, 2005: 41-42). Moreover, Ceausescu did not hesitate to order the demolition of many buildings including many churches to open up space for his giant "House of People" building, which is used as the Parliament building now in Romania (Mungiu-Pippidi, 1998).

The communist era had an important impact on the practice of religion as in other countries with communist regimes. According to the accounts of the priests and believers, under the communist regime the church attendance fell and religious practice was carried to the homes from the church. It was true that many of the religious practices, images, verbal expressions related with religion became less visible and frequent and as accounts of people from the city context show that many people had very scarce knowledge about religion. However, religion and religious practices did never disappear altogether (Heintz, 2004: 12; Tanasescu, 2005: 10). Tanasescu, based on her own experiences as someone who grew up in the 80s during the Ceausescu regime in Romania and during her fieldwork in 2004, states that in many houses it was possible to find icons and Orthodox calendars. People kept on venerating saints and celebrated the Christian holy days, while priests conducted baptizing and marriage ceremonies. To a large extent religion was withdrawn to the private sphere but religion was transmitted through symbols, rituals and every day practices to the younger generations (Tanasescu, 2005: 11).

While in the rural context people could practice their religion more freely, this does not mean that there was no intervention from the state. The party was also intervening in the rural context by means of state institutions. Teachers, doctors, engineers, whom Heintz calls as rural intellectuals, had to avoid using religious symbols at home, since their houses were visited by party members (2004: 11). The teachers were ordered to keep students at school at religious holidays. During my fieldwork one of the interviewee, who is coming from a Transylvanian city, told me about the same practice. She told me that they had to be at school for some activities on Sundays at around 09.00, exactly at the same time when the liturgy starts. She also told me that in the city baptisms and marriage ceremonies were either conducted secretly at homes or in distant villages. Her parents, who had a civil marriage, later on conducted a religious ceremony in a distant village. She has learnt about religion from her grandmother and later on she studied at the Faculty of Theology like her husband.

While the Orthodox Church succeeded in gaining some room for religious activities by submitting to the state, there were some churches that were growing without state support. After 1968 the state to some extent has released its stronghold on other religious denominations, which led to the growth of Neo-Protestant churches. As is revealed by the archives of the Securitate<sup>130</sup> in between 1968-1988 there were many conversions to Neo-Protestantism, especially among the Roma population. In 1968 Baptists were the leading denomination among the Neo-Protestant groups with 66,670 members, followed by the Pentecostals with 65,095 members. There were also the Adventists and Evangelicals but considerably less in number. By 1988, the Pentecostal assemblies has risen from 700-793 and the number of Pentecostals grew up to 155,470 (Fosztó, 2007: 83). Interestingly, when the Ceausescu regime became very repressive in the late 80s, the Neo-Protestant churches kept on growing considerably through conversion. This period was the revival of the Pentecostalism in different parts of the world and the state's destruction of old churches, forced migration and relocation of people from the rural areas to the cities in Romania also created a favorable ground, where the Pentecostals could act and adapt more easily given their flexibility of association (Ibid: 84-5).

Relative relaxation period and steps towards liberalization came to a halt within 10 years after Ceausescu came to power and the 80s were the years of economic decline and political repression in Romania.<sup>131</sup> Due to Ceausescu's despotism and nepotism, "socialism in one family" that ruled the country (de Nevers, 2003: 242) intensified people's deprivation in the 80s. Food shortages became unbearable, while opposition to his rule started to grow (Crampton, 1994: 385). Ceausescu refused to implement reforms in Romania even after Gorbachev introduced *glasnost* and *perestroika* and was critical of Gorbachev's move (de Nevers, 2003: 244). His rule also alienated the minorities and made them turn to their religion as a means of resistance to the communist rule.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>130</sup> The *Securitate* as a communist secret police service was based on the Soviet KGB model. The aim was to silence opposition and to extend the control of the Communist party over all spheres of life in Romania. As Romania started pursuing an isolationist policy, the *Securitate* became increasingly independent from KGB. With its personnel, it emerged as the largest per capita Eastern European secret police. Besides full-time agents, it had part-time informers and spies. Even though it was dismantled after the Romanian uprising, it was later reorganized as the Romanian Information Service and many members of it occupy top positions in certain post-communist institutions (Stan, 2004: 343; Stan and Turcescu, 2005: 656-7).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>131</sup> Interview with Prof. Niculescu.

It was the confrontation between a Hungarian priest, László Tökés, and his followers in Timisoara (a Transylvanian city) with the Romanian authorities that later on spread around the country and led to the Romanian revolution in 1989 against the Ceausescu rule (Tanasescu, 2005: 42). Since he allowed three students to recite poetry during religious service in his parish, the Protestant priest came under police pressure. Giving into pressures his bishop decided to send him to a remote parish, which he refused to accept and his supporters started demonstrations. When the police opened fire on the demonstrators, the event spread to other cities (Crampton, 1994: 399). Right after this event, a parade in Bucharest, where Ceausescu was supposed to give a speech, turned into a demonstration and then a bloody uprising on December 21<sup>st</sup>, 1989. Between 21 and 25 December, 5000 people died during the clashes with the police. However, the police joined the people in the streets on December 25<sup>th</sup>. Ceausescu and his wife Elena were caught and executed, which ended the Romanian uprising (Tanasescu, 2005: 43; Crampton, 1994: 399; de Nevers, 2003: 246). Those who sacrificed their lives for the nation had been buried with a religious ceremony in the Revolution Square covered with crosses and religious symbols (Tanasescu, 2005: 44), while the reformist communists took the uprising and, later on, the political power under their control (Crampton, 1994:450).

## **IV.2.** Reconquesting and Reconstructing: Collapse of Communism in Romania and the Romanian Orthodox Church

With the end of the Cold War, a new era has started for the ROC, which made it one of the main actors within the Romanian space but also gave it access to a transnational agency through global processes, the EU integration and transnational Romanian migration. This section discusses to what extent the Orthodox Church succeeded in seizing the opportunities and failed in responding to challenges brought with the new role and agency in post-communist era. After analyzing the role of the Church within Romania, a discussion on the stance of the Church towards global influences and the EU integration follows.

**IV.2.1. Rebirth of the Romanian Orthodox Church:** In the post-communist era, religious institutions that had to work with a limited mandate found themselves entrusted with the task of filling the post-1989 vacuum and taking on more social and political responsibilities to address different problems and expectations (Flora and Szilagyi, 2005:

109). Fall of the communism ended the repression of religious communities, provided legitimacy and high level of support for religion and opened a new area of agency for religious institutions (Ibid: 138), while setting the rules for religious pluralism within the ex-communist as well as the Romanian religious landscape. The religious institutions indulged in a vigorous reconstruction effort to undo the damages incurred under communism.

Despite the damage caused by the communist era on the ROC, it survived, as Lakatos argues, "not because, but in spite of, its attitude" during communism (1998b: 17). The Socialist ethic failed to replace the religion in societies under the communist rule (Lakatos, 1998a: 2) and the Orthodox Church emerged as the only institution that survived the one-party rule. However, the compromises made by the Church in order to survive started to be questioned by public opinion. In the early 90s in Romanian politics, one of the main issues was the public disclosure of the names, who have collaborated with the regime and who were fully or partially involved with the Securitate. Following the fall of the regime, the communist crimes came under investigation. Within this context, the hierarchy of the ROC also came under criticism (Stan and Turcescu, 2005: 655-6; Ramet, 2007: xivxvi), particularly Patriarch Teoctist. When Teoctist became the Patriarch in 1986, the Church was already under the Party's control. The Church was made to collaborate through threatening of the clergy, monitoring of the Church activity as well as the transfer of property of the Greek-Catholic Church. Before becoming the Patriarch, Teoctist was the Metropolitan of Moldova and Bukovina, the holder of which becomes the Patriarch according to the tradition.<sup>132</sup> As the Patriarch he assented to the demolition of 22 Orthodox churches until 1989 (Stan and Turcescu, 2005: 659-60; Stan and Turcescu, 2006: 1126). He was also accused of keeping silent, while the Ceausescu was destroying Romania's heritage.

Under increasing public criticism, Patriarch Teoctist stepped down asking to be excused of his duties owing to the health issues and old age (Ramet, 1998: 199) and came on television to publicly apologize from the Romanian people for yielding to communist oppression and supporting Ceausescu. After this public apology he retreated to a monastery in 1990. He asked the anti-communist prelates and the Orthodox laymen to choose a new patriarch. However, his resignation was against the Orthodox canon law, since a Patriarch can only resign if he is physically or mentally incapacitated. Furthermore, there were

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>132</sup> This tradition was respected in the election of the new Patriarch Daniel, who was the Metropolitan of Moldova and Bukovina before becoming the Patriarch in September 2007.

concerns that his resignation can set a precedent leading to change of the Patriarchs due to political reasons. Therefore, Patriarch Teoctist returned back to his post within three months (Stan and Turcescu, 2005: 661-2) and the Holy Synod reinstated him (Ware, 1997: 168). Apart from the Patriarch's public apology, there were no further moves to deal with the allegations of collaboration with the communist regime on the part of the Church hierarchy.<sup>133</sup> Moreover, the Church adopted the stance to prove that the Church was one of the opponents of the regime (Stan and Turcescu, 2005: 663) and it started with reinstating the priests that were deposed due to the pressure from the Party for their dissidence or refusal to submit to the Party (Ibid: 670).

However, this did not end the allegations. There were further allegations on some Orthodox clergy for being members of the *Securitate* or providing information about the adherents of the Church by breaking confessional secrecy (Ibid: 666). Moreover, there were the *Securitate* agents claiming that they were gathering information through a network of the Orthodox priests, who were trained by the *Securitate* to participate in nationalist-communist propaganda activities (Ibid: 672-3).<sup>134</sup> The Greek-Catholic senators and clergy were campaigning for opening the files (Ibid: 677-8).<sup>135</sup> There was also opposition within the Church urging the Church to deal with the allegations regarding collaboration with the communist regime such as the Group for Reflection on Church Renewal. The Group asked the Holy Synod members to resign and open room for younger generations. However, this was not accepted by the Church hierarchy, even though there was a partial renewal due to deteriorating health of some Synod members. There were also the Orthodox priests, who were asking for the opening of the *Securitate* files about all the Orthodox priests (Ibid: 682).<sup>136</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>133</sup> Based on *Securitate* files, there were further allegations on Patriarch Teoctist for being a member of the fascist Iron Guard in his youth and taking part in an attack to a synagogue in Bucharest. The Patriarch did not respond to the allegations (Stan and Turcescu, 2005: 663-4).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>134</sup> The Securitate agent claims that the training given to the Orthodox clergy, who collaborated with the secret police, led to intolerance towards other religious denominations, particularly towards the Greek-Catholics (*Evenimentul Zilei*, 14 June 1999 cited in Stan and Turcescu, 2005: 674).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>135</sup> In 2000, the Romanian parliament established the Council for the Study of *Securitate* Archives (CNSAS) to give Romanian citizens access to the files compiled by the communist era security police, *Securitate* (Stan, 2004: 341). However, the Council did not share most of the information about its activity and therefore did not accomplish its mission of opening of the files to public scrutiny (342). It was only in 1999 with efforts of the Christian Democrat senator Constantin Ticu Dumitrescu public gained partial access to some files (Stan and Turcescu, 2005: 656). Besides the restrictions on access, there are allegations that the *Securiate* files have been modified or partially destroyed (657).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>136</sup> The communist regime also had collaborators from the members of religious minorities. In 2007 Baptist priest Iosif Ton confessed that he had worked as an informer to *Securitate* and claimed that there were many other members of the Baptist community that collaborated with the secret police. There were many other priests or rabbis that accepted or were identified as informers to secret police (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 89).

Rather than supporting the opening of the files, the Church with a letter in 2001 asked the committee investigating the secret police files not to reveal the names of the religious figures that have collaborated with the regime. This move found support from the Social Democrats in power and the Greater Romania Party in opposition, which defines the Church as the main element of the Romanian identity (Ibid: 681; Muntean, 2005: 84). The Church rejected all the allegations regarding the collaboration with the *Securitate* and these allegations, rather than targeting the Church as an institution, remained as allegations on some Orthodox clergy. It was only Metropolitan Nicolae of Banat among the hierarchs, who confessed that he was an informant to the *Securitate* in 1996 (Mungiu-Pippidi, 1998; Stan and Turcescu, 2005: 671). Up to date the issue has not reached a conclusion and it keeps haunting the Church (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 88-9).

Even though these allegations damaged the Church's image and debate on this issue did not die down, it did not prevent it from becoming an important political actor. As Gillet argues, the ROC has a great adaptive capacity to survive the regime changes in Romania from the fascist one to the communist and now democratic regimes and European integration (1995: 359-60). The new president of Romania Ion Iliescu was a Communist party member, who publicly declared himself an atheist. However, this did not stop Patriarch Teoctist from working with the new President for democratic Romania (Mungiu-Pippidi, 1998). Therefore, the ideal of symphonia was revitalized by the Church (Stan and Turcescu, 2000: 1470; Mungiu-Pippidi, 1998) and it found a wide-scale acceptance, since identification with religion was a way for many to do away with the communist past. As is clear from what one Romanian Orthodox priest stated, what was important for the church was to survive communism and it continued its duty to the people "even if it had to take the rituals into the believer's homes and out of the sacred Church" (Tanasescu, 2005: 11). The Church is also trying to emphasize the Orthodox priests, who have been "martyred" due to torture of the communist state in prison in an effort to "reaffirm its position as protector of the people and faith through centuries of oppression and persecution" (Ibid: 94) and as a proof that it was the victim of the communist regime. Therefore, the ROC in postcommunist era has started to work with a new found legitimacy and became a powerful political actor (Stan and Turcescu, 2006: 1119).

One of the main reasons behind the Church's popularity is its vigorous reconstruction effort. "Reconstruction" was the key word for the ROC just after the 1989 as is revealed by the official bulletin of the Church (BOR, 1990, CVIII, 11-12: 98). The ROC

in post-communist Romania has become one of the main actors in political and social life, gained more public visibility and started reconquesting what has been lost during the Cold War years. The Church has gained the freedom to perform religious services and organize religious activities and indulged in reconstruction activities in different spheres of religious and social life such as the reconstruction of monasteries, churches, reorganization of episcopates, organization of catechism for children and young people, opening of seminary schools and theology departments at universities, introduction of religious education to public schools, organization of social assistance for the priests and faithful and giving national recognition to martyrs of the church, indulging into missionary work (through intensification of religious associations for women and youth), formation of good relations with other denominations in Romania and with international religious organizations (Ibid: 97-8). The need to change the pastoral method after 1989 (BOR, 1990, CVIII, 11-12: 101), revising the statute of the ROC in accordance with the liberal democratic system (Ibid: 102) and adapting the church publications to the liberal democratic context (Ibid: 101) were stated in the official church publications. As the presence of priests in different public institutions became legitimate, the Patriarchate resumed its activities in the army, prisons, hospitals and orphanages, reactivated or reestablished associations and charities that were closed down during the communist era.<sup>137</sup> The ROC has created or reestablished 12 eparchies with buildings and lands and it even used the buildings of the Communist Party. It has opened 13 new theology faculties and by 2003 the number of students undergoing pastoral training has reached up to 12,444 (Andreescu, 2003: 44-5 cited in Fosztó, 2007: 15).<sup>138</sup>

According to the current organization of the ROC, the highest authority is the Holy Synod headed by the Patriarch. All metropolitans, archbishops, bishops, assistant bishops to the Patriarch and assistant bishops in function are the members of the Holy Synod. Besides the matters regarding the Church's organization and functioning, the examinations and expression of the Patriarchate regarding matters of general interest of the society, normative projects and acts of the state concerning religious cults, religious education, social and religious assistance, national cultural patrimony and some other fields of religious and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>137</sup> In 2002 the number of Orthodox clergy amounted to 201 in hospitals, 62 in the army, 38 in penitentiaries and 48 in houses for the homeless (Flora and Szilagyi, 2005:135).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>138</sup> Other religious denominations also went through a process of expansion, which however does not match with the growth of the ROC.

social interest are among the attributes of the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate.<sup>139</sup> National Church Assembly of the Patriarchate deals with all the administrative, economical, sociocultural issues. It is composed of three representatives (one clergy, two lay persons) from each diocese or archdiocese elected for four years. The members of the Holy Synod may also participate in the assembly. The main executive organ of the Church is National Church Council. It has 12 members, who are members of the National Church Assembly (one clergy and one lay person from each Metropolitanate in Romania) elected for four years. The current Patriarch of the Church is His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel, who was enthroned as the 6<sup>th</sup> Patriarch of Romanian on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

At local level the administrative units of the Church are the parish church, monastery, deanery, eparchy (archdiocese and diocese and metropolitanate). The Metropolitanates are directly connected to the Patriarchate. The ROC has 6 Metropolitanates in Romania, which in total have 13,527 parishes, 14,513 priests and deacons and 15,218 places of worship. In addition to Metropolitanates in Romania, the Patriarchate has 3 Metropolitanates composed of 3 Archdioceses and 6 Dioceses in Europe; an Archdiocese in the Americas and a Diocese of Australia and New Zealand.<sup>140</sup> In line with increasing the spiritual mission of the Church, the current Patriarch also believes that there is the need to go beyond the walls of the Church through radio, television and daily newspaper of the Church (*News Bulletin*, September 2007: 14). Therefore, recently, the Patriarchate launched its own news agency, Basilica News Agency.<sup>141</sup>

The news agency is part of Basilica Press Center of the Romanian Patriarchate and it is established in accordance with the missionary vocation of the Church with an aim to present the institutions, activities and attitudes regarding contemporary challenges of the Church by publishing news and documents. It works in close collaboration with the Press Bureau, Radio TRINITAS, TRINITAS TV<sup>142</sup> and *Ziarul Lumina* (The Light) daily and administrative organs of the Patriarchate. The agency has correspondents in Romania and abroad and publishes news in Romanian and English, but also planning to have French and Russian versions in near future.<sup>143</sup> The Church has several publications such as *Biserica Ortodoxă Română* (the Official Bulletin of the Romanian Patriarchate), *Ortodoxia, Studii* 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>139</sup> "The Statutes for the Organisation and Functioning of the ROC General Stipulations", 7 <u>http://www.patriarhia.ro/\_upload/documente/121438488425759490.pdf</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>140</sup> The official website of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate: <u>http://www.patriarhia.ro</u>

<sup>141</sup> http://www.basilica.ro/

<sup>142</sup> http://radio.trinitas.ro/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>143</sup> http://www.basilica.ro/en/events\_2008/the\_romanian\_patriarchate\_launched\_its\_own\_news\_agency.html

*Teologice, Vestitorul Ortodoxiei, Chemarea Credintei*, News Bulletin, some of which are available online. Considerable increase in the Church publications, which reached 43 reviews and 50 books in 1998<sup>144</sup> and publication of Bibles, religious books, books for children and release of CDs, video cassettes, films and icons (BOR, 1990, CVIII, 11-12: 99) could also be seen as a sign of the effort to reach out to broader public (Flora and Szilagyi, 2005:132). The official website of the Patriarchate is also recently updated and redesigned and now has English version. These are all signs that besides the vigorous reconstruction effort in Romania, the Church is conscious of the opening of the Church to Europe, the US and the outer world. The new Patriarch,<sup>145</sup> who is relatively young and knows the European context very well, has also brought new dynamism.

The second most important factor that helped the rebirth of the Church and helped it in its reconstruction effort was its use of nationalism. Stan and Turcescu argue that it was the nationalism that helped the Church, which claimed to be the protector of traditional values to gain back the prestige, credibility and support of the people (2007: 201). The revival of religion in post-communist societies was a result of quests for spirituality, emphasis on tradition and willingness to undo the communist destruction of religion as well as resurfacing of national identities, which were repressed under the communist rule (Merdjanova, 2000: 257). As Eastern European states became "explicitly national" with the fall of the Berlin Wall (Ibid: 254), traditions and return to the foundations become valuable (Ibid: 255). With the collapse of the communist regime and ideology, religion and nationalism emerged as the substitutes for the people (Turliuc, 1998: 287). Merdjanova defines the post-communist nationalism in Eastern Europe as political religion (2000: 234), since it sacralizes nation, race, state or class and translates religious concepts and symbols into nonreligious categories (Voegelin, 1938 cited in Merdjanova, 2000: 248). In turn the

<sup>144</sup> http://www.crestinism-ortodox.ro/html\_en/index.html

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>145</sup> Patriarch Teoctist passed away on July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007 (*News Bulletin*, August 2007: 2). One day after his death the President Bàsescu decorated the deceased Patriarch with the "Star of Romania National Order in Collar Degree" as a sign of his appreciation for his life time service to the ROC and national unity as well as for his contributions to dialogue among the Christian churches. He is the first Patriarch to receive the Star (*News Bulletin*, August 2007: 4). His funeral took place on August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2007 (Ibid: 3) and burial service was celebrated by the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. The President and Prime Minister of Romania and many other public figures were present at his funeral (Ibid: 6). Metropolitan Daniel became the Patriarch on September 12<sup>th</sup> 2007. The enthronement ceremony took place on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007. The President, Prime minister, public figures, delegates of Romanian communities abroad and representatives of the Diplomatic missions in Bucharest were present at the ceremony (*News Bulletin*, September 2007: 4). The President Băsescu awarded the new Patriarch the "Romanian Star National Order with Great Cross Degree", which is the highest degree for the clergy to the new Patriarch (Ibid: 6). During his talk the President expressed his hope of increasing collaboration of the state with the Church for the resolution of social issues as well as ensuring unity of Romanian people. He stated that in the future "all the Romanians need the partnership with the Church, which is a source of culture, patriotism and values" (Ibid: 6).

Orthodox Churches embrace the nationalist discourse and capitalize on the nationalist sentiment.

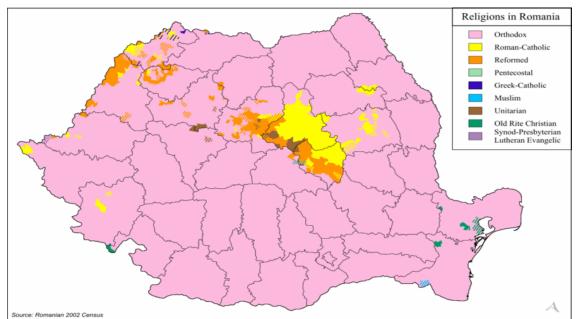
In the post-Cold War era, the ROC presents itself as "the institution" of spiritual guidance and social assistance and its presence "as the privileged *keeper* and *guardian* of national values" (Conovici, 2006: 1). For the Church, the end of the communist rule symbolizes the "moral and spiritual rebirth of Romanian people (BOR, 1990, CVIII, 11-12: 113) and the new era has brought "a new atmosphere of spiritual and national rebirth" (Ibid: 96). The Holy Synod states that the ROC as the "national and majority church" and as the protector of national interest and Romanian culture and language is willing to contribute to the spiritual rebirth (Ibid: 177). The Church hierarchs keep on reiterating this message, <sup>146</sup> while the pastoral messages, declarations, Church publications are used to express its nationalist stance (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 50). The canonization of national heroes such as Stephen the Great by Patriarch Teoctist was a confirmation of the nationalist stance of the Church. The reopening of the Bessarabian Metropolitanate and the attempts to construct a big Cathedral in Bucharest were also indicatiors of the Church's use of nationalist discourse to extend its reach and gain more power. The Church tried to avert rivaling churches through the use of nationalist discourse.

The ROC's claim to be the "national church" of Romanian people, besides being a pre-communist status, has some solid foundations. Within the entire Orthodox world, post-Communist Romania occupies the first place in terms of high level of religious practice and commitment (Agadjanian and Roudometof, 2005:16). According to pooled World Values Survey data collected in five waves since 1981 until 2001, among the post-communist countries Poland, Romania and Bosnia-Herzegovina emerge as more religious, while Eastern Germany, Estonia and Montenegro tend to be less religious (Norris and Inglehart, 2004: 121). According to different surveys conducted in 2000s, Romania emerges to be one of the most religious countries in the region (Voicu, 2007: 13). According to 1992 and 2002<sup>147</sup> censuses the people of the Orthodox creed is around 87% of the whole population,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>146</sup> During his visit to Germany, Patriarch Teoctist talked about the role of the ROC in preserving the cultural and spiritual values and identity of Romanian people all throughout the history and during the communist regime (BOR, 2006, CXXIV, 7-12: 102).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>147</sup> According to the latest census data conducted on 18-27 March 2002, the population of Romania is 21,698,181 and the Orthodoxy is the religion revered by the majority of the population (18,806,428, 86.7%). There are other churches and religions within the Romanian religious landscape. The number of Roman Catholics is 1,028,401, which is 4.7% of the population and they are mainly of Hungarian or German origin, while the number of Greek-Catholics is 195,481 and it is 0.9% of the Romanian population. The reformed church members reach up to 698,550, which makes the %3,2 of the population. There are different Protestant churches revered by 5-6% of the population. There is also a small Muslim

which makes the ROC second after the Russian Orthodox Church in terms of adherents. The ROC claims the allegiance of four of five Romanian citizens (Stan and Turcescu, 2000: 1467). Recent polls show that the Orthodox Church is the most popular and trusted institution in Romania in post-Communist era not only in Romania but also within the whole post-communist Orthodox world (Bogomilova, 2004: 8). The ROC is one of the most trusted institutions by the public according to the nation-wide poll conducted in 2001 (Flora and Szilagyi, 2005:121). A survey conducted in two counties of Romania also show that majority favor the Church's involvement for the solution of ethical and social problems (Ibid: 122).





However, constitutionally the ROC is not the national church of Romania. 1991 constitution in Romania declared separation of religion and state and guaranteed equal rights for all religious denominations without making any specific reference to the ROC. At its July 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> session, the Holy Synod of the Church has decreed to suggest constitutional amendments to certain provisions of the Constitution. The Holy Synod asked for the amendment of the provision on the status of the Orthodox Church and suggested the adoption of the article recognizing the ROC as "the national church" of the Romanian people, which is a continuation of its historical identity and as a church revered by the great

community composed of Turks and Tartars, which makes 0.3% of the population. Those of other religions is 0,4%, without any religion 0.1%, atheists under 0.1% and those that do not declare their religious denomination is 0.1%. <sup>148</sup> <u>http://www.wikipedia.org</u>

majority of Romanians.<sup>149</sup> 1992 census allowed the Church to make further claims that it is a Church revered by the majority of the population and it has the right to act to protect the rights of the majority (Tanasescu, 2005: 54). The Church was also concerned about the "equal treatment" of all religious denominations and was not ready to accept religious pluralism in Romania (Stan and Turcescu, 2006: 1119), which led it to declare itself as the "national church" in 1993 (Mungiu-Pippidi, 1998; Bria, 1995: vii). However, this claim of the ROC has not been officially recognized (Ramet, 2006: 161). This did not stop the Church from seeking recognition of its pre-communist status. For instance the Holy Synod stated in 1994 that the ROC is the "national church" but will participate in the debate on the Law on Religious Cults (denominations) as the "majority and national church" (BOR, 1994, 7-12: 372). Patriarch Teoctist argued that whoever denies the national church status of the Church has grown together throughout the history (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 30). Even as late as 1998 Archbishop Anania of Cluj repeated the request of the Church to be recognized as the national church (Ibid: 30-31).

In order to compensate for the failure to get the national church status, the Church indulged in the construction of a very big Cathedral, Cathedral of Nation's Salvation in Bucharest<sup>150</sup>, which led to a big public debate. From the Orthodox Church's perspective

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>149</sup> The Holy Synod made some other suggestions at the same session. The Church proposed to add a phrase to the article of the constitution on the freedom of thought and religion the phrase "Religious proselytism is forbidden". The Church also proposed to amend the article on religious education on public schools, which make religious education facultative. The Church asked for putting the religious education under state guarantee removing the phrase on the education being facultative (BOR, 1991, CIX, 10-12: 234) (25-26 July 1991 Session).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>150</sup> The idea of constructing a cathedral goes back to the Romanian independence from the Ottomans to symbolize the victory of the Orthodoxy against Muslims (Stan and Turcescu, 2006: 1123); however, it was not materialized. After the Church became a Patriarchate in 1925, the Patriarch Cristea called for the construction of the cathedral again. The construction of a very big cathedral was planned to assert and celebrate the freedom from Austro-Hungarian and Russian domination and the construction was once again delayed with the lack of funds (Ibid: 1124). During the communist rule, it was not possible to bring up the issue. The Orthodox Church wanted to materialize the dream with the end of the communist rule. There were attempts even in 1943 at the time of the Patriarch Munteanu. After 1989 the idea came back to life (News Bulletin, 2003: 10). In 1995 the Consulting Commission for Building the Cathedral for Nation's Salvation was set up, which included the Church hierarchs and members of the Church National Council as well as professors, theologians, historians, architects and engineers (Ibid: 11). The initiatives for construction of the Cathedral received mixed reactions from different segments of the society. While some argued that it is against the Orthodox tradition of some churches, some others objected that it will be very costly to construct the Cathedral at a time when Romania was in a period of economic and political transition. One of the main problems regarding the construction of the Cathedral was the disputed ownership of all the proposed lands. One of the lands was demanded by the Greek-Catholic minority for restitution. Moreover, on the same site there was a communist monument and the decision to destroy it led to protests. Many opponents regarded it as a "megalomaniac enterprise" (Heintz, 2004: 6). The Church responded the criticisms arguing that it is a necessity, since the current Patriarchal See has a capacity for only 500 people, which is very small for a European capital such as Bucharest with 2,000,000 inhabitants and the Romanian Patriarch is the only Patriarch in Eastern Europe that is celebrating the liturgy in a Metropolitan Church. The Church wanted the Cathedral to be the biggest and tallest church in entire Romania; a 10,000 seat cathedral that would occupy three hectares of land with a commercial centre and parking lot, a Cathedral which for many was alien to Orthodoxy (Stan and Turcescu, 2006: 1127). At the end, the government had to give up the idea of demolishing the monument of the Unknown Soldier, arguing the communism is part of the history of Romania, which it has to deal with. In 2004 elections, Traian Basescu, who has been the mayor of

"the new cathedral symbolizes the central place Orthodoxy occupies in the heart and mind of the nation" (Stan and Turcescu, 2006: 1121). Moreover, for the Patriarchate, the construction of the Cathedral would be a symbol of moral reconstruction after the Communist destruction<sup>151</sup> and would reverse the negative effects of the globalization on Romanian morality.<sup>152</sup>

Even though the state does not recognize the ROC as the "national church" it is not at an equal distance to the ROC as it is to other denominations,<sup>153</sup> which brings us to the third important factor that contributed to the ROC's rebirth and reinvigoration. Reconquest of the Romanian religious landscape would not have been possible without the contribution of the Romanian state. Rule of the social democrats under Iliescu from 1990 to 1996 and political victory of Christian Democrats in 1996, was instrumental in giving the Church a greater public role and involvement in issues other than religion in Romania (Mungiu-Pippidi, 1998). The Christian Democrats aimed at the reconstruction of morality in Romania, which would be based on family, school and the church (Barbu, 2004: 259 cited in Tanasescu, 2005: 58). During the rule of the Christian Democrats the Church made certain advancements. Religion courses at schools became mandatory (Mungiu-Pippidi, 1998).<sup>154</sup> By the mid-90s, there were around 900 churches that were being built (Verdery, 1999: 71 cited in Tanasescu, 2005: 56). As a communist, who defined religion as the opium of society in line with the Marxist ideology (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 14), Iliescu did not

Bucharest and who played an important role on the fate of the proposed Cathedral, won the elections and this postponed the realization of the Cathedral project (Tanasescu, 2005: 64-66). However, after winning the elections, Basescu changed his stance declaring his support for the construction of the Cathedral (Ibid: 1138). The Cathedral issue is not resolved vet. even though the Church has not given up on the project. <sup>151</sup> "Fericiți cei ce Construiesc Biserici, Nu cei ce le Demolează"

http://www.patriarhia.ro/ro/documente/comunicat\_8.html

The ROC is not the only Orthodox Church that took the initiative for the construction of a Cathedral in postcommunist era. Following the fall of the communist regime in Russia, the Church engaged into 300 million dollar project of establishing a cathedral, Christ the Saviour, which turned into the symbol of defeat of atheism (della Cava, 2001: 541).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>153</sup> Article 29 of the 1991 constitution guarantees freedom of conscience and autonomy of religious sects, charging the state with the duty to facilitate the presence of religion within state institutions. In 2000 the Law 21 of 1924 on associations and foundations has been abrogated with the Law 26. The new law eliminated the obstacles in the registration process for religious institutions - in Romania in order to be officially recognized and to fulfill its functions the religious institutions need to be registered - as well as the need for the approval of the State Secretariat for Religious Denominations in order to be registered (Ibid: 128). In 2002 an amendment was made to the constitution to allow the churches to establish their own educational institutions (Ibid: 133) allowing them to be active in the field of education. Moreover, the state has passed laws on two very delicate issues despite the opposition from all religious denominations. The state legalized abortion in 1989. Abrogation of the communist law that punished homosexuality proved to be more difficult, since it raised reactions from all religious denominations. Under increasing pressure from the EU the state changed the law (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 203). Therefore, even though Romania has changed 1948 law on religious denominations very recently and many religious denominations are not happy with the new law, religious denominations in the post-communist Romania work within a different institutional framework and context.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>154</sup> There are certain problems related with the religious education in public schools. Even though the students have the right to opt out of religion classes, few parents choose to do so, since the request has to be done officially. Moreover, no alternative classes are presented for those who would opt out (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 203).

use religion for electoral success. However, after Constantinescu's victory in 1996 elections, which successfully turned religion to an electoral tool, religion and religious symbols became an important element of the election campaigns (Ibid). Following his reelection in 2000, Iliescu sought to have closer relations with the Church and he supported the Church's case against the disclosure of priests' names that worked with *Securitate* (Stan and Turcescu, 2005: 683-4).<sup>155</sup> The Church also started using media more intensively to spread its message (Tanasescu, 2005: 56). State television created a new department, called "Spiritual Life", and started showing religious (Orthodox) programs in two channels eighthours a week (Mungiu-Pippidi, 1998). The State Secretariat regulating religious affairs is dominated by the Orthodox Church. All the secretaries after 1989, except one, were graduates of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 28). This gave the Orthodox Church upper hand in delaying a new law on religious denominations that did not grant the national church status to the Orthodox Church (Ibid: 29).

Despite its active involvement in public space in Romania, the Church was interested in increasing its involvement in political life. Archbishop Bartolomeu Anania of Cluj suggested that the priests should give electoral advices to public and should be given the right to become life-time senators in the parliament, while people were of the opinion that the Church should continue its duty, which is religious service to the people (Mungiu-Pippidi, 1998).<sup>156</sup> This raised a cause of concern for the international bodies arguing this would hamper the democratic system and equality principle in Romania if 27 posts in the Senate were given to priests or Church leaders, who are chosen for a life time. The government did not approve this proposal (Tanasescu. 2005: 59). Another similar suggestion came from Patriarch Teoctist at Putna in 2004, who called for closer collaboration between the state and the church similar to the one between the rulers and priests in the medieval ages (Ibid: 159). However, the same year before the 2004 local and general elections in Romania, the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate has banned the Orthodox clergy from taking active part in the electoral campaigns or getting involved in party politics, becoming members of the Parliament or take part in local or central public administration, stating that in accordance with the Holy Canons of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>155</sup> Christian Democrat Emil Constantinescu asked President Iliescu at a televised debate if he believed in God. Iliescu did not expect such a question and was unable to answer (Stan and Turcescu, 2005: 683-4).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>156</sup> It is not only the Orthodox Church that was involved in politics. The Reformed Church threatened its parishioners that if they do not vote for the Democratic Union of Magyars in Romania they will risk exclusion from their congregations (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 202).

Universal Church to receive earthly jobs is incompatible with priestly duties (*News Bulletin*, 2004: 2).<sup>157</sup>

In Romania, the religious denominations recognized by the state, get funds from the state to pay the salaries of the clergy and for the construction or reparation of places of worship. However, based on the reports of the Solidarity for Freedom of Conscience in Bucharest,<sup>158</sup> Muntean argues that the majority of these funds go to the ROC, since it is the church revered by the majority. This; however, is another issue of contention among different religious denominations in Romania. It is not only the monetary support that the ROC gets is the problem, but also the acquisition of construction material at a lower price as well as the usage of workforce such as the army or prisoners in construction (2005: 88). During 1990-2004, the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate has built 2000 worship places and there are 1000 more under construction. Romania is estimated to have the highest number of churches per capita in Europe (Stan and Turcescu, 2006:.1121). 2004 elections gave a boost to the public and political role of the Church. The Social Democrats in order to repair their tarnished image owing to the corruption charges and defeat their rivals tried to take the Church on their side, the public support of which was reaching up to 80%. The government channeled money for the construction and restoration of churches, Iliescu openly declared his support for the construction of the Cathedral of Nation's Salvation in Bucharest.<sup>159</sup> Recently, the support of the state to the Church in its construction effort has extended out of Romania, namely to the Romanian Orthodox diaspora.

Even though there are many factors and what we present here is not exhaustive, the last factor that is deemed to be important in contributing to the growing agency of the ROC in the post-communist era is the emergence of religiosity in Romania. With religiosity we do not only mean growing church attendance, since the church attendance is not the only way of measuring religious commitment of a community. Beyond the institutional level, the religiosity manifests itself in different ways in Romania. Furthermore, observing religious representations such as religious images, verbal and nonverbal practices related with religion in different contexts can provide us with more "appropriate measurement tools" regarding religiosity (Heintz, 2004: 2).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>157</sup> This seems to be what people expect from the Orthodox clergy. According to the survey conducted by the Institute for Public Policy in Bucharest in 2003, while 50% believed that non-religious politicians should not hold office, the majority of the respondents were not happy with the intervention or influence of the priests in political life.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>158</sup> Solidarity for Freedom of Conscience, Bucharest has been established to draw attention and fight against the faithbased discrimination and practices that breach the principle of secularism in Romania. <u>http://www.iheu.org/node/1577.</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>159</sup> However, close relations with the Church did not help the Social Democrats to win the 2004 elections.

It is possible to trace religious representations both in the rural and urban context in the post-Communist Romania. Those who lived in rural areas and did not have much contact with the Communist party or ideology were relatively free to practice their religion. Especially after the 60s, there was more religious freedom in the rural context. Therefore, the fall of the communist regime did not lead to big changes in terms of religious practice (Ibid: 6). This is also what I have been told by the interviewees coming from the rural context in Romania. The religion within the rural context is more ritualistic and a community affair. Many villagers define the religious practice on Christian holidays as part of the tradition rather than religion. It was in the urban context what led to a considerable change after 1989 in terms of religious practice such as increasing church attendance of all age groups, growing number of churches and television programs about religion, presence and increasing visibility of religious symbols at schools, image of people (especially young) making the sign of cross when they see a church (Ibid: 7),<sup>160</sup> considerable increase in the number of people who respect the practice of fasting (Ibid: 13) and restaurants offering menus during the period of fasting (Ibid: 14).<sup>161</sup>

However, rather than revival, Heinz argues that the change in the religious life of the city in Romania should be termed as "renewal" given the fact that religion became more faith-based and individualistic and less traditionalistic and communal (Ibid: 7). This new form of faith and personal relationship with God was also promoted by the Christian intellectuals through the use of mass media. This might mean less church attendance and a critical stance toward the clergy. There are also tendencies towards individual *bricolage* (Ibid: 18), which however is at its very initial stages.

The ROC in the post-communist era became an important actor in the transformation of the Romanian society and succeeded in gaining people's support and in reconquesting Romanian political, religious and socio-cultural spheres of life. It is obvious that reactions to the forty years of repression of religion and increasing religious freedom, the freedom of the Church to be more active in the social life and public space, its search to be the moral guide of people in Romania through the clergy in churches, schools, army,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>160</sup> This was one of the very perplexing images for me during my first days in Bucharest in March 2007. It was mainly young people who were making the sign of cross as the bus passed in front of each and every church. Another interesting thing was to see many people reading the Bible on the bus.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>161</sup> This seems to be what people expect from the Orthodox clergy. According to the survey conducted by the Institute for Public Policy in Bucharest in 2003, while 50% believed that non-religious politicians should not hold the office, the majority of the respondents were not happy with the intervention or influence of the priests in political life.

prisons and other public institutions had an impact on religious reinvigoration in Romania. Besides its activism extending beyond the boundaries of Romania, its nationalist discourse, increasing religiosity within the Romanian society and Romanian state's support and collaboration were also instrumental in making the ROC an important actor within Romania. In this section we have discussed the internal dynamics of Romania. The next section evaluates the encounter of the ROC with globalization and the influence of global factors and forces on the agency of the Church.

**III.2.2.** The Romanian Orthodox Church and Globalization: As Romanian society becomes more open to global forces and influences after the fall of communism, throughout the transition period to global market economy and democracy, accession process into the EU and transnational migration, the ROC feels the challenge of globalization in its heartland more closely. Bria argues that it is not only the communist period that weakened the religious organizations. Transformations the society is going through, rapid transition from rural parishes into urban communities without proper preparation and revision of worshipping services, increasing influence of mass media on the society have important repercussions for the religious traditions in Romania (1995: 44). Therefore, the ROC is trying to develop strategies to cope with a rapidly changing society and a regional, international and global volatile context.

According to Fr. Dr. Ion Stoica, both the communist ideology and the secularization ideology were born within the Western context and "Easterners" were/are rather receivers and victims of these two de-Christianizing forces. In addition to the secularizing forces now the Orthodoxy faces the challenge of globalization, which make people "rootless" and "disoriented" (Ibid: 186). As he puts it dramatically, the East European man, who has been emancipated from totalitarian force of communism, is now being enslaved by his own (material and other) temptations (Ibid: 188). He finds the solution to problems posed by globalization within the Orthodox tradition. He argues that "the life of Orthodoxy is the tradition" (Ibid: 206). However, at the same time he emphasizes the dynamism in tradition, which keeps it "permanently actual". While performing its main apostolical mission, he argues, the Church cannot and should not ignore or underestimate the contemporary problems or concerns. He; therefore, criticizes the conservative stance within the Orthodoxy, since it leads to inertia and makes the Church fall behind the global developments (Ibid: 206) and argues for a more open dialogue with globalization in order

to cope with problems it creates. While he accepts that the need to reconcile the Orthodox tradition with modernity renders the task of the Orthodox priests very difficult, especially in reaching out to the "man of the computer" (Ibid: 196), Stoica sees evolution as part of the future of the Orthodoxy in line with the developments in art, science and technology rendering the Orthodox people capable of coping with change (Ibid: 203).

One important consequence of the fall of communism and opening up to global forces and factors is religious pluralism. The transition to liberal democracy and global market economy and the prospects for joining the EU led to legislative initiatives for further democratization and this had important implications for religious institutions in Romania, especially for the ROC. The ROC started facing competition from other churches that were free to act in democratic Romania with a crucial amount of foreign support and pressure on the Romanian governments. The starting paragraphs of the section on the achievements and perspectives of the ROC after 1989 on the Patriarchate's official website clearly indicates that the Church considers religious pluralism in Romania in the post-communist era as the biggest challenge:

The events in December brought about a series of changes not only in the political and social life of the country, but also in the religious one. Soon after those events, our Church was faced with new challenges, which she would be obliged to face in the future too, but for which she was not prepared. For example, as far back as December 1989, the existence of the Catholic Church of Latin Rite (former Greek Catholic or United) was recognised; in March 1990, the Vatican appointed six Catholic bishops of "Latin Rite" and five others of "Greek Rite" or Oriental (for Blaj, Oradea, Lugoj, Cluj-Napoca and Baia Mare) without the previous approval of the Romanian state authorities. In 1991, the metropolitan of Blaj, Alexandru Todea, was raised to the rank of cardinal by the Pope. These hierarchs, as well as some priests who had not returned to Orthodoxy in 1948 or those ordained in the meantime, started an intense proselyte activity, in view of attracting Orthodox priests and faithful to the Catholic Church of Greek Rite. In spite of the fact that they have a small number of faithful (228,377 according to the census of 1992), yet they reopened Theological Academies in Blaj, Cluj-Napoca, Baia Mare and Oradea.

During the first months of 1990, the legal existence of several neo-Protestant cults was recognised (as associations). All these cults started an intense proselyte activity among the Orthodox faithful, with the permanent material support from abroad and many persons engaged in proselyte activity who have come to our country to preach Christ, as if our people had not known Him for almost two thousand years. Nevertheless, the census in January 1992, presents the following confessional configuration of Romania: out of 22.760.449 inhabitants, 86,8% are Orthodox, 5% Roman Catholics, 3,9% Reformed, 1% Catholics of Greek Rite ("United"), 1%

Pentecostals, 0,5% Baptists, the rest of the cults being under 0,5% (the atheists represent only 0,2%).<sup>162</sup>

In December 1989 with the Decree Law No. 1 the Greek-Catholic Church, which was united with the ROC under communist rule, was reestablished and with the Decree Law No. 126 of April 1990 the Church was recognized and the rules for property restitution were specified (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 95). Following the reestablishment, the Greek-Catholic Church demanded the return of the property confiscated by the communist regime.<sup>163</sup> The ROC resisted against the court decisions that asked the ROC to return the properties to the Greek-Catholic Church.<sup>164</sup> It was also unwilling to accept an equal status with the Greek-Catholic Church (Mungiu-Pippidi, 1998). In order to solve the problem of restitution of churches, a joint Orthodox-Uniate Dialogue committee has been established; however, it could not reach a mutually acceptable solution about the issue up till now (Muntean, 2005: 86). The relations between the ROC and the Greek-Catholic Church changed gradually since 1989 due to certain important developments such as reinstitution of the Greek-Catholic Church, Pope's visit to Romania in 1999<sup>165</sup> and Patriarch Teoctist's visit to Vatican in 2002, the initiatives of the Romanian government after 1996 for the restitution of property and the decision of the government in 2004 that allowed other churches to go court against the Orthodox Church to claim its property back (Muntean, 2005: 84-5; Metropolitan Daniel Ciobotea, 2003: 329). However, the property restitution is still an unresolved issue.<sup>166</sup>

The problems of the Orthodox Church with religious pluralism were not limited to the problems with the Greek-Catholic Church. Some Orthodox sects, who were against Patriarch Teoctist's decision to stay in his post, were organizing protests during special

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>162</sup> Rev. Prof. Dr. Mircea Pacurariu, "Short History of the ROC" <u>http://www.patriarhia.ro/</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>163</sup> There are around 3,000 churches confiscated by the regime and given to the Orthodox Church, which were mainly Greek-Catholic, but also Catholic and Hungarian churches (Muntean, 2005: 89).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>164</sup> One of the claims of the Orthodox Church is the fact that the number of adherents of the Greek-Catholic Church fall considerably; therefore, they do not need to get back all the churches that were confiscated. In addition to the communist policies, ongoing migration after 1989 has taken its toll on the Greek Catholic Church. When the Church was disbanded the Greek-Catholic population was around 2,000,000 people, while according to 2002 Romanian national census there are around 200,000 (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 93-4).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>165</sup> The Pope and the Patriarch have co-celebrated the mass in Bucharest during the Pope's visit to Romania (Morini, 2002: 98).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>166</sup> While the state authorities were reluctant to get involved, the Greek-Catholic and the Orthodox Churches failed to reach an agreement on the issue. The state decided to return the property of the Greek-Catholic Church that was confiscated in 1948 (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 96). Up until now, the Greek-Catholics could get only 160 of the 1,800 worship places confiscated in 1948 (Ibid: 103). As a last resort, the Greek-Catholic Church started taking the cases to the European Court of Human Rights with the expectation to exert more pressure on the state to find a viable solution to the problem (Ibid: 202). Throughout this period, the Greek-Catholics received support and recognition from the Pope by raising the Church to the status of Major Archbishopric in 2005, giving the synod of the Church the right to elect its own bishops (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 116).

holy days and rituals that Patriarch Teoctist participated in order to gain visibility in public and media. They were calling themselves *Vacaresti*, which was the name of a monastery that was destroyed in 1984 with Teoctist's approval (Tanasescu, 2005: 69). Moreover, the missionary movements and proselytizing activities of certain Protestant churches were another cause of concern for the Church. The conversion strategies such as the free English courses and assistance in immigration to the Western countries were preoccupying for the Church, which it defined as "temptations from the Devil" (Ibid: 55). The Church was also preoccupied about the growing emigration. It was not only because the Romanian Orthodox people were leaving the country. The emigrants and the emerging rich class that had the chance to visit Europe and make comparisons between the reality in Romania and in Europe (Ibid: 55, note 19). The current Patriarch Daniel, in an article he has written when he was the Metropolitan of Moldova and Bucovina, has defined emigration as preoccupying both for the Church and the state (2003: 324).

Within this context, the emergence and religious activities of foreign evangelical groups are seen as proselytism (Bria: 1995: viii), which according to Bria destabilizes the established churches (Ibid: 45). In a similar line, Archbishop Nifon states that the emergence and growing number of "parachurches and other sects" makes things more complicated for the Orthodox Churches in different parts of the world.<sup>167</sup> Patriarch Daniel in the same article mentioned above argues that the poverty of the Orthodox believers are exploited or manipulated by the members of some other religious groups in order to recruit new members for their religion (Metropolitan Daniel Ciobotea, 2003: 324). When the society is in transition, the missionary theology of the Orthodoxy asks the Church to help the people through linking the Gospel with the context people are living in and support them against the threats of secularization and proselytism (Ibid: 325).

The ROC strongly opposes certain denominations or "sects"<sup>168</sup> and seeks state's support in impeding their work in Romanian territory. Even though it was recognized by the Romanian state in 1990 (Felix, 2007; Jubilee Campaign, 2003: 26)<sup>169</sup>, when Jehovah's witnesses' attempted to organize a congress in Bucharest on 19-21 July 1996, it had faced protests from the Church and the government. Patriarch Teoctist expressed concern over the attempt arguing that it would serve nothing but "growing violence and hatred in the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>167</sup> "ROC Leader Describes Delicate State of Ecumenism in Eastern Europe" 1998, *NCC News Archives*, New York" <u>http://www.ncccusa.org/news/news96.html</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>168</sup> The "sects" is used by the ROC in a pejorative sense.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>169</sup> In 1993 there were reported to be 50,000 Jehovah's Witnesses in Romania (Ramet, 1998: 269).

world", while the government stated that organizing such an event in July or "at any time in the future" would be "inopportune" (Ionescu, 2008).

Another cause of concern is the spread of the Pentecostalism. The Pentecostal and Adventist Churches found a base among the lower classes and particularly among the Roma population (Lakatos, 1998: 30), which has been marginalized and is less affected by the ethno-nationalist debate. Through conversions today the Pentecostalism has become the 4<sup>th</sup> religious denomination in Romania with 324,462 adherents (1,5% of the Romanian population) (Fosztó, 2007: 91). Traditional churches in Romania define this as "proselytism", which they consider as "unfair" and "immoral" (Muntean, 2005: 88). The representatives of the Romanian Orthodox, Catholic, Greek-Catholic and Protestant Churches are of the view that proselvtism is being promoted in Romania, while the neo-Protestant and particularly the Pentecostal churches see it as a means to recruit new believers to their churches.<sup>170</sup> Traditional churches employ ethno-nationalist strategies associating religious identity with an ethnic one and they make alliances with different secular forces in order to monopolize the religious landscape, which do not create favorable conditions for religious competition (Fosztó, 2007: 89). In a context, where nationalist discourse is instrumentalized, new religious movements, which are trying to find a base in the post-communist societies and which are considered "foreign" are not welcome by the traditional churches as well as national-political forces (Merdjanova, 2000: 253).

Given the concerns and reservations about religious pluralism, Fosztó argues that free religious market theory cannot be applied to Romania given the fact that the conditions for free competition of religious denominations for believers are not mature enough (2007: 88), while Muntean argues that there is no fair competition, as churches try to prevent the others reaching out to its own members (2005: 88). Moreover, interdenominational mutual acceptance and collaboration is not very well established in Romania and still hard to achieve. During the 90s there were some religiously motivated confrontations among different groups related with property restitution or activity in schools<sup>171</sup> as well as clashes

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>170</sup> The ROC, Catholic Church, Greek-Catholic Church and the Protestant Churches perceive themselves as the traditional churches that are in Romania for more than a hundred years, while they see the Neo-Protestant churches such as the Baptists, Pentecostals, Seventh-Day Christian Adventist, and the Jehova's Witnesses as newly built and lacking a base in Romania. There are also some other churches or religions, however the number of their followers is small such as the Armenian Church, Old Rite Christian Church, Evangelical Church as well as the Muslims and Jews. Therefore for traditional churches the main rivals are the Neo-Protestant churches (Muntean, 2005: 92) and there is less room for cooperation between the two groups, however there are serious problems between the Greek-Catholic and the Orthodox Churches that is impeding the cooperation (Ibid: 94).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>171</sup> After the fall of communism, the Baptists indulged into vigorous educational activity (Lakatos, 1998: 28). Therefore, there is also competition within the field of education.

between the Orthodox clergy and "sects" (Fosztó, 2007: 86-87).<sup>172</sup> Lakatos also states that contact among the churches has been limited and there is the need for more collaboration and he suggests the starting point should be at the local level (1998b: 21-2).

Despite its skepticism towards new religious movements and neo-Protestant Churches, the ROC is aware of the need for change regarding the ecumenical dialogue and collaboration with the other churches. As stated in the official bulletin of the ROC, in a context of fragmentations and profound changes due to economic and political globalization it is necessary for the ROC to present the world with a very authentic Christian message. In order to reveal the universal character of the Orthodox Church contacts and relations with the sister Orthodox churches became more intense and frequent in 2000 (BOR, 2001, CXIX, 1-6: 487). Moreover, theological and ecumenical dialogue with the Catholic and Protestant Churches continues at national and international level and involvement of the Church in the lives of the Romanian Orthodox diaspora is emphasized and links with diaspora are strengthened (Ibid: 488).

Another area of competition among the churches in Romania is the social sphere. During the communist era due to the restrictions on religious institutions' ability to provide social assistance was curbed. Moreover, the communist system was providing every citizen with education, health, housing and job facilities. After the fall of the communist regime, a period of transition followed, which brought economic crises, unemployment and large scale migration. The transition had a big social cost. Romanian state has tried to tackle the majority of the social protection issues by itself; however, alone it was not able to deal with all the problems, which shows the need for civil society involvement (Muntean, 2005: 96). Therefore, after 1989 the churches in Romania started to put more emphasis on social work.

However, what the churches have done so far is not sufficient and as Preda argues, the churches need to provide more social assistance (cited in Carp, 2007: 28). The public opinion is also expecting more from the churches in this sphere, particularly from the ROC. According to the survey in Bucharest, three quarters of respondents want the churches to be

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>172</sup> The problems between the Orthodox clergy and different religious denominations sometimes took a violent form as was the case in Tulcea County in November 2001. The Romanian Evangelical Alliance (an inter-confessional organization composed of Baptists, Evangelicals, Pentecostals and Orthodox Lord's Army movement) rented a village hall in order to show a religious movie. Even though the mayor agreed, the Orthodox priest did not allow the publicity about the movie and tolled the bells of the Church, which is done in the case of calamity. The representatives of the Evangelical Alliance were threatened not to show the movie and they had to leave the village. However, the next day they came back with media reporters. The priest and his brother, who is also a priest refused giving interviews and collected the Orthodox people in the Church by tolling the bells again. Finally, the representatives of the alliance had to leave the village under police escort and later on he filed a complaint, while the mayor has resigned (Fosztó, 2007: 88).

more involved in social issues, while three quarters were against the involvement of the clergy in politics. 78.1% of the respondents believe that the ROC should be more involved in social protection issues (Muntean, 2005: 94).

While during the communist era there was no competition among the churches, now the churches are competing in a totally different environment in Romania. Moreover, they are now facing the challenges of secularization and change of moral codes in the society, which brings the requirement for the "modernization of the pastoral work" and reorganization of the church structure (Lakatos, 1998b: 18), even at the parish church level (Ibid: 19). The Orthodox Church faces the competition from the Catholic and Protestant Churches as they are more open to the Western model of social work and they get assistance from churches in Europe and the US. Since most of the charitable organizations of the Catholic and Protestant Churches in Romania were confiscated during communism and they are still the property of the state, social work depends very much on the voluntary work and Western financial aid (Ibid: 14). All the churches started building up NGOs to deal with certain social issues, which were tried to be handled directly by the churches themselves. The largest religious NGO in Romania is *Caritas* in terms of monetary resources, personnel and projects (Muntean, 2005: 90), which is a Catholic institution.

As compared to the Catholic and Protestant churches, the Orthodox Church in Romania has been less active in the social realm and has seen the state as the one that is responsible for delivery of services (Féltoronyi, 1992 cited in Lakatos, 1998b: 5). Different from the Catholic and Protestant Churches the social work is not performed through an institutionally autonomous and separate structure in the Orthodox Church. According to the Article 137 of the "Statutes for the Organization and Functioning of the ROC General Stipulations" the system of social assistance is integrated into the administrative organizational structure of the Church.<sup>173</sup> Following the collapse of communism, many associations and foundations have been reactivated by the Church and some new ones have been established for the charity work.<sup>174</sup> The Orthodox Church has two big NGOs, *Vasiliada* and *Christiana*.

The main area of charity activity of the ROC is on health care and orphans and abandoned children (Flora and Szilagyi, 2005: 136). Already in early 90s the Church took

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>173</sup> "The Statutes for the Organisation and Functioning of the ROC General Stipulations",65-66. http://www.patriarhia.ro/\_upload/documente/121438488425759490.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>174</sup> http://www.crestinism-ortodox.ro/html\_en/index.html

action to help street children. The ROC started giving religious and social assistance to street children in the city of Brasov in 1994 (BOR. 1994, CXII 1-6: 251). As Rev. Uţa states with large scale Romanian migration the issue of abandoned children became more acute and immediate and require intensive work on the part of the ROC.<sup>175</sup> The Church states that it is helping abandoned children, trying to prevent school drop-outs and assisting youth's socio-professional reintegration (BOR, 2002, CXX, 1-6: 672-3).

As early as 1994, giving education on theology-social assistance at Theology Faculties to train priests for future tasks in social assistance (BOR, 1994, CXII, 7-12: 379) was on the agenda of the ROC. Enormous social problems of Romania such as economic crises, high unemployment, inadequacy of health and psychological support services have led the Church in collaboration with the State to create new departments within theology faculties that train students for social assistance. Therefore, the theology students besides theology education get training on social work and medicine to enable the Church to better address the social problems (Metropolitan Daniel Ciobotea, 2003: 326). In addition to social assistance, the "moral decay" in society is a concern for the Church. The official church bulletin also expresses the need for the ROC to be socially engaged to deal with social problems such as homosexuality and prostitution for national and confessional reconciliation (BOR, 2003, CXXI, 1-6: 75).

As the social problems became more complex and other denominations became very active in social work, which was part of their missionary activity, the ROC has felt the need and urge to do more in the social sphere and put more emphasis on the missionary activity directly linked with social assistance. With this goal in mind, the Holy Synod has adopted a regulation for the organization and functioning of social assistance system of the Church in 1997. All the churches under the jurisdiction of the ROC were to apply the regulation and contribute to the Philanthropy Fund in accordance with their categories (1<sup>st</sup> category has to contribute 1,000,000 lei, 2<sup>nd</sup> category 600,000 and 3<sup>rd</sup> category 400,000 lei) (BOR, 2001, CXIX, 1-6: 419).

The Philanthropy Fund or the Central Missionary Fund is one of the sources of funding to be used in social, missionary and charitable work comes through the collection

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>175</sup> Pr. Uta argues that the abandoned children and increasing school drop-outs very are serious problems, stemming from emigration waves out of the country, which strains the Church's capacity to respond to with the current social assistance schemes. The children, whose parents emigrate to work, in most of the cases have to live with their grandparents. The lack of affection and intergenerational clashes create important problems for the children. Therefore, there is the need to do more on this issue. Interview with Rev. Mircea Alexa Uta, Patriarchal counselor - External Communities Sector at his office at the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate in Bucharest on March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

of money by the parish churches and monasteries for. After the approval of the regulation for the organization and functioning of social assistance system of the Church by the Holy Synod in 1997, philanthropic activity and social assistance became one of the priorities of the Church in its working in Romania and the world (BOR, 1998, CXVI, 1-6: 374). Through the contributions of parish churches philanthropy fund has reached 21,5 billion lei in 2000 (BOR, 2001, CXIX, 1-6: 489). In 2005 the ROC has spent 2,191,205.000 lei/ROL coming from the Philanthropy Fund, donations and money sent form people and institutions abroad (BOR, 2006, CXX, 1-3: 125). In addition to their contributions to the Philanthropy Fund, the monasteries provide social assistance for those in need.

Besides collecting money for the fund, the Church takes active part in joint social assistance projects. Currently, the ROC is working actively in collaboration with some state institutions and NGOs and assuming new roles in the social sphere. In 2003 Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate has signed a deal with the Ministry of Interior for preventing trafficking in human beings through giving information and granting assistance to victims (News Bulletin, 2003: 9). The Patriarchate made an agreement with a pharmaceutical company in April 2003 for a nation-wide one-year-program called "Health and Faith", which will distribute free medicines to social-medical settlements of the Church. The program amounts to 1,2 billion lei. The main target group was those who cannot have access to health insurance system, autistic children, AIDS patients and people treated in church's health centers (Ibid:14). In order to support the victims of the floods in different parts of Romania that took place throughout 2005, the Patriarchate collected around 10,000,000 euro from priests and faithful in efforts to make a contribution to disaster relief (News Bulletin, 2005: 6). The Church took an active part in national campaign organized by USAID in collaboration with the Romanian government and international NGOs, in order to combat HIV-related intolerance (News Bulletin, 2004: 4). The Holy Synod of the ROC has decided at its session on March 2-3, 2005 to get involved in the national campaign for supporting the family and rights of the child in collaboration with the National Agency for the Protection of the Child's Rights in Romania. The Patriarchate decided to give support in training the participants and informing the people. The Patriarchate also collaborated with the International Organization for Christian Orthodox Charity initiated a program for preventing and combating HIV/AIDS and violence in the family in Romania. It is a threeyear project and to be implemented in 13 eparchies by Orthodox parishes and religion teachers in schools. The project will be funded by the US government through their agency

USAID in Romania (BOR, 2005, CXXIII, 1-3: 112; *News Bulletin*, 2005: 5), which has contributed 2,000,000 USD (BOR, 2005, CXXIII, 4-6: 590).

The social assistance work of the Patriarchate today is coordinated by the Sector of Church and Society, which organizes social assistance activities and monitors legislation on social assistance sphere, facilitates access to the PHARE funds for social assistance and publishes material for the communication and promotion of programs (BOR, 2001, CXIX, 1-6: 488). In all the eparchies a sector for social assistance is founded and social activity is coordinated by an inspector of the eparchy (BOR, 2006, CXXIV, 7-12: 31). The Church provides social assistance through its social institutions, which are 121 centers for children, 35 centers for elderly, 106 canteens, 52 diagnosis and treatment centers including pharmacies, 23 centers for counseling and family assistance.<sup>176</sup>

Despite all the steps taken to provide better social services, the ROC still expresses the need for a strategy and unified action with regards to social assistance (BOR, 2006, CXXIV, 7-12: 33). There is the need for the establishment of a consultation bureau. The Patriarchate is hopeful that with Romania's accession to the EU Romania will have the possibility to benefit from EU structural funds, which will guarantee better quality for the social services offered by the Patriarchate. There is another source of optimism for the ROC. The younger priests, who had the chance to study abroad, come back with new ideas to "modernize" the Church. They have programs regarding the social sphere, for young people and the missionary activity (Tanasescu, 2005: 55-56). The Orthodox Church through its church and social organizations is capable of reaching out to different segments of the society and the majority of the population. Therefore, it has the potential to become a very powerful agent in social work (Lakatos, 1998b: 11) and young priests are trying to turn this potential into action.

Another area that posed both challenge and opportunity for the Church is the miracle cults. The reemergence and spread of miracle cults in Romania<sup>177</sup> was both impressive for the church and preoccupying given the low level of religious education during the communist era. Therefore, the Church authorities decided that the intervention is necessary (Tanasescu, 2005: 74). As Binns argues there is a tension between the institutional religion and popular religion (2002: 135) and in the Romanian case the Church

<sup>176</sup> http://www.patriarhia.ro

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>177</sup> Pilgrimage to monasteries in Moldava did not start after communism. Ceausescu regime promoted tours to the monasteries, which belonged to Romania's national heritage (Tanasescu, 2005: 145).

was trying to shape and institutionalize popular religion of the masses within the official Orthodoxy.<sup>178</sup> Even though many stated that through miracle cults they became closer to the Church, they pose a challenge to the authority of the Church over people's relations with the sacred (Tanasescu, 2005: 93). As in the case of St. Ilie Lacatus, the Church's refusal to canonize him did not stop people from believing and venerating him (Ibid: 88-9).

As media coverage regarding the miracle cults made them more popular and people started turning to the miracle cults as a sign of belief and for the resolutions of their problems (Ibid: 85-7), the ROC decided to take control of the situation. The establishment of the Pilgrimage Office by the Patriarchate in the late 90s was an attempt to manage pilgrimages to certain cults or saints canonized by the Church. The Church was also interested in making Romania's religious and cultural heritage better known to foreign tourists that are interested in visiting Romanian monasteries and showing that the Orthodoxy is part of Romanian national identity. The pilgrimages became the main source of income for most of the monasteries by the late 1990s (Ibid: 109). The pilgrimage tours became a venue for encounters and exchange of values among different churches, theology students and believers. The Church considered it as an occasion for the Christians to get to know each other's values and traditions as well as another form of ecumenical meeting. Starting from 2004 the Patriarchate decided to invest more into pilgrimage tours, seeing it as a tool for religious education (Ibid: 111-116). The popularity of sites and trips not only in Romania but also abroad led the Romanian state to direct more funds for restoration of monasteries and building infrastructure for the sites. Moreover, the EU funds were used to restore monasteries in accordance with the European standards, which would reinforce the new image of Romania as "Europe's New Jerusalem and spiritual stronghold" (Ibid: 166). Since these sites are not only part of Romania's Orthodox religious life and tradition but also national heritage, the role of the Church in Romania's national history and identity is also consolidated (Ibid: 15).

In the post-communist era, as a response to further democratization, globalization and religious pluralism the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate adopts the rhetoric of "representative institution" and the role of the "translator" of the "will of the majority"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>178</sup> One way of institutionalizing popular belief is canonization. As Apostolic Churches grew in size and jurisdiction and with the development of Church organization the canonization was transferred from the local churches to the central church organization and standardized. A general compilation of saints were created by the central organs to be celebrated throughout the liturgy and on Saints' Days (Tanasescu, 2005: 78-79). These dates are now part of the Church calendar, making known to the public the holy days.

(Conovici, 2006: 8). This change in rhetoric is important but also problematic for the Patriarchate given the organic relationship between the religion and nation in Romania. However, many believe that there is the need for a broader and structural change beyond the change in rhetoric. Stoica suggests that the Orthodox Church should carry on with its patristic and apostolic tradition, but also should develop responses based on certain issues (2007: 187). He emphasizes the need for "awakening" to the new realities and therefore "awareness and metanoia", which he describes as "fundamental change in thinking" (Ibid: 194). Flora and Szilagyi argue that in order to adjust to the post-communist global era, the Orthodox Church should go through a process of institutional restructuring and revise its way of relating to the people and communicating its message (2005: 138). Similarly, Bria argues for the need to reform the parish system and redefine the mission of the Church (1995: 47). Therefore, the Church has to transform itself to adapt to change.

**III.2.3.** The European Integration and the Romanian Orthodox Church: Romania following the fall of the Ceausescu regime entered a transition period and went through important transformations in less than two decades. After a long negotiation period, it recently became one of the newest members of the EU. During the negotiation phase it had to make important political, economic and legal reforms to adjust its system to the EU *acquis*, which had important implications for the state, institutions and society in Romania. The prospect for membership meant change and to a certain extent the Europeanization of Romania, which led to diverse array of reactions within Romania. The Europeanization logic assumes a one-way flow of influence from the EU to the member states, since the European integration affects and transforms the institutional and legal structure, traditions and even identities of member states. However, it would be more accurate to talk about a two-way relationship, which includes encounter, interaction and dialogue as well as clashing interests within the EU space. Membership in the EU gives different organizations and interest groups in Romania the chance to be active in the EU and influence the national and the European context through Brussels. The ROC is one of the main institutions that have gained access to the EU space through the recent EU enlargement. The Orthodoxy was already present in the EU since the accession of Greece in 1981; however, Romania has the highest number of Orthodox population in the EU and it gives the ROC an important representative power. As the transnationalism of the ROC encounters

transnationalism of the EU within the EU space, the Church reassesses its position and reconsiders the "reconfiguration of its role in the European context" (Carp, 2007: 18).

Through the EU enlargement new transnational religious communities gain access to the EU space and religious politics become an important aspect of the secular European polity (Katzenstein, 2006: 1-2). Katzenstein argues that "European enlargement will feed rather than undermine the importance of religion in the EU" and suggest that rather than Europeanization of the new member territories, multiple modernities and transnational religious communities of the new members reintroduce religion into the centre of Europe (Ibid: 2).

While it is true that new members play an important role in the reintroduction of religion into the EU politics, we should not underestimate the contribution of the ongoing EU debate on the role of religion. It is one of the main discursive spaces where different transnationalisms meet. Following the failure to formulate the EU constitution, those arguing for the constitutional recognition of the Christian roots started to voice their opinions more strongly (Ungureanu, 2006: 6). According to Weiler, who is one of the main advocates of recognition of the Christianity in the forthcoming EU constitution and shares the communitarian viewpoint, the European history could not be understood without reference to its Christian roots (2003 cited in Ungureanu, 2006: 11-12). He argues that the Christianity is a distinct feature of Europe, which it should not hesitate to assert (Ibid: 13). The Orthodox Churches are one of the participants of the debate on the constitution of the EU and they have also mobilized their resources to exert influence (Ramet, 2005: viii). Katzenstein foresees an important role for the Orthodoxy in the EU as it comes in closer contact with the Catholicism within the EU in challenging the EU's secular impact on the Christian values (2006: 4). During the Pope's visit to Istanbul in November 2006, the Catholic Church and the Ecumenical Patriarchate issued a joint declaration. As stated in the Joint Declaration, both Churches regard the European integration as a positive move. However, they stress the importance of preserving the Christian roots of European culture.179

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>179</sup> "In Europe, both the Orthodox Christians and the Roman Catholics, while remaining open to other religions and their contribution to culture, should unite their efforts to safeguard the Christian roots, traditions and values, in order to preserve respect for history and to also contribute to the culture of a future Europe, as well as to the quality of human relations at all levels. In this respect, how could we not refer to very ancient martyrs and to the glorious Christian heritage of the land, in which we are meeting, beginning with the words of the Book of the Apostles for Saint Paul, Apostle to the Nations? On this land, the message of the Gospel and ancient philosophical tradition has met. This bond, which contributed to our common Christian heritage, remains current and will in the future bear fruit for the promotion of the

The perspective of the ROC on the issue is based on the idea that the Romanian people appeared in history as Christian people and as the only representatives of the Latin Orthodoxy; therefore, as a bridge between the East and the West. Majority of the Europeans in the EU are Christians and European identity has Christian roots. Even though many European citizens are not practicing Christians today, the humanist ideals shared by many Europeans and the EU institutions are based on the Judeo-Christian tradition. In line with this perspective, the Church in agreement with the Catholic Church in Romania, has proposed the inclusion of the phrase "preponderant Christian" to the preamble of the Convention Treaty of the EU, therefore suggesting the phrase should be: "The member states and the citizens of the European Union [...][are] aware both of their history and of the universal indivisible values of the human dignity, liberty, equality and solidarity, as well as their preponderant Christian religious inheritance" (*News Bulletin*, 2003: 5).

The response of the Church to Romania's bid for the EU membership is very much influenced from the perspective presented above. The Church after the fall of communism had to grow into the idea of being and working in the European religious landscape. Christian Democrats and Iliescu, who has been elected in 2000 for the second time, have put more emphasis on Romania's bid for the EU.<sup>180</sup> This meant increasing pressure from the EU for further democratic reform and initiatives in political and economic sphere as well as the religious sphere.<sup>181</sup> This raised the concerns on the part of the ROC against the growing Western influence in the country and on the Romanian way of life. Democratization was already seen by the Church as a challenge to the Byzantine model of church-state relations (Mungiu-Pippidi, 1998) and growing Western influence and global processes of change were preoccupying the Church and the Orthodox priests (Tanasescu, 2005: 62).<sup>182</sup> Western Europe with its secularization, individualism, privatization of

Gospel and for our unity."Summary of Joint Declaration by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and Pope Benedict XVI, November 30, 2006. <u>http://papalvisit.ecupatriarchate.org/</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>180</sup> Romania was the last country to go through the regime change in the Soviet bloc. The Communist Party leadership succeeded in gaining the political power during and aftermath of the uprising and came to power through democratic elections (de Nevers, 2003: 239) and even after the fall of the Ceausescu regime, reformation of the system took a long time. Iliescu who won the 1990 elections started a very limited reform policy (Crowther, 2004: 369). It was only after 1996 elections significant changes took place in political leadership, and therefore, more reforms came in terms of democratization as well as domestic and foreign policy (Ibid: 384; 392). Additionally, the EU bid of the country and being part of the European institutions put pressure on the government for further reform.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>181</sup> The EU was putting emphasis on human and minority rights issues such as discrimination against the Roma, Hungarians and Germans (Tanasescu, 2005: 60-61). When Romania was searching for accession to the EU, in 2002 it became a member of the NATO.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>182</sup> The abolition of the law criminalizing homosexuality was one of the conditions for the admission of Romania to the Council of Europe after Ceausescu's fall. The European Convention on Human Rights also recognized and ratified required Romania to recognize the right of its citizens the right of choice in sexual orientation (Ramet, 1998: 197). The

religion, where family and traditional values are in retreat, was seen as a menace to the Orthodox tradition and values by many of the Church hierarchs and priests. In 2003, Archbishop Anania was arguing that the EU lacks religious and cultural dimensions (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 207). The Church was also concerned that the Orthodox Romanians would be second class citizens in the EU where the Orthodox population is a minority. These fears were instrumental in making the Church adopt the Catholic Church's stance with regards to reference to the Christian roots of the EU in the EU constitutional debate (Ibid).

Secularization was and is one of the main concerns of voices that are critical of joining the EU within the ROC, the Metropolitan Bartolomeu Anania of Ardeal criticizes the EU for asking Romania to accept homosexuality, abortions or genetic engineering (Dobrater, 1998 cited in Flora and Szilagyi, 2005: 126),<sup>183</sup> while Europe itself is suffering from a disease called secularization (1998: 1 cited in Carp, 2007: 12). Archbishop Gherasim of Suceava and Radauti argues that joining the EU would ruin Romanian Orthodox law (Mediafax Bulletin, 1998 cited in Flora and Szilagyi, 2005:126). There were also those who argued for dealing with secularization by being in Europe and contributing its re-Christianization. According to Bria, the Orthodox Church is the main institution that ensures continuity and unity of the country (1995: 3: 51) and the bridging role of the Romanian Orthodoxy should be utilized in the reconstruction of Romania and Europe and reaching out to new public within and out of Romania (1995: 52). According to Stoica, the European integration also poses challenges for the Church since integration to the EU structures means becoming a minority in one's own house (2007: 197). In his opinion it is the task of the Church to attract the intellectuals and young generations to the Church and "re-Christianize the emancipated European", which however, necessitates the right communicative methods and "missionary talent" (Ibid: 195). Metropolitan Daniel Ciobotea argued that "Europe needs a soul" and the only true soul for the Church is Jesus Christ (2003: 329) and emphasized the need for collaboration among the churches against the secularization process (Ibid: 330). He was of the view that given the willingness of Romanians to be members of the EU and NATO, the people should be told the advantages

Church was severely critical of these moves, which worked to strengthen critical stance of the Church towards tendencies and influences originating from the West.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>183</sup> Archbishop Anania of Cluj is the leader of the conservative wing of the Church, which has a very rigid position on issues such as homosexuality and abortion and is in favor of involvement of priests in politics (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 206).

and risks of integration with Europe. This would help Romania to make a better contribution to Europe in spiritual and cultural terms and get well integrated into the European institutional framework without losing its spirituality (Ibid: 324).

As Romania moved closer to the EU, the Church hierarchs started to argue that Europe has a Christian legacy and the Orthodox Church has been an important element of the European integration since the beginning of Christianity (Carp, 2007: 9). It was, the Metropolitan of Banat Nicolae Corneau, who first made a public statement following the accession of Romania to the Council of Europe arguing that all the churches including the ROC support an entity that will "renew once and for all the union of those who honour Christ", since "Christianity tends naturally to unity" (1993: 378 cited in Carp. 2007: 6). He further argues that the main duty of the Christians is contributing to "the strengthening of the new Europe" (Ibid: 7). Patriarch Teoctist in a speech made in 1995 states that: "There can be no house of Europe without the spirituality of Mount Athos, without the values of the thinking of the Eastern Holy Fathers, without the beauty and the riches of the orthodox religion." (1995: 34 cited in Carp, 2007: 8). He was of the view that no other institution in the EU can replace or substitute the Church and churches should bring in their contribution to the construction of the new Europe and in order to do this should work together (News Bulletin, 2003: 16). In another speech in 1996 Patriarch Teoctist stated: "As church, culture and faith, we are in Europe since we exist in history as a Christian people, and therefore, bearer of God." (Carp, 2007: 9). The ROC was one of the 17 religious denominations in Romania that signed a declaration on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2000, to give support to the Romanian state and to state their commitment to collaborate in order to make a better contribution to the European integration as well as to the resolution of economical and social problems of the country (Carp, 2007: 19). According to the ROC, the Orthodoxy, which was in the past of Europe, will also be in the future. Patriarch Teoctist in his speech during the visit of Archiepiscop Christodolous of Greece to Bucharest in 2003 stated that the main contribution of Romania to the EU would be its Orthodox culture (BOR, 2003, CXXI, 1-6: 205), while the Holy Synod was of the opinion that the Orthodox mysticism represents a chance for Europe and the world (BOR, 2005, CXXIII, 4-6: 46).

As Romania grew closer towards the EU accession, the ROC became active supporters of Romania's EU vocation within and out of Romania. At the Interparliamentarian European General Assembly of Orthodoxy on June 27<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>, 2002 in Bucharest the role of the Orthodox culture in the EU enlargement and promotion of respect for culture and religion in the EU were discussed (BOR, 2002, CXX, 1-6: 160). In 2003 Patriarch Teoctist during his visit to Berlin has stated that the Romanian Orthodox Metropolitanate in Germany is the centre, which can contribute to European society and culture by transmitting Romanian Orthodox values (BOR, 2003, CXXI, No. 1-6: 9). During his visit to Germany on May 11<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> 2006 to put foundation stone to the ROC that is being built in Berlin and to bless the Cathedral of the Metropolitan Church in Nuremberg (BOR, 2006, CXXIV, 4-6: 73), the Patriarch had a meeting with the German Chancellor Angela Merkel and expressed his support for Romania's candidacy for the EU (Ibid: 209). When the treaty for the adhesion of Romania to the EU was signed on April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2005 in Luxembourg, the Holy Synod expressed its support and stated that is a very important date for the future of the country. Metropolitan Serafim of Germany was of the view that with the adhesion treaty, the Yalta agreement that have left Romania at the mercy of the Soviet Union has been annulled (BOR, 2005, CXXIII, 4-6: 44).

Being in the EU space requires the ROC to accommodate itself in a new and extended religious landscape and religious pluralism, since religious pluralism is one of the traits of the EU context. It has Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox (Orthodox element was added with the entry of Greece into the EU in 1981 and strengthened with the accession of Romania and Bulgaria in 2007) elements of the Christianity and Islam with the candidacy of Turkey (Bloß, 2003: 2). There is also diversity in terms of church-state relations in the EU member countries and different types of religious traditions become part of the European religious landscape and contribute to religious pluralism in Europe. The religious landscape of Europe is changing rapidly. Rather than religion in Europe it is necessary to talk about religions in Europe. Besides Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists are now important elements of religious landscape of Europe (Davie, 2005: 26) due to different migratory flows. Growing number of Muslim immigrants raise important issues for European democracies. There is the need to reconcile Western Christianity with Eastern Christian legacy of the new members and legacy of Islam of the candidate country (Spohn,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>184</sup> Davie argues that while British people prefer believing without belonging, Scandinavians reverse it by "belonging without believing", since a very small portion of the Scandinavians go to the Church, while they keep on paying for their taxes to the official churches. (2005: 3). She defines this phenomenon as "vicarious religion" (Davie, 1994 cited in Bloß, 2003: 8) meaning a religiously active minority continue religious practices on behalf of the majority that do not go to churches but pay taxes to them. In Italy, Spain, Belgium and Ireland on the other hand it is possible to observe higher level of church attendance (Davie, 2005: 12). The presence of the Vatican in the Italian peninsula has an important affect on the level of religiosity in Italy (Ibid: 21).

2007: 7) and a more comprehensive and inclusive approach when debating and formulating policies regarding religion at the EU level.<sup>185</sup>

Aware of this diversity within the EU, the ROC structures its ecumenical relations at three levels; national, European and world (BOR, 2003, CXXI, 1-6: 28). Patriarch Teoctist deemed the collaboration of the churches necessary in order to make a contribution to the future of the EU (Carp, 2007: 12). Moreover, he stated that the Orthodoxy cannot be confined to the Eastern part of the European continent and the ROC coexists with other churches within the EU space (Ibid: 11). Archbishop Nifon of Târgovişte argues that he argues that it is necessary for the churches as parts of social infrastructure to speak with one voice through ecumenical collaboration. The collaboration of churches is important, since they will fulfill the function of protecting the European traditions and ethical values (Ibid: 14-5). Moreover, he argues that important challenges that humanity is facing due to globalization such as environmental problems or poverty require a collective response of different various religions through inter-religious dialogue (Mihăiță, 2007: 100).

However, given this diversity and plurality, Manolescu argues that ROC lacks the experience of living together with other religions and religiosities and membership of Romania in the EU presents it with the challenge of religious pluralism (2006 cited in Carp, 2007: 32), which it has to tackle. Romanian state is a secular state. Stan and Turcescu call the current Romanian system of church-state relations "managed quasi-pluralism"; it is managed because of the denominations have to register and get recognition from the state to work freely in Romania and it is quasi-pluralistic since the Orthodox Church has primacy among 18 denominations recognized by the Romanian state in state institutions (Ibid: 28). The preparation phase of the draft law<sup>186</sup> and the debate regarding the new law on religious denominations, which is passed by the Parliament on December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2006 and approved by

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>185</sup> Different forms of church-state relations and citizenship regimes in European state impacts the integration of immigrants, and therefore, their religions and religious organizations into the nation-states' institutional structures. In Protestant countries (in Scandinavia and UK) church-state relations and religious pluralism are managed by multicultural citizenship. In Catholic countries, despite the fact that there is a church-state separation, the Catholic Church as the church of the majority has a privileged position. This leads to a hierarchical form of citizenship. Finally, in countries such as Netherlands, Germany and Switzerland where there are Catholic and Protestant populations there is a corporatist-hierarchical citizenship regime (Spohn, 2007: 13-4).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>186</sup> Following the fall of Ceausescu regime, the work and debate on a new law on religious denominations has started. However, the law was not passed until late 2006, 16 years after the Romanian Revolution, and the governments kept the 1948 Law on Cults with some amendments. During the preparation phase of the law on religious cults, civil society groups were divided mainly into two camps; one camp asking for strict separation of church and state, the other camp demanding established church model, including the ROC (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 26). The conclusion of accession negotiations for the EU required the Romanian government to promulgate a new law on religious denominations that is in line with the EU regulations. With this goal in mind, from March 2005 onwards the government started organizing meetings with the representatives of 16 religious denominations and international organizations.

the President on December, 27<sup>th</sup> 2006<sup>187</sup> is indicative of the fact that Romania will have to do more in terms of harmonizing its system with that of the EU.<sup>188</sup>

Stan and Turcescu argue, what is needed is "twin tolerations" not strict separation of church and state; which means constitutions should not privilege certain religions and state institutions should be free, while the individuals and religious communities should have the freedom to worship and advance their values publicly within the limits of democratic rights of others and law (Stepan, 2000: 39-40 13 cited in Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 13) and expect that the EU will have a deeper impact on church-state relations in the country in the near future (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 206). Horeover, they estimate that the strict separation of church and state does not seem to be likely in Romania and given the inclination of the EU to endorse Christian values through its constitution, it might not be necessary for Romania (Ibid: 16).

It is essential for the Church to adapt itself to religious pluralism and new institutional framework not only because of the accession to the EU but also due to the growth of the Romanian Orthodox diaspora within the EU context. The presence of Romanians in different parts of Europe through migration is an important force that extends the reach of the Patriarchate and the Romanian diaspora makes the Orthodoxy not only Eastern but also Western as Metropolitan Daniel argues (Ibid: 14). Similarly, Preda argues that the Romanian diaspora in Europe, which only in Germany the Orthodoxy has become the third numerous Christian confession reaching up to 1,5 million, makes the Orthodoxy a Western European religion as well (2003 cited in Carp, 2007: 25). According to Stoica

"Legea Cultelor - Adoptata de Camera DepUțatilor" (Mitropolia Moldovei si Bucovinei) - 2006-12-13 http://www.crestinortodox.ro/Legea\_Cultelor\_\_\_adoptata\_de\_Camera\_DepUțatilor-103-11836.html

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>187</sup> "Legea Nr. 489/2006 Privind Libertatea Religioasă și Regimul General al Cultelor"

http://www.cultura.ro/Laws.aspx?ID=98

Romania was the last country in Eastern Europe to pass a new law on religious denominations in late 2006 (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 25). State Secretariat for Religious Denominations argued that even though the law did not change, the new Constitution and governmental decrees changes many provisions of the 1948 Law Nr. 177, a claim challenged by many religious denominations (Jubilee Campaign, 2003: 25). Other churches (particularly Protestant) accused the ROC of "imposing its will on the text of the law", while the ROC was content with the promulgation of the new law just before Romania's accession into the EU arguing Romania will enter the EU with a European law on cults. Another criticism is the criteria for the recognition of a religious denomination, which is hard to accomplish for many small religious groups. The new law stipulated that any cult has to wait 12 years before applying for recognition and introduced some restrictions for recognition of new cults. For a denomination to be recognized by the State Secretariat it has to have members, which should not be less than 0.5% of the population (Stan and Turcescu, 2007: 33). The bill foresaw fine for unregistered religious activity (Ibid: 35-36). Since the denominations asking for recognition have to submit their statutes and organizational information as well as detailed report about their dogma and doctrine to the State Secretariat, this might provide basis for the state to interfere in internal religious affairs of denominations (Jubilee Campaign, 2003: 25). Since the Orthodox Church refuses to bury the deceased belonging to a different religious denomination or bury only in accordance with the Orthodox rite makes the issue more acute and complicated (Felix, 2007). The new law also has introduced a ban on public offence to religious symbols. Therefore, some religious denominations that are not satisfied with the new law continue their struggle for amendments.

Romanian emigration is an opportunity for the Church (2007: 192). The presence of diaspora opens a new space for the ROC within the EU context. Reaching out to growing number of Romanians in the EU member states, who are now the EU citizens, and opening new parish churches in different parts of Europe is an important task and challenge for the Church. The diaspora also puts more strains on the Church to revise its role in the social sphere within and out of Romania. The experience of the ROCs, which try to cater for different social needs of Romanian communities abroad, is an important source of information and experience for the social assistance activities of the Patriarchate in Romania.

The EU accession and growing number of the ROCs in Europe motivated the church to open a representative bureau in Brussels.<sup>189</sup> On October 1<sup>st</sup> 1997, the Holy Synod of the ROC declared its support for a European Orthodox Commission in Brussels (which however did not materialize up until now). On March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2000, the Holy Synod of the ROC took a decision for the representation of the Church in the EU and the Council of Europe structures (Carp, 2007: 20). Due to problems related with the funding the opening of the bureau was postponed until 2007. On the day of accession of Romania into the EU (January, 1<sup>st</sup> 2007) the ROC has opened an office of representation to the EU in Brussels.<sup>190</sup> However, according to Preda, official representation will not be enough. Apart from an official representation he argues for an Orthodox lobby in the EU (2003 cited in Carp, 2007: 25). The ROC is an actor within the EU space and is taking Romania's EU membership seriously. However, to what extent the ROC will embrace the EU agenda to its full (Carp, 2007: 6) and to what extent it will use the chance the new era and membership in the EU presents to heighten its transnational agent status remains to be seen.

**III.2.4. The Romanian Orthodox Church within the Transnational Migration Context:** Due to recent large scale migration the Romanian Orthodox diaspora grew rapidly and spread to different parts of the world. However, before 1990s there were Romanians that have emigrated and were living abroad. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries Romania was predominantly a country of emigration and the US was the main destination country for many Romanians. While during the communist era the emigration

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>189</sup> Patriarch Bartholomew I wanted the Ecumenical Patriarchate's bureau to represent the whole Orthodox Church in the EU organs (BOR, 1995, CXIII, 7-12: 69) to work as a European Orthodox Commission and have a rotating permanent committee to solve the current problems (BOR, 1997, CXV, 7-12: 346).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>190</sup> <u>http://www.patriarhia.ro</u>

was limited in scale, with the end of the Cold War large scale emigration started. This time however the main destination is the European continent. Romanians have even immigrated to Australia and New Zealand and they have started opening parish churches.

Review of the Romanian migration experience shows that the ROC has always been the primary institution that migrants turn to and transplant in new settings, which expand the influence and jurisdiction of the ROC beyond Romania's borders. While the spread and growth of Romanian diaspora change the ROCs self-perception, current migratory waves through transnational connections provides the ROC with a new area of agency and it emerges as a transnational actor within the transnational migration space. As its jurisdiction extends beyond Romania's traditional homeland, the ROC devotes more attention to the Romanian Orthodox diaspora. In his speech on the occasion of his enthronement Patriarch Daniel stated that the Romanians abroad need more pastoral and material support for maintaining their identity and dignity and for improving cooperation with other Churches in the social field and with the citizens of the countries they are living or settled (News Bulletin, September 2007: 14). In order to better evaluate how the ROC copes with migration and growth of Romanian diaspora this section discusses the experiences of the ROCs in diaspora in three parts. First the organizational experiences of the ROCs in the American continent from the 19<sup>th</sup> century up until today are discussed. In the second part the emergence of the Romanian Orthodox diaspora particularly after 1989 is elaborated. The third and final part describes the organizational structure of the ROC in diaspora and analyzes the Patriarchate's stance on the issue and future prospects for the ROC in diaspora.

**IV.2.4.1. The Romanian Orthodox Diaspora in the American Continent:** Romanians are present in the American territory for the last 250 years. A group of Romanians that arrived in 1849 to California later on moved to Mexico. There were many Romanians soldiers who fought and died in the Union Army during the Civil War. However, first big scale Romanian migration of around 145,000 Romanians to the US was from 1895 to 1920. The majority were unskilled workers looking for better life standards and stability. But many had the goal to return back and they did after they have saved enough money to purchase land and houses in Romania. By 1920 the Romanian population in the US was around 85,000 (Wertsman, 2004: 289-90). Restrictions on traveling out of Romania, the US quota system allowing only 603 Romanians to immigrate to the US and the economic depression in the US decreased the Romanian migration to the US. The first generation of Romanians in the US settled in the East and Midwest close to industrial centers and factories. The majority of the migrants were males, who have left their families behind. Therefore, they have lived together in crowded boarding houses. On Sundays they met at the Church and restaurants. The first ROC, St. Mary's Orthodox Church, was established in Cleveland, Ohio in 1904. St. Helen's Greek-Catholic Church was founded in 1905 in East Cleveland (Ibid: 293). The churches turned into community centers within the American context. Later on with family reunification the communities grew in size. There were big Romanian communities in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Michigan and Indiana. Romanians have also settled in Florida and California. The first generation Romanians after getting settled brought their extended families or had friends and relatives from the same regions. The second and third generations after achieving educational, linguistic and professional skills moved out of Romanian neighborhoods (Ibid: 291) and spread to different parts of the US.

The Nazi occupation of Romania during the World War II led to increasing migration towards the US. Many Romanians who arrived during and after the World War II held monarchist views and were against the abdication of the king. Among who arrived there were many Catholics that were deported (Ibid: 296). Refugees and exiles that arrived in the US were around 30,000 and they received financial assistance and moral support from secular and religious Romanian associations in the US. Newcomers established associations and churches and continued the struggle against the communist rule in Romania from the US (Ibid: 290).

An example to church-building effort in the US is from Indianapolis. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there were many Eastern Europeans immigrating to the US, including many Romanians. The Romanian Orthodox community of Indianapolis after getting settled indulged into opening an Orthodox Church. They have bought a building and transformed it into a church in 1906; however, since no priest was available at the time, the official establishment of the congregation took place in 1910. In 1949 a new church was constructed and in 1952 it was consecrated as the "Church of Saint Constantine and Elena". Particularly in the 80s the church went through certain transformations. The liturgical language became English, church services were rescheduled, church school and woman's association (AROY) was reestablished. During this time, the Church grew with converts.

As is stated on the website of the Church, the number of converts has increased considerably in the last decade.<sup>191</sup>

The ROC has been the main institute that the Romanian Orthodox carried also to the Canadian context. Following their settlement in Canadian cities they have established their own parish churches and the ROC was the organization that reproduced Romanian religious and cultural tradition and identity with its emphasis on the Romanian language. The ROC tried to maintain Romanianness in Canada also through bringing Romanian Orthodox priests from the homeland. What emerged out of the Romanian presence in Canada was Romanian-Canadian culture, which was neither solely Romanian nor Canadian. However, as the World War II and the Cold War weakened the ties with the homeland and as Romanians became more assimilated into the Canadian culture and society, they started to lose Romanian language, which is preoccuppyig for the priests. Mixed marriages are also increasing and the ROC is feeling the need to revitalize the Romanian Orthodox culture within Canada.<sup>192</sup> Even though the Patriarchate is sending contributions to the ROCs, it is not sufficient. Since the salaries of the priests are not sufficient, they have to work in other jobs to earn a living and maintain their families.<sup>193</sup>

As the number of the Romanian Orthodox parishes increased in the new continent, the Patriarchate took the initiative to organize the parishes and placed them under its jurisdiction. The Romanian Orthodox Missionary Episcopate of America was formed in 1925. The Bishop of the Episcopate, Bishop Polycarp, who went to Romania in 1939, could not return back since the World War II erupted and after the war a communist regime was established in Romania. The Patriarchate had to get the approval of the communist regime before appointing priests abroad. Pr. Polycarp was forced to retire and the regime appointed a new bishop, who was not accepted by the Episcopate in the US. Pr. Andrei Moldovan, who was an American citizen, was nominated as the new bishop. Most of the parish priests that arrived during his period were trained in Romania and the bishop maintained ties with the Patriarchate through visits to Bucharest. However, the intervention of the communist regime soon led to divisions within the Romanian communities in the US and Canada. A

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>191</sup> <u>http://www.saintsconstantineandelena.org/history.htm</u>
 <sup>192</sup> <u>http://www.multiculturalcanada.ca/Encyclopedia/A-Z/r2/9</u>
 <sup>193</sup> <u>http://www.multiculturalcanada.ca/Encyclopedia/A-Z/r2/7</u>

new anti-communist Romanian episcopate emerged under Bishop Valerian Trifa<sup>194</sup> with its see in Grass Lake, Michigan. However, the division did not end even after he has left.<sup>195</sup>

Currently the ROCs in the American continent are divided into two groups. There are communities under the jurisdiction of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America, which is part of the OCA, and the Romanian Orthodox Missionary Archdiocese in America and Canada, which is under the jurisdiction of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate with 85 parishes and 60,000 members all around the US. With the Holy Synod decree of December 12<sup>th</sup>, 1974 the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate became an Archdiocese and gained its autonomous status under the jurisdiction of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate.<sup>196</sup> The See of the Archdiocese is in Chicago. Pr. Nicolae Codrea was elected as the new Archiepiscop of America and Canada on March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2002 in Michigan by the congress under the presidency of Metropolitan Iosif Pop (BOR, 2005, CXXIII, 1-3: 624-6). Besides its administrative organs, the Archdiocese has associations for youth and women. The Romanian Orthodox Youth in America and Canada (ROYA) is the youth association of the Archdiocese and each parish has a local ROYA.<sup>197</sup> There is also the Association of Romanian Orthodox Ladies Auxiliaries (AROLA).

With the fall of the communist regime, a new wave of immigration to the US has started as well as to Canada and South America. According to 1990 US Census figures there are 365,544 people of Romanian descent are living in the US (Wertsman, 2004: 291). Those who arrived after 1989 have high educational skills just like the ones who arrived during and after the World War II (Ibid: 293). There are now scholarly exchanges between Romania and the US through grants and scholarships and the Romanian Studies Association of America, the American Romanian Academy of Arts and Sciences and some other academic organizations play an important and active role in this exchange (Wertsman, 2004: 296). Today it is possible to find Romanians living in all the states of the US; however, states such as New York, California, Florida, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, New Jersey and Pennsylvania have the highest concentration of Romanians. In South America, there is a Romanian Orthodox community settled since a long time in Argentina in cities

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>194</sup> According to the Prof. Niculescu's account Trifa had relations with the Iron Guardists, however gave wrong information about his involvement with the fascists to the US officials. Under the threat of deportation he had to leave the US in 1985. Archbishop Valerian (Trifa) died in 1987 and the Dr.Nathaniel (Popp) is the current Archbishop of Detroit and the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America. <u>http://www.roea.org/hierarchs.htm</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>195</sup> <u>http://www.multiculturalcanada.ca/Encyclopedia/A-Z/r2/7</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>196</sup> http://www.romarch.org

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>197</sup> http://www.royaweb.org/default.asp

such as Mendoza, La Piata, Cordoba sau Rosario. Up until 1989<sup>198</sup> the Romanian community performed cultural and spiritual activities through the Association of Mihai Eminescu. The association also has a publication with the same name (BOR, 2002, CXX, 1-6: 172). Currently, there are 15 Romanian Orthodox parish churches and 19 priests in Argentina.<sup>199</sup>

The spiritual unity of the Romanian Orthodox diaspora is important for the Patriarchate. Therefore, it deemed the dialogue between the two episcopates in the American continent very important (BOR, 2004, CXXII, 9-12: 245). This has led to the initiatives for setting up a joint commission betweent the two episcopates. The Congresses of Orthodox Episcopate of America and the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas have met on July 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>, 2008 to discuss the proposal offered by the Joint Dialogue Commission to "Establish a Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of North America" and to explore the ways of overcoming 60 year-long separation and achieving unification. The Commission will continue meeting to come up with a complete proposal for unification.<sup>200</sup> The dialogue is ongoing; however, it is not finalized yet.<sup>201</sup>

Besides the Orthodox Church, there are other Romanian Churches in the US. The Greek-Catholic Church has 15 parishes with around 4,000 members. There are also Romanian Protestants organized in different churches. They are mainly the Baptists, Pentecostals and 7<sup>th</sup> Day Adventists. First Romanian Baptist Church was established in 1910 in Cincinnati, Ohio and today there are 35 parish churches with 10,000 members. The Romanian Pentecostals since 1920s have organized themselves into 50 parish churches with around 17,000 believers. 7<sup>th</sup> Day Adventists succeeded in forming 12 parishes with 2000 people since the 1980s (Wertsman, 2004: 293-4).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>198</sup> There are three groups of Romanians in Argentina. The first group is composed of those settled in Argentina after the World War I and during interwar years, the second group composed of those running away from the communist regime during and after its establishment and the third group is composed of those who have left Romania after 1989. Only a few of the members of the first group are living today. The intellectuals among the members of the first group have established the Association of Romanian Community of Argentina. With the arrival of second and third waves the number of Romanian Orthodox parishes has increased in time.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>199</sup> Both Pr. Mircea Uta (who is a member of the external relations commission of the Patriarchate) and the Romanian ambassador to Argentina were present at the official inauguration ceremony of a parish church in Buenos Aires (Ibid: 174-5).

<sup>5).</sup> <sup>200</sup> "Romanian Orthodox Congress Endorses Joint Dialogue Commission Proposal" <u>http://www.romarch.org/news.php?id=1311</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>201</sup> "The 76<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America Debates the Proposal of Unification with the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese of America and Canada"

http://www.basilica.ro/en/news/the\_76th\_congress\_of\_the\_romanian\_orthodox\_episcopate\_of\_america\_debates\_the\_prop\_osal\_of\_unification\_with\_the\_romanian\_orthodox\_archdiocese\_of\_america\_and\_canada.html

**IV.2.4.2. The Romanian Orthodox Diaspora in Europe and the World:** The European continent is the second main destination for the Romanian Orthodox migrants and is the main recipient of the recent large scale migration from Romania. The Romanian people have spread to different parts of Europe from very South in Greece<sup>202</sup>, Spain, Italy and Portugal to very North such as Finland and UK as well as Middle East, Australia and New Zealand.

While majority of Romanians have arrived in Europe after 1989, there were Romanians in Europe beforehand. Despite the limitations during the communist rule, migration existed in Romania in the form of internal, cross-border and –to a very limited extent – international migration. Before the Revolution, Romanian migration, which was subject to visa given by the communist regime allowing Romanians to work or study abroad, had ethnic or political motivations (Nicolescu and Constantin, 2005: 55). Those who could not acquire necessary permits had to escape from the country by risking their lives or bribing the officials. Even though there were those that could go into exile, it was at a limited scale. Those refugees and migrants, who settled in Europe, took the initiative to open up Romanian Orthodox parish churches. The main destination for Romanian refugees was France. Visarion Puiu, who was the Metropolitan of Transnistria in Odessa from 1942 to 1944 and reopened churches closed by the Soviets but later on took refuge in France fearful of punishment for his religious activities, established the first Romanian Orthodox parish in 1954 (Nicolae, 2003: 6).

There were also Romanian communities in different cities of Europe and they set up parish churches. The Romanian Orthodox parishes emerged in Stockholm in 1971, in Göteborg in 1976 and Malmö in 1977 with some other branches in other parts of Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Norway. The first parish in Switzerland was opened in Geneva in 1975 with branches in Lausanne and another parish in Zurich in 1982. The first Romanian Orthodox parish in Italy was opened in Milan in 1977; then new parish churches were opened in Turin, Bari and Rome, while the first parish in Belgium was opened in Brussels in 1978 and later on in Antwerp (Nicolae, 2003: 6).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>202</sup> The Romanian community in Greece before 1989 had a different character. The Romanians who immigrated were either skilled migrants or they were married with Greek citizens, while after 1989 Romanian migration to Greece took the form of labour migration (Voudouris, 2004: 176). Voudouris argues that the positive image of the Romanians in Greece was negatively influenced by new migratory waves to the level of stigmatization of Romanians in Greece (Ibid: 178).

The Romanian population in Spain arrived in Spain in three waves. The first wave started in 1941 following the Romania's entry into the World War II and the establishment of communist regime with the end of the war. During 1965-70 came the second wave mainly to Barcelona and Madrid. It was a short liberalization period allowing mixed marriages, cultural exchanges and enrollment of Romanian students at Spanish universities (Moldovan, 2002: 242). The third wave came in the 90s in the form of labor migration. Those arriving with the third wave were already aware of the presence of the ROC in Madrid, which was established in 1979, and the rest found about it after they have arrived. As the Priest Moldovan of the Church states the Church acted as a reference point and provided guidance for the Romanian Orthodox community. He suggests that the Church "exerts an important influence on the individual's intellectual, spiritual and moral development. Within the Church, the Romanians shape out their souls, life and behaviour, turning into a fully developed human being" (Ibid: 243). Besides the religious services, there is a Sunday school for children, which consists of courses about religion, Romanian culture and language. The Church puts special emphasis on the spiritual education of the Romanian youth.

Due to growth in the number of Romanians in Spain nine more parish churches were opened in 2001 such as the ones in Barcelona, Alacala and Henares (BOR, 2001, CXIX, 1-6: 462). Since the Romanian Orthodox priests are also newcomers and they face a new environment with different social and bureaucratic issues ten cultural and social associations have been opened that work in cooperation with the churches and help the Romanian communities cope with the problems they encounter in the Spanish context (Moldovan, 2002: 244).

The Romanian community in London is using the St. Dunstans Church for all services since 1964 as a result of an agreement between the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate and the Bishop of London and Archbishop of Canterbury. The parish priest is also the representative of the Patriarch to the Archbishop of Canterbury. Therefore, the St. Dunstans Church has an important role in promoting ecumenical relations between the two churches. In 1965 Patriarch Justinian Marina has visited the Church and became the first Patriarch to celebrate the Divine Liturgy in an Anglican Church (Pufulete, 2004: 287). The iconostasis of the Church has been brought from Antim Monastery in Bucharest in 1966, which stood in the Monastery for more than hundred years. In collaboration with the Romanian Cultural Centre in London, the church offers Romanian language courses on

Saturdays for children, classical music concerts (Ibid: 288). The Church, Pufulete argues, acts as a symbol of religious and national identity of Romanians in London (Ibid). The Church is used by the Romanian community only on Fridays and at week ends, while the Anglican community uses it during the week days.<sup>203</sup> A new parish church was also opened in Oxford in 2001 (BOR, 2001, CXIX, 1-6: 462).<sup>204</sup>

There is a small but growing Romanian community in Finland. The Romanian Orthodox parish priest states that Romanians come together in four Finnish cities (Helsinki, Turku, Tampere and Lappeenranta) for prayers, baptisms and weddings; they actively participate in the religious services and parish life. The liturgy is in Romanian and the church provides a space for socializing in Romanian and reproducing the Romanian culture through food and customs. The priest also publishes one page newsletter in Romanian (Durac, 2004: 128-9).

Due to emergence of parishes in different parts of Europe, the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate took the steps to open its first bishopric in Europe in the 70s. The Romanian Orthodox Missionary Episcopate for Central and Western Europe was established on April 27<sup>th</sup>, 1972 and the Episcopate was elevated to the level of Archiepiscopate in 1974. However, after 1989 with large scale migration to Europe many ROCs emerged and the Patriarchate had to take steps to reorganize parish communities in Europe. The ROCs in Europe are under the jurisdiction of Metropolitanates in France and Germany. Germany was one of the main destination countries at the beginning of the 90s for ethnic Germans and Romanians from Romania. In time the number of the ROCs have increased and the Extraordinary Assembly of the Metropolitan Church of Berlin was convened on January 16<sup>th</sup>, 1993 to discuss canonical jurisdictional issues, the organization of the Orthodox diaspora in Metropolitanates, Archbishoprics, Bishoprics and the establishment of the Metropolitan See in Berlin with the title "Romanian Orthodox Metropolitan Church for Germany and Central Europe" (BOR, 1993, CXI, 1-3: 138). Pr. Serafim was enthroned as the Metropolitan of Romanian Orthodox See in Germany on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1994 (BOR, 1997, CXV, 7-12: 354-5). Particularly after 1993 with the change in German asylum policies, new destination countries emerged and Romanian Orthodox

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>203</sup> http://www.radur.homechoice.co.uk/roc.html

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>204</sup> Besides the ROCs, associations also try to contribute to the preservation of cultural and religious identity in UK. The Association *Românul Britanic* was established by two Romanian families in London in 2002. Two of the goals of the association are to preserve linguistic, cultural and religious identity of Romanians in UK and to reduce the gap between the ROC and the Church of England (Crişan, 2004: 273).

migrants carried their faith with them to new settings. This has led to the creation of another Metropolitanate in France. The statute of the Archepiscopate in Paris was adopted on November 25, 1996. On November 9<sup>th</sup>, 1996 the limits of the jurisdiction of Metropolitan Church in Paris has been defined and the title of the Metropolitan Church has been changed as the "Romanian Orthodox Archepiscopate of Western and Southern Europe" (BOR, 1997, CXV, 1-6: 318). The parish churches in France, Italy, Spain, Ireland, Great Britain, Iceland, Netherlands, Belgium, and Switzerland came under its jurisdiction (BOR, 1996, CXIV, 7-12: 442; Nicolae, 2003: 7).

Besides conducting religious services the Metropolitanates organize religious training and cultural activities for the Romanian Orthodox communities. The Metropolitanate of Germany has the Association of Romanian Youth, which was established in Germany by two meetings of Ph.D. theology students ("Young Orthodox" Festival) in Germany and France (BOR, 1999, CXVIII, 1-3: 417). The Metropolitanate of Paris also has a youth association, *Nepsis*.<sup>205</sup> *Nepsis* has established a new section for the children between 3-13 years of age; *Nepsis Junior*. A considerable number of parishes have established catechism for young people and Sundays are dedicated to the children (BOR, CXXIII, 1-3, 2005, 170). *Nepsis* has organized a pilgrimage trip to Tismana Monastery for Romanian youth in July 2006<sup>206</sup> and Dragostea in 2007.<sup>207</sup> The Metropolitan See in Paris in collaboration with the Romanian Ministry of External Affairs has organized a trip to Tismana monastery in 2007.<sup>208</sup>

Since there are Romanian communities in Central and Eastern Europe, the Patriarchate has opened two Romanian Orthodox episcopates in Hungary and in Serbia, which were founded in 1994 (BOR, 1994, 7-12: 386). There are 21 parish churches, 16 filial branch churches under the jurisdiction of the Episcopate in Hungary (BOR, 2005, CXXIII, 1-3: 173), while the episcopate in Vârșeț, Serbia has 40 parish churches and 22 priests (Ibid: 175).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>205</sup> The association *Nepsis* was established on November 13<sup>th</sup>, 1999 with the initiative of Metropolitan Iosif. NEPSIS means awakening. This name was chosen since it represented the goal of the establishment of the association, which is to transmit the faith to younger generations. <u>http://www.mitropolia-paris.ro/?subject=nepsis/index</u>. NEPSIS has taken the initiative to found a filial office in Valencia, Spain at the meeting on March 17-18<sup>th</sup>, 2007 with the participation of the parish priest, parish community and Romanian youth from different Spanish cities (Grecu, Bogdan. (May 2007) "Filială "Nepsis' la Valencia", *Foaia Sfântul Ioan Casian*, No. 275, 7).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>206</sup> Protopop Marc-Antoine, (December 2006) "Adunarea Anuală Protopopiatului Franței", *Foaia Sfântul Ioan Casian*, No. 270, 14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>207</sup>Camelia-Mihaela Dascălu, (November 2007) "Pelerinaje sau Cărări pe Drumul (D)dragostei", Foaia Sfântul Ioan Casian, No.276, 8-9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>208</sup> MOREOM, (September 2007) "Tabăra Internațională de Tradiție și Spritualitate Ortodoxă Tisamana 2007", *Foaia Sfântul Ioan Casian*, No. 278, 8-9.

There are also Romanian communities in Australia and New Zeland and recently a diocese was formed. They are directly connected to the Patriarchate in Bucharest. In a short article written in 2004 by a Romanian Orthodox in New Zealand, the Romanian Patriarchate and authorities were requested to support the community in Auckland to bring a wooden church with loose parts to be brought together in Auckland, to open a Romanian cultural centre similar to the ones in Canada and the US and open a honorific consulate (Pucu, 2004: 218-219). Even though there is no information available if the Romanian community succeeded in bringing the wooden church from Romania, there is a ROC in Auckland; St Ignatius ROC. There are also parish churches in Wellington, <sup>209</sup> and Christchurch. In Austrialia there are parish churches in Adelaide, Sydney, Brisbane and Perth<sup>210</sup> and two new ROCs that have been opened in Melbourne (BOR, 2006, CXXIV, 4-6: 98).

Additionally there are representations of the Church at Holy Places (Jerusalem, Jordan and Jericho), which give religious assistance to the Romanian Orthodox communities in Jerusalem, Palestine and Jordan, a parish church in Rabat, Morocco (BOR, 2001, CXIX, 1-6: 462) representative bureau of the Romanian Patriarchate at the European Institutions in Brussels<sup>211</sup> and the Romanian Orthodox parishes in Sofia, Cyprus, Johannesburg and Istanbul.

The Romanian Orthodox community in *Hasköy*, Istanbul, is using the Church of *Sfânta Muceniță Paraschevi*<sup>212</sup>, which belongs to the Ecumenical Patriarchate.<sup>213</sup> According to parish parochial council members there are around 17,000 Romanians in Istanbul (while a Turkish newspaper states that they are around 10,000<sup>214</sup>) but the parish community consists of 800 members. The Patriarchate was aware of the high number of Romanians in Istanbul and it took the issue of opening a parish church in Istanbul on its

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>209</sup> <u>http://www.orthodoxchurch.org.nz/parishes.php#Romanian</u>. (BOR, 2005, CXXIII, 1-3: 128).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>210</sup> 137 members of the Romanian Orthodox people living in Perth with the donations have transformed a building into a ROC (BOR, 2006, CXX, 1-3: 129). The Holy Synod decided to send funds from Missionary Fund for the provision of objects for the liturgy services and ask for the intervention of the Romanian government for financial support (Ibid: 130). <sup>211</sup> "The Statutes for the Organisation and Functioning of the ROC General Stipulations", p. 3-4

http://www.patriarhia.ro/ upload/documente/121438488425759490.pdf; (BOR, 2006, CXX, 1-3: 128).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>212</sup> http://www.bisericaistanbul.com/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>213</sup> I have visited the church a couple of times and talked with the priest and leaders of the parish community. The Church is surrounded with walls and has a big garden. A Romanian gardener, who has been working in Istanbul for a long time is taking care of the beautiful and very neatly organized garden. There is also a separate hall with a kitchen. As I have been told, Mircea Lucescu, the former Romanian footbal player and a well-known Romanian football manager during his stay in Istanbul when he coached two Istanbul football teams was visiting the Church with his wife as a practising Orthodox. He has also made donations for the renewal of the hall and garden. In the hall besides the pictures of Romanian presidents and football heroes there is the photo of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder of the Turkish Republic.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>214</sup> "İstanbul'a Romen Ortodoks Kilisesi", Sabah Online Edition, 22 May 2004.

agenda in 1999. According to the Holy Synod proceedings, the Ecumenical Patriarchate has announced that it will give the Sfânta Parascheava Church to the use of the Romanian community and decided to discuss the issue of the jurisdiction of the parish church with the Ecumenical Patriarchate (BOR, 1999, CXVII, 7-12: 563-5).

Following the death of the Romanian migrants at a hotel fire and difficulties encountered during the funerals has intensified the efforts for the opening of the ROC in Istanbul. For some time the community used an Armenian Catholic Church at the centre of Istanbul. In 2004 with an opening ceremony (after its restoration) and with the participation of the Ecumenical Patriarch, Patriarch Teoctist and the Romanian Minister of Culture, the current church was given to the parish priest Silviu State and the Romanian community.<sup>215</sup> In accordance with the agreement between the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate made in 1925 for the recognition of the autocephalous status of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate, the Romanian community living in Istanbul is under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. However, their parish priest is ordained by the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate.<sup>216</sup> The Ecumenical Patriarchate cannot appoint a Greek priest to the Church, since he would not speak Romanian and nobody would understand the liturgy in Greek. In terms of its internal organization; therefore, the Church is autonomous, the parish members elect the parochial council and with their contributions maintain the Church and pay the salary of the priest. However, the religious duties of the priest are not organized by Bucharest but the Ecumenical Patriarchate.<sup>217</sup>

Historical and spiritual importance of the Church makes it a home for the Romanian community in Istanbul. Sfânta Parascheava Church is a Church which has been restored in 1692 by the Saint Martyr King Constantin Brancoveanu and Greek community. The patron saint of the Church is also from Iasi in Romania.<sup>218</sup> Therefore the community and the priest see the Church as a "little Romania" and are willing to continue using the Church in the future. Most of the parish members are settled in Istanbul and some of them have Turkish citizenship and/or married to Turkish citizens. The ROC in Istanbul presents an interesting case of interaction and experience of the Orthodoxy in an ancient capital of the Orthodoxy with predominantly Muslim population and in a secular state.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>215</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>216</sup> The same principle applies to the small Greek community in Bucharest, which has a Greek priest, whose priestly duties is organized by the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>217</sup> Interview with Rev. Dositheos Anagnostopoulos.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>218</sup> Within the Church there is the tomb of Saint New Martyre Arghira, who has been imprisoned and tortured for her religious beliefs for 16 years. There is her icon in the Church as well.

IV.2.4.3. The Organization of Romanian Orthodox Churches in Diaspora: The Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate tries to cope with the expansion of the Romanian Orthodox diaspora all over the world by extending its organizational reach to different continents. The spread of Romanian diaspora led to a radical change in the perception of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate of its jurisdiction. While during communism the jurisdiction of the Church was delimited with the territory within the boundaries of Romania, following the fall of the regime, the nation rather than the territory became the defining element for the definition of the Church's jurisdiction. The Article 1 of the new statute of the ROC in 1990 just after the fall of the Ceausescu regime shows the perception of the ROC has changed as compared to the Cold War years under the communist rule. As stated in 1948 Statute of the ROC, there were 5 Metropolitan Sees under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate, which are the Metropolitan Sees of Hungaro-Wallachia, Moldova and Suceava, Ardealului, Oltania, Banat and the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate included the people of the Orthodox creed of the People's Republic of Romania. In the 1948 Statute the reference is to the territory.<sup>219</sup> In 1990 Statute, the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate is extended to the diaspora, since the reference is to the Romanian Orthodox people living within and out of Romania.<sup>220</sup> Article 6 of the Statute stipulated that religious assistance and canonical organization of the Romanian Orthodox diaspora is the responsibility of the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate.<sup>221</sup> The most recent statute of the Patriarchate also has the same reference point.<sup>222</sup> According to the Article 7 of the current Statute establishment, dissolution, territorial change and assignment and change of titles of Metropolitan Sees, Archdioceses and Dioceses are done with the decrees of the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate in accordance with the pastoral requirements and the administrativeterritorial organization of the state.<sup>223</sup> Once set up, the parish churches, dioceses,

<sup>220</sup> Statutul: Pentru Organizazrea și Funcționarea Bisericii Orthodoxe Române.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>219</sup> Statutul Pentru Organizarea si Functionarea Bisericii Ortodoxe Romane (1948) Article. 1. Biserica Ortodoxă Română cuprinde pe toți crecincioși de religie creștina ortodoxă din Republica Populară Română.

Art.1 Biserica Ortodoxă Română cuprinde pe credincioșii de religie creștină ortodoxă din România și diaspora ortodoxa română. (BOR, 1990, CVIII, 11-12: 222).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>221</sup> Art.6. Asistența religiosă și organizarea canonică a diasporei ortodoxe române se asigură de către Sfintul Sinod al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române. (BOR 1990, CVIII, 11-12: 222).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>222</sup> The Statutes for the Organization and Functioning of the ROC General Stipulations

Article.1. The ROC is the community of the Orthodox Christians, clergy, monks and lay, canonically constituted in parishes and monasteries in the eparchies of the Romanian Patriarchy inside and outside the Romanian frontiers, which witness God in the Holy Trinity, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, based on the Holy Scripture, liturgical services and canonical order. <u>http://www.patriarhia.ro/\_upload/documente/121438488425759490.pdf</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>223</sup> Article 7 of "The Statutes for the Organisation and Functioning of the ROC General Stipulations", 4.

archdioceses, Metropolitan Sees and some other Church units abroad are organized and work according to their own statutes, which are approved by the Holy Synod.<sup>224</sup>

Currently, in addition to the Metropolitanates in Romania, the Patriarchate has 3 Metropolitanates composed of 3 Archdioceses and 6 Dioceses in Europe. The Metropolitan Churches are Autonomous Metropolitan See of Bessarabia; the Romanian Orthodox Metropolitan See for Germany, Central and North Europe, which has the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese of Germany located in Nurnberg and the Romanian Orthodox Diocese of North Europe located in Stockholm under its jurisdiction; the Romanian Orthodox Metropolitan See for Western Europe, which has Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese for Western Europe seated in Paris, the Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Italy seated in Rome, the Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Spain and Portugal with its see in Madrid under its jurisdiction; the Romanian Orthodox Diocese in Hungary; and the Romanian Orthodox Diocese in Serbia and Montenegro.<sup>225</sup> There is also a Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas with its see in Chicago<sup>226</sup> and the Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Australia and New Zealand seated in Melbourne, which are under the jurisdiction of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate.<sup>227</sup> The dioceses in Sweden, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Sweden in Europe and Australia and New Zealand are recently created due to increasing number of churches in a very short time. The enthronement ceremony of the first Bishop of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of Northern Europe Right Rev. Macarie Dragoi took place on July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2008 at the Serbian Orthodox Church in Stockholm. The Episcopate has been created due to requests coming from Romanians in Sweden, Norway and Denmark to the Patriarchate. The headquarters of the Episcopate is in Stockholm.<sup>228</sup> The enthronement of Right Rev. Mihail, the first Bishop of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of Australia and New Zealand took place on June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008 in Melbourne,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>224</sup> Article 8 of "The Statutes for the Organisation and Functioning of the ROC General Stipulations", 4 <u>http://www.patriarhia.ro/\_upload/documente/121438488425759490.pdf</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>225</sup> The Metropolitan Sees in Germany and France are officially recognized by the German authorities (BOR, 2005, CXXIII, 1-3: 152). The ROCs in Spain have been officially recognized by the Spanish authorities in June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2004 (Ibid: 170). Negotiations are under way for the official recognition of the ROC in Italy.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>226</sup> Currently, there are 52 parish churches under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Church in Germany and 112 parish churches under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Church in France (BOR, 2006, CXX, 1-3: 128), while in America and Canada there are 58 parish churches (BOR, 2006, CXX, 1-3: 267).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>227</sup> "The Statutes for the Organisation and Functioning of the ROC General Stipulations", p. 3 <u>http://www.patriarhia.ro/\_upload/documente/121438488425759490.pdf</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>228</sup> "The Enthronement Ceremony of the First Bishop of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of Northern Europe", 17 July 2008.<u>http://www.basilica.ro/en/romanian\_orthodox\_diaspora/the\_enthronement\_ceremony\_of\_the\_first\_bishop\_of\_the\_r</u>omanian\_orthodox\_episcopate\_of\_northern\_europe.html

Australia.<sup>229</sup> The Church is planning to open one parish church in Japan<sup>230</sup> and one in South Korea.<sup>231</sup>

Starting from 1990 External Affairs Commission of the Church (Comisia afecerilor externe bisericesti) became very active and actively involved in diaspora affairs. The main concern of both the Patriarchate and the commission has been to stabilize contact of the Mother Church (Biserica-mamă) with the Romanian Orthodox diaspora (Diaspora *Românească Ortodoxă*), particularly with those that are not under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate and to achieve unification of all the Romanian Orthodox diaspora under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate (BOR, 1991, CIX, 10-12: 169). The unity of the church with the Romanian diaspora in Central and Western Europe is an important concern expressed in church publications repeatedly.<sup>232</sup> The reference to "22 million Romanians in the country and abroad" (BOR, 2006, CXXIV, 4-6: 152) by Patriarch Teoctist and the Church hierarchs is indicative of the new perception of the Church and its emphasis on the unity of the Church and its adherents.

However, despite the change in perception of the Patriarchate regarding its role out of Romania, in the 90s there were delays at the implementation level. In its 1992 official bulletin, the Church makes a self-criticism for not doing enough for the last two years about the Romanian Orthodox diaspora (BOR, 1992, CX, 11-12: 211). The Church expresses the need to work on a declaration that shows the willingness of the Holy Synod to make a contribution to the unification of the Romanian diaspora. The need to meet the Romanian Orthodox priests that are under the jurisdiction of other churches in diaspora as well as diaspora communities to discuss the viewpoint of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate is also discussed (Ibid: 211). Three reasons can be identified in the delay in materializing its

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>229</sup> "Enthronement of Right Rev. Mihail, the first Bishop of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of Australia and New Zealand", 20 April 2008.

http://www.basilica.ro/en/press releases/enthronement of right rev mihail the first bishop of the romanian orthodox episcopate of australia and new zealand.html <sup>230</sup> "The ROC will Establish a Parish in Japan"

http://www.basilica.ro/en/news/the romanian\_orthodox\_church\_will\_establish\_a\_parish\_in\_japan.html

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>231</sup> "His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel Received His Excellency Valeriu Arteni, Plenipotentiary Minister of the Ministry of External Affairs", June 30 2008

http://www.basilica.ro/en/news/his beatitude patriarch daniel received his excellency valeriu arteni plenipotentiary minister of the ministry of external affairs.html

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>232</sup> It is stated that the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate should increase its efforts for the unity of ROCs and (BOR, 1990. CVIII, 11-12: 215) reorganize the Romanian Orthodox communities and unite them with the Mother Church (BOR, 1992 CX, 11-12 201). The diaspora has spiritual links but the need to consolidate ties and tie the diaspora permanently through Church organization to the Patriarchate is also expressed (BOR, 1992, CX, 1-3: 211). The ideal of unification of entire Romanian Orthodox diaspora under one eparchy (BOR, CXVIII, 1-3, Jan-March 1999, 418) and the problem of establishing links with the Romanian Orthodox diaspora spread all around the world (BOR, 2001, CXIX, 1-6: 488) are also stated.

objectives regarding diaspora; limited resources of the Patriarchate, allocation of resources primarily to the internal reconstruction efforts and activities to undo the destruction caused by the communist regime and the emergence of large scale emigration that caught the Patriarchate unprepared for a rapid extension of the Romanian diaspora. However, as the Romanian diaspora in Italy started to stabilize and grow in size, the Church started to put more emphasis on the relations with diaspora.

The relations with the Romanian diaspora is an intricate issue, since it involves relations with other Orthodox Churches in diaspora, which requires a "deeper analysis" by the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate and elaboration of the issue with the Ecumenical Patriarchate and in its pan-Orthodox sub-commissions (BOR, 1992, CX, 11-12: 201). Since the establishment and maintenance of the parish churches is done through the contribution of the Romanian Orthodox communities abroad and many small communities are trying to create their own parish churches by their own means the coordination of the churches abroad becomes difficult. In order to guarantee the unity of the Church, the Patriarchate puts great emphasis on the nomination of the priests. The Holy Synod has decreed that the nomination of priests that will work abroad should be sent by the Mother Church and the external relations of the Church should be organized in accordance with the local hierarchy of the church. The Holy Synod also decided to impose canonical sanctions for the priests concerned that do not respect this rule (BOR, 2002, CXX, 1-6: 654-5).

In order to monitor the working of the ROCs abroad and ensure unity, delegations of the Patriarchate visit the Metropolitanates, episcopates and parish churches to meet the priests working abroad and the Romanian diaspora. The delegations then inform the Holy Synod about the conditions, problems and expectations of diaspora.<sup>233</sup> The Patriarchate also organizes conferences, which brings together the Romanian Orthodox priests in Romania and abroad and members of the diaspora. For instance in the spring of 2005 a conference is organized by the organs of the Patriarchate on "The Phenomenon of Migration in Parishes: Opportunities, Problems and Perspectives" (BOR, 2004, XII, 9-12: 255).

The main difficulty the Romanian Orthodox community in diaspora face is financial problems in opening or maintaining a worshipping place, and therefore, they need

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>233</sup> Metropolitan Daniel is visiting the ROCs abroad and representing the Church in its relations with other churches in ecumenical dialogue. Metropolitan Daniel visited the Romanian Orthodox parish in Göteburg, Sweden and then discussion of the problems of diaspora at Holy Synod meeting (BOR, 1993, CXI, 1-3: 140). A delegation from the Patriarchate visited Romanian diaspora communities in Australia, New Zeland and Turkey to get to know better the life and problems of diaspora in November 1999 (BOR, 1999, CXVII, 7-12: 563).

monetary support from the Patriarchate and state (BOR, 2002, CXX, 1-6: 687). Another problem related with the establishment of new parishes is the payment of salaries of the priests. The priests I interviewed have said that either they do not receive anything or what they receive is so meager that they have to work or get financial support from the parish community. As could be seen in the proceedings of the Holy Synod, the Church is aware of the fact that the salaries of the Romanian Orthodox priests working abroad are not sufficient and there is the need for a supplement (BOR, 1999, CXVII, 7-12: 568).<sup>234</sup>

Pastoral and missionary work in diaspora is one of the priorities of the Patriarchate (BOR, 2002, CXX, 1-6: 687) and the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate claims responsibility for the Romanian diaspora (BOR, 2003, CXXI, 1-6: 21) sees the growth of the Romanian diaspora is a sign of growth of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate (BOR, 2003, CXXI, 1-6: 4). As Patriarch Teoctist has stated in his speech during his visit to Berlin in 2003, the children who do not have a mother or father at home, since they have immigrated to Italy or Canada or who do not have any friends; have a mother, which is the mother of everyone, the Mother Church (BOR, 2003, CXXI, 1-6: 99). For the period of 2006-10, the Holy Synod decreed to put emphasis on the dynamic religious life in order to ensure unity of the Church (BOR, 2006, CXX, 1-3: 60), which means that the Patriarchate is planning to be more active in diaspora in the future.

The ROC has gone through different phases and came under different rulers up until it emerged as a Patriarchate with the independence of Romania. After it endured and survived the repressive communist rule, in the post-communist era it experienced a rebirth and emerged as one of the most trusted institutions within the Romanian public space. While it is indulged in a vigourous reconstruction activity inside Romania, it has to cope with serious social problems exacerbated with a long transition period to democracy and global market economy and effects of globalization. The EU accession of Romania also creates certain challenges for the ROC, while making the ROC an actor within the EU space. Growing presence of Romanian nationals within the EU space is another very important factor that extends the ROC's jurisdiction, presenting it with a new area of agency. Despite delays, problems and limited resources, the ROC is striving to live up to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>234</sup> In 1999, Metropolitan Iosif of Paris has reported the problem of the salaries of the priests working abroad and the need to change the existing situation to the Holy Synod (BOR, 1999, CXVIII, 1-3: 418). The need to change the existing regulation for the payment of the salaries of 52 priests was expressed in the following proceedings, since the budget of 52,000 USD is not sufficient (BOR, 2000, CXVIII, 4-6: 329-30).

the expectations of the Romanian Orthodox communities in Europe and use the opportunities presented with transnational migration.

## Chapter.V. A Process in the Making: Immigration and Religious Pluralism in Italy

Italy as a receiving country of immigration since the late 1970s is becoming religiously more pluralistic due to the arrival and settlement of immigrants belonging to different faiths and religious organizations.<sup>235</sup> Religious diversity and pluralism is a new phenomenon in Italy. Italian population is predominantly Catholic and despite the revision of the state's relations with the Catholic Church in 1984 (Spini, 2003: 420), the Catholic Church still enjoys certain privileges. Italian state has a speacial relationship with the Catholic Church different from other European states. As migrant religious institutions are transplanted in Italy, while paving the way for encounter of the Catholic Church and the Italian society with different religions, the Italian religious landscape becomes more diverse and more competitive.

Even though different religious minorities gain more visibility, drawing a map and defining the extent of religious pluralism in Italy is not a very easy task. Given the high number of irregular migrants in Italy, it becomes very difficult to define precisely the number of believers in different religions. Moreover, people coming from the same country are not always of the same creed or from the majority religion of that country. For the people of the same creed, the statistical data does not reflect the diversity of perception and practice (Introvigne, 2001: 9). Despite these shortcomings, certain estimates could still be made. If we consider religious pluralism among Italian citizens, we are talking about approximately around 1,178,000 people, who belong to religions other than Catholicism in Italy.<sup>236</sup> If we include foreign residents in Italy we are talking about 3,499,900 people who belong to different religions and religious institutions.<sup>237</sup>

Marginal Catholic groups and dissidents*	20.000
Orthodox	57.500
Protestants	409.000
Jews	29.000
Jehova's Witnesses	400.000
Other Christian groups***	26.000

Table 1. Religious Minorities that are Italian Citizens<sup>238</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>235</sup> In addition to immigration, religious pluralism is also attributed to semi-deregulation of religious market.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>236</sup> Between 2002-2007, 160.000 foreigners have acquired Italian citizenship and 100.000 of them belong to religions other than Catholicism.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>237</sup> "Il Pluralismo Religioso Italiano nel Contesto Postmoderno" <u>http://www.cesnur.org/religioni\_italia/introduzione\_01.htm</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>238</sup> Ibid.

Muslims	40.000	
Bahá'ís and other Islamic groups	3.000	
Hindus and neo-Hindus	18.000	
Buddhists	107.000	
Osho groups	4.000	
Sikh, Radhasoami Movement and their	2.500	
derivations		
Other Oriental religions**	1.000	
New Japanese religions	2.500	
Esoteric Teachings and "Ancient Wisdom"	13.500	
Movements of Human Potential	20.000	
New Age and Next Age	20.000	
Other	5.000	
Total	1.178.000	
* Catholic groups not in communion with the Catholic Church		
** Zoroastrians, Chinese and Indo-Chinese religious groups		
*** Particularly Mormons (22.000)		

## Table 2. Religious Affiliation of Migrants in Italy (Estimates of Caritas/Migrantes – Dossier 2008)

Muslims	1.253.704	
Orthodox	1.129.630	
Catholics	775.626	
Protestants	138.825	
Hindus	90.931	
Buddhists	55.861	
Other Christians	52.181	
Animists	44.674	
Jews	7.165	
Others	435.013	
Total	3.983.610	

 Table 3. Main Migrant Religious Minorities in Italy (Estimates of CESNUR 2008)

Muslims	1.153.400
Orthodox	836.000
Protestants	180.000
Hindus	45.000
Buddhists	37.000
Other Oriental and African Religions	30.000
Sikh e Radhasoami	15.000
Jehova's Witnesses	15.000
Jews	7.000
Others	3.500
Total	2.321.900

While *Caritas* bases its estimates on religious heritage and faith brought from the country of origin, Center for Studies on New Religions (CESNUR) bases its estimates on regular contact with a religious organization and religious practice such as prayer, fasting, etc. in Italy. For the case of the Protestants, while *Caritas* takes religious affiliation in the country of origin, CESNUR bases its analyses on the contact or belonging to a Protestant Church in Italy (African, Latin American, and Philippine Pentecostals; Chinese Baptists; Korean Methodists, North European Lutherans and Reformed Christians that live in Italy).<sup>241</sup>

However, regardless of differences in number the estimates reveal certain trends. Due to immigration, Islam has become the second religion in Italy, which due to internal as well as international dynamics is at the centre of academic and public debate on religious pluralism. Despite Islam's overrepresentation and problematization in the public and academic debate, the majority of the immigrants that arrive in Italy belong to the Christian faith, particularly to the Christian Orthodox faith. Even though recent migration from Eastern Europe makes the Orthodoxy a Western European religion as much as an Eastern European one, it did not get the scholarly attention within the context of transnational migration and within the Italian/European context. Due to heterogeneous nature of migration flows into Italy, many other faiths and religious institution become part of Italian religious landscape such as the Protestantism, Hinduism and Buddhism and other Asia and African faiths. Therefore, in the following sections after a discussion on the institutional framework for church-state relations in Italy, different migrant institutions and their impact on Italian religious landscape and legal-institutional structure are analyzed. The final section is devoted to the emergence and evolution of the Orthodox Christianity and churches within the Italian territory due to migration, which will provide a comparative perspective to evaluate the accomplishments of the ROC within the Italian religious landscape.

## V.1. Church-State Relations and Institutional Framework for Religion(s) in Italy

Italian religious landscape went through important changes in the last two decades due to changes in legislation as well as migratory flows carrying different religions into the Italian territory. However, the Catholic Church in Italy has always had special relations with the Italian state given the fact that the Holy See in Rome is the centre of the Catholicism. Up until 1947, the Catholicism was the state religion in Italy (Introvigne and Stark, 2005: 4) and today nominally 87% of the Italians are Catholics.<sup>242</sup> Even though Catholicism is not the official religion of the state, according to Cardinal Biffi (2000), it is "national historical religion" of Italians and one of the main sources of their identity. The Catholic Church plays a decisive role in the definition and reproduction of common national values (Pace, 1998 cited in Saint-Blancat and Schmidt di Friedberg, 2005: 1084).

The relationship between the state and the Church in Italy has been based on and shaped by the internal evolution and external adjustment of the Catholic Church within history. As La Piana argues the Papacy is in constant struggle with two opposite forces. While the Church presents itself as the only Church of the only true religion, which is immutable in its essence, it has to adjust to new realities and keep pace with change (1920: 161). The Westphalian system of modern sovereign states was a direct challenge to the Catholic Church. Disintegration of medieval Christendom was followed by the emergence of national churches in Europe. Europeans became the members of state churches before becoming citizens of the state (Casanova, 2001: 428). Following the Reformation, it lost its claim to be the only Church in Western Europe and lost its control over national Catholic Churches. Following the Risorgimento and absorption of Rome into the Italian territory in 1870, the Papacy lost the temporal power and it reacted with the Vatican Council I in 1870 to reclaim its supremacy over all the Catholic Churches. Even though with 1871 law the Italian state guaranteed the liberty of the Pope and his immunity, the Papacy refused to accept the law and the legitimacy of the Italian state and tried to prevent the participation of the Catholics into the political life of the new state (La Piana, 1920).<sup>243</sup> Until the end of the World War II, the Catholicism worked in close collaboration with authoritarian parties and regimes. Only after the war, the Christian Democrats emerged as an alternative to the Catholics in Europe (Davie, 2001: 465).

It was Mussolini who ended the stalemate between the state and the Church by signing 1929 Lateran Treaty, which abolished the 1871 law, established the Vatican City-State and recognized the extraterritoriality and sovereignty of the Vatican, even though it

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>242</sup> Jehova's Witnesses is the second denomination reverred by the Italian citizens, followed by the Assembly of God, Methodists, Waldesians and Mormons. "International Religious Freedom Report 2006: Italy", Released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, US Department of State, <u>http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2006/71387.htm</u>
 <sup>243</sup> "La Chiesa Cattolica", CESNUR, <u>http://www.cesnur.org/religioni\_italia/c/cattolicesimo\_02.htm</u>

was an enclave within the city of Rome.<sup>244</sup> Following the agreement, the priests started to get their salaries from the state, while other religious minorities faced discrimination (Introvigne and Stark, 2005: 5). Following the end of the war, with the promulgation of the 1947 Constitution, all religions were claimed to be equal before the law. There are three constitutional guarantees regarding religious freedom in Italy. With the Article 7 of the Italian Constitution the international treaty between the Italian state and the Vatican has been promulgated. Article 8 of the Italian Constitution guarantees the equality of all the religious confessions before the law and stipulates that religions other than the Catholicism can organize under the Concordat they sign with the Italian state. Third guarantee is the articles that give liberty to the Italian citizens to affirm faith in their own cult or religion with respect to the laws of the state regardless of the fact that their religious institution has a concordat with the Italian state (Spini, 2003: 420). In brief, the Constitution, while recognizing the concordat (*intese*) with the Catholic Church, prepared the ground for signing of concordats with other religious bodies. However, no other concordat was signed up until 1984.

Different from many Protestant state churches in the post-war Europe, the Catholic Church in Italy was immune from the intervention of the state. However, this did not lead to stagnation within the Church. Internal competition worked as an antidote against stagnation (Introvigne and Stark, 2005: 13). Moreover, the Catholic Church went through a reorientation process following the *aggiornamento* (the Vatican Council II), which could also be defined as "cautious adjustment" (Berger, 2001: 444) to the modern secular world. Since the Vatican Council II in 1960s, the Church accepted the modern human rights discourse and freedom of conscience (Casanova, 2001: 432-3) and changed its stance towards religious minorities in Italy and the world in general (Introvigne and Stark, 2005: 5).

In 1984 the State signed a new concordat with the Catholic Church. Article 9.2 of the 1984 Concordat stipulates that the principles of the Catholicism are part of the "historical patrimony of Italian people" (Canta, 2005: 257, note 24). The Concordat brought the *otto per mile* tax system (a voluntary check-off on taxpayer returns) instead of payment of priests' salaries by the Italian state. Italian citizens from 1984 onwards had to pay 0.08% of their taxes either to the state (which would be distributed between the state

and religious institutions with the concordat) or to the religious body they specified. The same year a concordat was signed with Waldensian Protestant Church, which also represented Methodists. Then the other concordats followed.<sup>245</sup> The Concordats signed in 2000 with the Jehovah's Witnesses and Italian Buddhist Union are pending parliamentary approval.<sup>246</sup> The law on religious freedom, which was prepared by the Prodi government could not be finalized due to the elections; however, Spini argues that it was a political move by the government, which was aware of the fact that the Parliament did not want to ratify the concordats (2003: 422). The negotiations for the signing of concordats are also under way with the Romanian and Russian Orthodox Churches.

There is the possibility to sign a concordat with the Italian state if there is a religious body representing the religious community that is recognized by the Italian state. However, this rule does not work in the case of Islam (Blasi, 2007: 321).<sup>247</sup> In 1998 Islamic organizations in Italy demanded signing of a concordat with the Italian state. However, the government decided not to start negotiations with any of the Muslim groups or associations (Spini, 2003: 423). For the case of Muslims signing of a concordat is not only a juridical but also a political act and very much influenced by the international political climate (Schmidt di Friedberg, 2002: 146). This does not stop the efforts of the Muslims to ask for a concordat with the Italian state. Those who are active in Muslim associations (Ibid: 145). Therefore, Italian Muslims put emphasis and base their claims on citizenship rights and do not accept any act or treatment on the part of the state that they deem as discriminatory (Schmidt di Friedberg, 2002: 155) such as Imam Aboulkheir Bregheiche:

[...]I consider this attitude of the Italian state towards this important religious minority as unjust, which is the Islamic one. The Italian state by stipulating real and proper concordats with almost all the religious minorities, the most important being the concordat with the Vatican and concordats with all the others, even those who have very few people with respect to the Islamic community –but they are still important – and they stop before the Islamic community with the excuse of international situation that requires elaboration, that etc. We naturally do not accept

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>245</sup> The Italian state signed concordats with the Seventh Day Adventist and Assemblies of God Pentecostals in 1988, the Union of Jewish Communities in 1989 and the Baptists and Lutherans in 1995 (Schmidt di Friedberg, 2002: 144). The Italian government started concordat negotiations with the Mormons and the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Istanbul in 2000, the Apostolic Church and the Hindus and Japanese Buddhists in 2001. "International Religious Freedom Report 2006: Italy", Released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, US Department of State, <u>http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2006/71387.htm</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>246</sup> http://www.cesnur.org

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>247</sup> Before 1998 three Islamic organizations have presented proposals to the Italian state. The first was by UCOII in 1990, the second by the Italian Muslims association in 1993 and the third by the Italian Islamic Religious Community (COREIS) in 1997 (Schmidt di Friedberg, 2002: 146, note 6).

this attitude of the state, *of our Italian state*, because we are Italian citizens, regular residents in Italy and do not have anything to do with the Islamic states of origin, if something happens abroad, we are non guilty or responsible. We want to be treated like all the other citizens...in terms of duties and rights. For this reason we certainly and rigorously ask for a concordat from the Italian state because it is the Italian constitution that says for each religious community the Italian state stipulates concordats respecting their statutes. There are statutes of the religious minorities. This is the Italian constitution that we all have to respect; the citizens and the governing authorities. Therefore to delay the stipulation of ...to stipulate this concordat with the Italian Islamic community with different excuses that they are divided, that they are not united etc. with all the excuses that definitely it is not the real motive. The real motive is that of international politics. Soon it is necessary to finalize this concordat. The Italian state knows very well that it should not act in this way. All the Muslims are ready; all the Muslims would like to collaborate for the realization of this concordat. [...]<sup>248</sup>

The main difficulty regarding Islam is the way it is organized. Non-existence of a church-type organization and diversity in Islam render it difficult for the state authorities in Europe to find an interlocutor (Atacan, 1993: 13) that represent all the Muslims in the country in question (Ibid: 19). Therefore, the case of Islam proves to be more problematic for the Italian state:

For this it is necessary to work at more than one level. On the one hand at institutional level it has all the right, duty to form, we can say, the people suitable for this function that important, which is that of imam. But at the same time how it [the Italian state] did with all the other religious minorities, democratically let the religious minorities precisely as the constitution says, as we have said, respecting their social statutes, which means the community identifies the proper person that naturally has the prerequisites to be able to do. It is not possible to accept that these priests are *imposed* by the state. So, have we become a religious or secular state? The state has to oversee naturally, make sure that these people are suitable, they concretely have the necessary prerequisites and the community to choose these people, especially in ...from the Islamic point of view, an imam has to be accepted by the community. It could not be imposed from outside. Therefore, I believe that by working together on these two platforms, we can say the institutional one, which is indispensable and the one of the community, which has its role, its responsibility, in its space I believe that we can achieve a lot. [...]<sup>249</sup>

A concordat between the Italian state and a religious body gives the representatives of religion access to hospitals, prisons, military barracks, allows them to conduct religious marriages or funerals, and exempts the students from exams on important religious days.<sup>250</sup> Different migrant communities without a concordat with the state encounter certain

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>248</sup> Interview with Imam Dr. Aboulkheir Bregeiche, President of the Islamic Community in Trentino-Alto Adige, at his clinic in Mezzacorona on January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>249</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>250</sup> "International Religious Freedom Report 2006: Italy".

difficulties in this respect. However, while the Christian communities can have access to the hospitals or prisons with the assistance of the Catholic Church as well as collaboration of the Italian officials working at hospitals or prisons, non-Christian migrant religious organizations are more disadvantaged as compared to the Christian ones:

[...] We cannot assist the prisoners for instance. We cannot assist the sick people at hospitals, we cannot concretely contribute to the religious education of the students...We are impeded to contribute exactly how all the other religious minorities do...For this vacuum, we can say, is created...leaves a freehand to...to imam, those responsible for the mosques, Islamic centers to invent a sort of modality for being able to do it, because it is necessary to do from the religious point view. A marriage should be made, it cannot be conducted only in the municipality and there is the need to do it in the municipality obviously, to respect the law, to do it in accordance with the norm of the law with all the necessary requirements etc. etc. but it is also necessary to do something in some way. It is not valid of course from the legal point of view and this is an exact discrimination because the other religious minorities, the priests that have people who are in charge of this duty can do it and it is a marriage contract, it is a recognized marriage [...]<sup>251</sup>

Even though there is no concordat with the Muslims in Italy, there are initiatives on the part of the Italian state to construct a representative body for the Muslims in Italy. It was Giuseppe Pisanu, ex-Minister of Interior who took the initiative to establish *Consulta Islamica* in October 2005 (Caritas, 2006: 211).<sup>252</sup> Despite stereotyping and unwelcoming discourses against Muslim migrants in Italy, there are also initiatives to consolidate the dialogue. Regional and local administrations allow for arrangement of prayer rooms and sometimes even for the construction of mosques.<sup>253</sup> Since 2001 the last Friday of Ramadan is celebrated as the day of Christian-Islamic dialogue in Italia (Caritas, 2006: 210).

The case of Muslims is indicative of the fact that even though singing Concordats provide solutions, there is the need for a general law (Spini, 2003: 421), which is vital for coexistence of different religions on the Italian territory. Besides Muslim religious organizations, there are other different religious organizations disadvantaged by the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>251</sup> Interview with Imam Dr. Aboulkheir Bregeiche.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>252</sup> Consulta Islamica was established on Settember 10th, 2005. It conducts research to formulate the stance of the Ministry of Interior in its dialogue with the Muslim community in Italy.

<sup>(&</sup>lt;u>http://www.interno.it/mininterno/export/sites/default/it/temi/religioni/sottotema003.html</u>). It has purely consultative functions and composed of 16 members. The institution aimed at creating an Italian Islam, which would fight Islamic radicalism and fundamentalism (Caritas, 2006: 211). *Consulta Islamica* claims to represent "95% of moderate Muslims who do not attend mosques, madrassas, or Islamic cultural centers, and who only came to our country to improve their living conditions and with the sincere intention to respect our law and order" (Laurence, 2007). However, it is doubtful how many of the Muslims would identify with the institution.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>253</sup> "International Religious Freedom Report 2006: Italy".

concordat system. Furthermore, current situation creates a contradiction between the two articles of the constitution. While Article 8 negates the equality of all religions before the Italian law, Article 3 promulgates equality of all the citizens and non-discrimination principle. Spini suggests a general law that will give different religious bodies legal personality and allow their representatives to perform religious services in accordance with the Italian law (2003: 425). Following Pier Paolo Donati's suggestion, Blasi argues for a "religiously qualified secular public sphere" to deal with new European religious pluralism. A secular public sphere with equal distance to all religions but capable of recognizing different religious identities and organizations and managing religious diversity and interreligious dialogue through a general law is the path to be taken (2007: 321; Elsheikh, 2003: 431).

However, the issue of religious liberties and religious pluralism cannot only be guaranteed through legislation. There is the need for the adoption of the inter-culturalist approach by the migrants, Italian society and institutions at the spaces of encounter between different cultures and religions. One of the main spaces of encounter of different religions and cultures is the Italian schools. The presence of foreign-born students or students with foreign nationality is increasing with a faster pace and in a shorter time as compared to other European states that have had the migration experience long before Italy. Moreover, since the migrant community is a heterogeneous one the foreign student community is also a diversified one (Canta, 2005: 251).

The Italian state with Article 9.2 of the 1984 Concordat with the Catholic Church guarantees continuation of teaching of the Catholicism at public schools except universities (the parents have the right to choose to avail their kids of this right or not) (Canta, 2005: 257, note 24). For the year 2003-2004 92.7% of the Italian students have used this right. Those who do not use are around 7% and there is a slight increase in the number due to presence of non-Catholic students at Italian schools. Particularly Muslim students opt out of the courses. Even though it is early to talk about teaching of other religions during classes on religion, Canta suggests that these classes could be turned into workshops for discussion and teaching of different religions and create the basis of dialogue among different communities (Ibid: 258-9). Schools are where multiculturalism becomes visible and in some cases conflictual. Therefore, there is the need for putting more emphasis on multiculturalism within the educational system and to formulate school curricula with a multidisciplinary approach to give basic knowledge on religions to students (Ibid: 255).

Majority of the immigrants in Italy immigrate to Italy with economical motives i.e. for work. Many aim to earn good enough to have good life standards of life for themselves and for their families (Liverani, 2005: 195). Migrants work mainly in services sector. However, there are also many working in industry and agriculture (Bentivogli, 2005: 175). Therefore, work environment is one of the main platforms where people from different ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds meet and work. The encounter is daily and it can last for long years depending on the duration of the work experience of the migrants at the work place. Within the secular work environment the presence of people of different origin with different religious backgrounds might lead to dialogue as well as confrontation. As a sign of collaboration more immigrants are getting actively involved and some become representatives in trade unions and workers' associations (Liverani, 2005: 196). According to Liverani and Bentivogli for the diversities to co-exist and keep on producing an economic value there is only one way; the recognition of diversity, while underscoring the importance of preserving secular nature of the work place (2005: 197; 2005: 181-2).

How much time and space is or should be allowed for religion at the secular work environment is the main question (Bentivogli, 2005: 178). There are particular problems for certain migrant workers regarding certain religious holy days, time and place of worship at the work place and food served at the work place. Liverani is of the view that these issues could be resolved through agreements between the employers and migrant workers (2005: 196). However the problems regarding exclusionary attitudes on both Italian workers and migrant workers (Bentivogli, 2005: 192) and discriminatory attitudes of employers towards the migrant workers requires more time and effort to solve. There is the need for dialogue at a larger scale with more involvement of migrant organizations, including religious ones. At institutional level in addition to legislation and policies that would support interculturalism and dialogue, an interculturalist attitude would facilitate the "integration" of migrants into the system, while allowing those who have the citizenship to make better use of their rights. Opening up room for dialogue at work, at school or at institutional level is indispensable for "social integration" of migrants and for avoiding creation of cultural or residential ghettos (Bentivogli, 2005: 183).

## V.2. Immigration and Change in the Italian Religious Landscape

Within the Italian context, besides semi-deregulation of the religious economy,<sup>254</sup> particularly due to the demise of the Christian Democratic Party in Italy<sup>255</sup> and signing of concordats, migratory flows contribute to religious diversity and change (Introvigne and Stark, 2005: 6-7). Italy does not follow the example of older European immigration countries. As argued by Colombo and Sciortino it is possible to talk about the "plurality of migratory systems, at times interconnected and at others highly differentiated" within the context of Italy (2004a: 50). Starting from the 70s female migrant workforce from Philippines and Cape Verde and male migrants from Tunisia and Egypt started to arrive (Colombo and Sciortino, 2004b: 26). In the 80s migratory waves from Senegal and Morocco reached Italy. In the 90s Philippines, China and Sri Lanka were the first three migrant groups and in the next decade they were followed by Pakistanis and Bangladeshis (Colombo and Sciortino, 2004b: 27). With the beginning of the 90s, we see a sharp increase in the number of (mostly irregular) immigrants, especially women, from the Balkans, Eastern Europe and Russia. Political instability and economic crises in Eastern Europe following the collapse of Communist regimes have coincided with social, economic and demographic changes in Italy and led to the articulation of migratory systems between Eastern Europe and Italy, particularly between Romania and Italy. The foreign population in Italy rose very rapidly and growing presence of immigrants has become an important structural characteristic of the Italian society and labor market as well as the organization of private and urban space and functioning of the welfare state (Sciortino and Colombo, 2003: 7). As the migrant communities in Italy grow in size, the number of regular migrants reaches up to 3,690,052 (Caritas, 2007: 193). In this section, main religious minorities and their experiences in Italy are discussed briefly.

**V.2.1. Muslim Migrant Communities in Italy:** Despite the emergence of different migrant religions within the Italian context, it was the arrival and increasing presence of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>254</sup> Introvigne and Stark argue that the world is not only religious but more religious as compared to the past (2005: 14) and basing their arguments on the religious economy theory, they explain the low level of religious observance in Europe with "highly regulated and constrained religious markets that effectively prevent healthy competition" (Introvigne and Stark, 2005:2). Therefore, Introvigne and Stark argue that in order to reinvigorate religious life, there is the need for deregulation in Europe, since it would lead to competition and argue that even small changes in religious competition make a difference (Hamberg and Pettersson 1994, 1997 cited in Introvigne and Stark, 2005: 3).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>255</sup> According to Davie one of the main factors that led to the collapse of the Christian Democrat Party in Italy was the falling apart of its main rival, the Communist Party (2001: 466).

Muslim migrants in Italy that rendered the phenomenon of migrant religions more visible (Caritas, 2007: 192).<sup>256</sup> Due to the growth in the number of immigrants from different Muslim countries especially in the 90s. Islam has become the second religion in Italy with 1,202,396 (Caritas, 2007: 194), 10,000 of which are Italian converts (Pace, 2007: 93). Italian Muslim community is a young one and is very fragmented since Muslim immigrants are coming from different countries and continents of origin with different Islamic traditions. There is not a dominant nationality at the local context and the common language of communication is only Italian (Schmidt di Friedberg, 2002: 152). Even though majority of the Muslims are from Morocco and Albania, there are Muslims coming from different parts of the world.

It was the Muslim students who took the initiative for the establishment of the biggest Muslim associations in Italy. The students have established the Unione Studenti Musulmani d'Italia. Slowly it started expanding and having branches in different Italian cities. Starting from the 1990s with the influx of immigrants the Muslim community grew, they have decided to transform the students' associations into a more inclusive organization, which led to the birth of UCOII (Unione delle Comunità e Organizzazioni Islamiche in *Italia*).<sup>257</sup> It is a coordinating organization of different Islamic associations in entire Italy. One of the founding associations of UCOII is Alleanza Islamica d'Italia,<sup>258</sup> which is mainly in charge of education, study programs and the schools. Alleanza Islamica is not only an Islamic association. It also works for "buon inserimento-well integration" of the immigrants. In every city where Muslim migrants settled, associations and mosques (rather prayer rooms) have emerged.<sup>259</sup>

Starting from the late 70s prayer rooms and *halal* butchers emerged in big cities such as Milan, Turin, Rome and Naples (Saint-Blancat and Schmidt di Friedberg, 2005: 1085). The first (Omar) mosque in Italy was established in Catania in 1980 with funding from Libya. The second (al-Rahman) mosque was opened in Milan. It is associated with Centro Islamico di Milano e Lombardia (Islamic Centre of Milan and Lombardy). The biggest mosque in Italy and in Europe is in Rome (Naso, 2007: 328), which was opened in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>256</sup> Up until the mid 80s many researchers working on immigration did not take religion or Islam into consideration or only touched upon it just as another factor that renders migrants different (Atacan, 1993: 27), while in mid 80s Muslim migrants have been re-presented and analyzed as "culturally different" and through "us and them" dichotomies (İbid: 28). <sup>257</sup> http://www.islam-ucoii.it
 <sup>258</sup> http://www.alleanza-islamica.it/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>259</sup> Alleanza Islamica of Trento was established in 1990 with the arrival of Muslim immigrants in the Trentino region. Interview with Imam Dr. Aboulkheir Bregeiche.

1995 and funded by Saudi Arabia. In other cities all around Italy, there are religious cultural centers with prayer rooms. Even though they are prayer rooms, they are called as "mosques" (Saint-Blancat and Schmidt di Friedberg, 2005: 1085). It is difficult to determine the number of prayer rooms in entire Italy, since while some are shut down due to problems related with the safety regulations, urban legislation or other issues, new ones are opened up (Ibid: 1085-6).

By the end of the 90s, the mosque issue became more controversial as Muslims started taking the initiative for opening prayer rooms as well as with the involvement of Lega Nord and increasing media attention in the issue. The mosque issue in reality is about increasing visibility of Islam (Atacan, 1993: 10) and its claim to recognition and demand for equal treatment by the state or local authorities (Saint-Blancat and Schmidt di Friedberg, 2005: 1089). Legitimacy of Muslims in public space at local as well as the national space defines the tone of the dialogue or conflict over the construction of mosques within the European space. However, the conflict and/or dialogue have implications for religious pluralism in Europe in general and in different European states in particular. In Italy the construction of a worshipping place for Muslims always involves three dimensions, which are religion, politics and media and the differences between local and national authorities over the immigration and religious pluralism issues (Ibid: 1084). When Muslims apply for the opening of a prayer room, the issue is perceived as a potential source of conflict by the local authorities. The conflictual atmosphere surrounding the mosque issues<sup>260</sup> impedes the solution of main problems and Muslim communities come up and settle with palliative solutions.

In Italy Muslims have been constructed as "radical alterity" since the beginning of the 90s (Frisina, 2003: 255, note 6) and public's concern grew with the growth of Islam in Italy (Rivera, 2002: 253 cited in Frisina, 2003: 253). Even though the Muslim migration to Italy has slowed down, the media's attention on Muslims in Italy kept on growing (Canta,

 $<sup>^{260}</sup>$  One local case, which became a national issue, is worth mentioning. In 2000 Muslims in town of Lodi in Italy wanted to build a cultural center with an attached prayer room over the land of the municipality with their own resources. First the Audit Office started investigating if the deal between the Muslim community and the municipality respects the best interests of the municipality. Then local residents, concerned about the fall of the prices of their houses and problems regarding parking space, took the issue to the Administrative Court (*TAR*) (Saint-Blancat and Schmidt di Friedberg, 2005: 1087). On October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2000 Lega Nord organized a big demonstration on the very land, where the cultural centre was going to be built. The protestors were carrying flags from the battle of Lepanto, they poured pig urine over the land, a Catholic priest consecrated the land and then held a mass over it in order to ensure that this land will be unusable for Muslims (Ibid: 1089). In order to end the stalemate the municipality suggested another land 3 km.s out of town; however, the Muslims have to collect the necessary amount of money for the construction of the mosque (Ibid: 1090).

2005: 252). One of the main reasons behind it is Islamophobia,<sup>261</sup> which was wellestablished in the 90s in Italy.<sup>262</sup> The discourse used by Lega Nord and some other right wing parties, some intellectuals, media and some representatives of the Catholic Church as well as the failure of Muslims in taking active part in the dialogue and becoming "interlocutors" led to re-presentation of Islam as a "threat" to the Italian Catholic identity, secular values and security. Short-term or international political concerns have also played a role in reproducing Islamophobia.

Regarding the stance of the Catholic Church towards the Muslims in Italy, it could be argued that two different concerns shape the ambiguous response of the Catholic Church. On the one hand, the Church is in favor of supporting inter-religious dialogue, while on the other hand it is wary of challenges posed to its monopoly over the Italian religious space (Ibid: 1092). Feelings of support as well as concern seem to shape the relations of the Catholic Church with the Muslim community in Italy. There are some among the Church hierarchs such as Cardinal Biffi, who is gravely concerned about the Islamic presence in Italy. Cardinal Biffi underlines the elements of Islamic faith that render Muslims "different", while in reference to the Christian, particularly Catholic migrants, he states "within the Church there are no foreigners." Therefore, those out of the Church are "foreigners" to the land, culture, history and nation (Cardinal Biffi, 2000). Despite Cardinal Biffi's statements that construct Islam as a "threat" to the "Catholic national identity",<sup>263</sup> there are many Catholic priests and associations that try to help Muslims to construct prayer rooms (even collect money) and practice their religion in Italy (Frisina, 2003: 256).<sup>264</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>261</sup> It is neither specific to Italy nor is it new. Dassetto and Bastenier are of the view that the discourse on Islam in Europe is inspired by the Orientalist conceptual framework as well as historical, linguistic and juridical disciplines starting from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The study of the Islamic reality, organization and social relations today is inspired by this traditional conceptual framework (1988: 87). The number of Muslims reaching up to 20 millions makes Islam is the second largest religion in the EU (Laurence, 2007). However, Islam in Europe is considered a "foreign", therefore "un-European" and "immigrant" religion (Casanova, 2005: 9; Atacan, 1993: 9). Modern secularist bias, which re-presents Islam as "antimodern" and "fundamentalist" (Casanova, 2005: 9-13) influences the way Islam is perceived in Europe. Islamophobia is wide spread in Europe and as stated by a recent report published by the Institute of Race Relations in UK on "Islamophobia, Integration and Civil Right in Europe" Islamophobic discourse in Europe is a very important impediment in the way of "integration" of Muslims (IRR Report, 2008: 7). Islamophobia as we know it has started with the Iranian Revolution and Rushdie affair. September 11<sup>th</sup> was the major event that strengthened, and for many, confirmed the fears against Islam and the Muslims. Therefore, the prayer rooms are started to be perceived as a hiding place for "terrorists".

http://inhouse.lau.edu.lb/bima/papers/Ottavia.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>263</sup> Political scientist Giovanni Sartori following the Lodi incident and Cardinal Biffi's comments on the Muslim immigrants commented on the issue with a newspaper article "Gli Islamici e Noi Italiani" ("The Islamists and We Italians") published by *Corriere della Sera* on October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2000. As could be inferred from the title Sartori constructs his discourse on a "us and them" dichotomy and describes Islam as "foreign" and Islamic presence and resistance to integrate into the Italian culture, norms and way of life as "invasive".

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>264</sup> With the leadership of Father Giorgio Butterini in Trentino some Catholic priests united their efforts to collect money and give support to the Islamic community of Trento for the opening of a place of worship. Chiara Bert, "Colletta Cattolica per Realizzare la Moschea", *Trentino*, 20 March 2008, 13.

It would also be wrong to define the relationship of the Italian institutions and society with Muslim migrants as antagonistic. There are differences in terms of how Italian society perceives certain Muslim communities as well as how these communities relate to the society. The African Islam has good relations with local authorities and since African Muslims are not perceived as Muslims by Italians, they are not seen as "problem cases" (Saint-Blancat and Schmidt di Friedberg, 2005: 1100). Other Islamic groups and centers have initiated a program to directly inform public opinion in Lombardy, Veneto and Piedmont regions in Italy through inviting schools and students to Islamic centers. This move had a lot to do with countering information based on the colonial era with the current information about Islamic life, family and organization (Frisina, 2003: 253). The imams in Verona and Trento chose to enter into communication with different civil society groups and put emphasis on doing things in a legal and transparent way (Saint-Blancat and Schmidt di Friedberg, 2005).

Muslim communities also develop different types of responses regarding problems and dialogue. When problems such as mosque controversies arise, the majority prefers to keep silent and close themselves to dialogue with the Italian authorities and institutions at local and national level and put more emphasis on establishing transnational networks with other Muslims living abroad. Italian administrative and institutional system is a highly bureaucratized one and this requires the migrants, particularly the representatives of immigrants to be more in contact with local authorities and institutions and have good relations with municipality, police, foreigner's office, the Catholic Church and other actors (Schmidt di Friedberg, 2002: 151). However, there are some Muslim leaders who choose to have closer contact and more communication such as the Trento<sup>265</sup> branch of Islamic Alliance association.<sup>266</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>265</sup> The Muslim community in Trento is composed of migrants coming from different countries, particularly from North Africa, Senegal, Pakistan, some Middle Eastern countries and Albania. However, the majority are from Morocco. The Muslim community is in the second phase, which Imam Bregheiche defines as settlement. Many have decided to settle in Italy and many are getting Italian citizenship. They are trying to become citizens of Italy and integrate to the society, while maintaining their identity, particularly the religious identity.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>266</sup> In Trento it has organized courses on inter-culturalism and adult literacy classes, Italian language courses for immigrants, Arabic language courses for Italians. As the Imam claims, since Muslim women have more difficulty in integrating into social fabric of the society, there is particular emphasis on women. Another target group is young people. There are also certain specific activities for younger Muslims. Every 15 days they organize meetings with women and young people to listen to their questions and problems regarding integration while maintaining their "roots of religious nature" and to clarify certain concepts about how to practice Islam in a "secular country". They also give assistance to those who need an accommodation, work or need information on health issues. This is a demanding work since it requires a daily group work. But they are convinced about the importance of this work, because when they work for and with the Muslim youth, they work for the Italian society. Interview with Imam Dr. Aboulkheir Bregeiche.

The association in Trento collaborates with other associations and Italian institutions. They collaborate mainly with the Provincial administration and the municipality, particularly for education at schools and family issues. The province also funds some of their activities. Recently, they have organized a course on parenthood; how to accomplish good relations between the parents and the children, since as Imam Bregeiche states that the mentality of the young Muslims growing up in Italy in a secular and Western context is different from the parents. They are part of the *Forum del Trentino della Pace* of Trentino region, which coordinates different associations that work for integration and peace. It is also part of *Tavolo Locale delle Appartanenze Religiose*. There are many activities organized for the schools, they either go to the schools or the schools visit the association. There is also an exhibition of religions organized by *Tavolo Locale delle Appartanenze Religiose* once a year, which is visited by the schools in Trento.<sup>267</sup>

Imam Bregeiche emphasizes that there are problems but the only way to take is to further the "dialogue, integration, reciprocal acquaintance, deepening in order to construct a life, a more dignified life for everyone." Moreover, many non-Muslim Italian citizens and associations understand that it is a "normal need" and they support and defend the initiatives for opening of prayer rooms or the issue of serving food in accordance with the Islamic diet at school or factory canteens as well as rights of the Muslims and common values. The main problem is the worshipping place. Currently, there are two worshipping places and the attempts to construct a bigger religious cultural centre with an attached prayer room have so far failed.<sup>268</sup> Even though the imam is disappointed about the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>267</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>268</sup> On December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2007 Imam Breigheche announced the collection of money for construction of a mosque and on February 10th, 2008 owner of a music store sold his shop to the Islamic community. When Lega Nord figured out that the shop will be transformed into a religious association, it started collection of signatures against the mosque. The community living in the neighborhood at North of Trento was also not happy with the new development and asked the municipality to check if all the paperwork is done properly, while Lega Nord threatened arguing they will analyze the documents and if they find irregularities they will ask the municipality to revoke the opening of the new "mosque". The community of the neighborhood also has written a letter to the Ministry of Interior to intervene in the issue directly, since in their packet for security the construction of new mosques was forbidden. In support of the mosque initiative the parish community of San Francesco Severino has collected money and donated 2,000 euro to the Islamic community (Bartolameotti, 2008: 15). The owner of the Hotel Gardolo, Gianni Bort, has taken the initiative to the court with the claims that what is being built in Gardolo is a place of worship, not a cultural religious centre, it will overburden the urban environment and parking space in the area will not be sufficient, since it will attract many other Muslims living in the province. The hotel owner was also of the view that this will have negative consequences for the economic activity in the neighborhood. Therefore, he based his claims, rather than on religious basis, on the drastic change that the construction of the centre will lead to. On September 11<sup>th</sup>, the court accepted the application of Gianni Bort against the construction of the centre and then approved of the claims of the hotel owner. The local administration, while stating that they are respectful of the court decision, say that there is nothing against the construction of a cultural association in the neighborhood. The new cultural centre, if constructed will host 200 people and the decision to have a bigger centre with parking space was a necessity given the increase in the number of Muslims in province and to avoid praying in the streets (since the current prayer rooms are very small and is not sufficient for all the Muslims). The centre will only be used for Friday prayer from

impediments and problems, he states that the community will not give up the project and will sooner or later open the center in accordance with the Italian Constitution that guarantees religious freedom.<sup>269</sup>

Besides the "mosque issue", there are some other problems of the Muslim communities in Italy. Due to the fact that some are coming from countries of origin that does not have a secular system, the adaptability of Muslims to the secular system and society is under question (Frisina, 2003: 257). The challenge of adaptation to a secular context cannot be denied; however, Muslim communities are searching for solutions within their religion and are making compromises on certain religious practices to integrate, while preserving their Muslim identity:

Yes of course, I believe that every community, minority, as a minority, we can say, in a different context from...from its own definitely goes through difficulties because the country is structured in a different manner. Here there is a Catholic Christian majority, the Catholic rite is prevalent, we can say, in the public life. This is normal, we consider it a type of life, we can say, of work, everything in it is structured in a manner, we can say, secular, yes but on the other hand respecting exactly the traditions of the majority of Italian people in Trentino, the Catholic Christian one. This creates for all the minorities I was saying, not only for the Islamic one, and this requires more effort. For instance the workers, those work in a different cycle that does not match with the prayer times for instance, does not match with the time of breaking the fast in the month of Ramadan. They encounter difficulties but thanks to God, already in our religion they tackled these particular situations when someone finds himself in a particular...particular difficulty more or less important, our own religion offers the solutions. Therefore this contributes to overcome we can say these...these difficulties of a worker, who does heavy work etc. can do two prayers together instead of taking a break from work and doing all the prayers in its moment.<sup>270</sup> He may not fast some days eventually if the work is really this heavy but he has to work to earn his life.<sup>271</sup> If he has to travel a lot etc. In short our own religion already contains the solutions to face these moments of of...difficulty. Obviously difficulties as we were saying before, before they, others,

<sup>13.00</sup> to 14.00; however, for religious festival prayers the gym in Gardolo will be used. C. Bert, "No alla Moschea, Troppi Disagi per il Quartiere", *Trentino*, 27 September 2008, 16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>269</sup> At his sermon on the occasion of Ramadan (*eid al fitr*) prayer on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2008 imam talked about the issue. He was critical of the fact that democratic Italian state does not give the right to Muslims to have one or two days of holiday during their religious feasts. Another issue was the construction of the Islamic centre. The emphasis was on the rights of the Muslims due to the fact that Muslims as citizens that are fulfilling duties to their Italian state have certain rights given by the Italian constitution. However, due to growing Islamophobia Muslims are discriminated against in a democratic country. He was critical of the efforts to stop the construction of the centre but he said they will not give up the goal, even if they have to sell their houses or make many sacrifices and asked the Muslims to donate for the construction. He stated that Muslims will not stop from working to "construct Italy" and the religious center.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>270</sup> Muslims are commanded to pray (perform *salah*) five times a day. Before praying they have to perform cleaning ablution and the place for prayer should be clean. The Muslim should be properly and cleanly dressed. There are prescribed times for prayer. Muslims perform *salah* before the sunrise, at noon, in the afternoon, after sunset and in dusk until dawn. In addition to five daily prayers it is compulsory for the Muslim men to perform congregational prayer on Fridays at noon time in the mosque.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>271</sup> Every year Muslims fast on the 9<sup>th</sup> month of the Islamic calendar for one month. Fasting requires the Muslim not to eat or drink anything from dawn until sunset. It is a religious practice to discipline the body and soul. It is compulsory on those who are healthy and are not traveling.

have to understand them and that they can resolve in this case. I am referring in particular to food served at the school canteens for instance or the canteens of the companies.<sup>272</sup> There these are moments, personal choices should be respected and they are respected in general but due to not knowing exactly about the issue sometimes some teachers or employers create tactless difficulties.<sup>273</sup>

Muslim representatives in their public discourses tend to limit their references to the country of origin of Muslim migrants given the universal message of Islam, the diversity of origin within the Italian Muslim community and the fear of being associated with Islamic movements in the country of origin. Rather than reproducing a Moroccan Islam or an Albanian Islam, the emphasis is on creating an Italian Islam, while acknowledging the fact that the experiences of Muslims in Italy in particular and in Europe in general have implications for the relations of Europe with the Islamic world.<sup>274</sup> For the creation of Italian and European Islam, different Muslim associations in Italy have worked with other Muslims in different parts of Europe to establish European Islamic institutes and research centers dealing with the problems of European Muslims that respect the laws and principles of European societies they are living in but also trying to maintain their religious identity and roots.<sup>275</sup> With this goal in mind Islamic Alliance Associations became one of the founding members of the Federation of Islamic Organisations in Europe<sup>276</sup> (FIOE),<sup>277</sup> which has recently issued the "Muslims of Europe Charter"<sup>278</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>272</sup> Consumption of pork meat and non-*halal* food is forbidden for Muslims.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>273</sup> Interview with Imam Dr. Aboulkheir Bregeiche.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>274</sup> According to Imam Bregeiche if Muslims living in Europe have good experiences and content with the way they are treated this will contribute to the image of Europe that "respects the human rights and diversity", while if they are insulted, their prophet and religion are insulted the image of Europe changes. Interview with Imam Bregeiche.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>275</sup> Currently, Islamic Alliance Association in Italy is working on two issues; the imams and the teachers. First they have organized courses for imams. Professors, who teach in these religious institutes, have come to guide and help the Alleanza Islamica on how to train imams to confront the problems and issues in the lives of Muslims in Italy. Alleanza Islamica has week-end schools for kids to teach them the basic principles of Islam in their mother tongue, so that they can both maintain faith and the cultural baggage. They are also trying to train the teachers who teach at the week-end school because they want them to have a certain level of professionalism. There is a centre in Paris that trains teachers and gives them pedagogy education.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>276</sup> As Imam Bregeiche states the headquarters of the Federation are in Dublin, "not in Mecca or in Pakistan, but Dublin", since they are settled and living in Europe and they want European Islamic organizations and initiatives to find solutions for the problems of European Muslims and issuing of the Charter shows that the European Muslims feel the responsibility to do something on their part for the international community, Europe and for individual European states in which they are living.

http://www.fioe.org/
 Wuslims of Europe Charter", http://www.flwi.ugent.be/cie/documenten/muslim\_charter.pdf. FIOE has been debating the issuing of a Charter on Muslims living in Europe for better understanding of Islam and integration of Muslims within the context of citizenship to European societies since 2000, established a committee to work on the Charter. Different Islamic bodies came together in Brussels in January 2002 to discuss the draft and then the draft was disseminated widely. On January 10th 2008 in Brussels 28 Muslim organizations came together and they signed the "Muslims of Europe Charter". The Charter emphasizes the importance of the presence of Islam within the European context, working within the citizenship framework and rights, inquires how the European Islam can make a contribution to modern European societies, which it is part of, and how it can further cooperation among Muslims of Europe in a widening EU.

The case of Islam presents a challenge both for the Italian system of church-state relations and the Catholic Church. The presence of Islam in Europe is not problematic only because it is seen as the "other" of Western secular modernity and as the religion of the "other" but also because it raises important questions regarding the role of the religion in the public space and restriction of religion to the private sphere (Casanova, 2005: 9-13).

Besides Islam, there are many other migrant religions and institutions that are carried to the Italian religious landscape through migration such as the Protestant and Orthodox Churches and Latin American Catholicism. The Buddhism and Hinduism are also growing religions due to mainly immigration, but also Italian converts. The African immigrants, besides the African Islam and Christianity carry with them different African religions and contribute to the religious diversity in Italy, while the traditional Jewish community in Italy is decreasing in size. In the following section different migrant religious institutions are briefly discussed.

**V.2.2. Migrant Christian Churches in Italy:** Even though migration and religious pluralism is debated in general with reference to Muslim immigrants, the majority of immigrants in Italy are Christians. Through migration different churches and experiences of the Christianity are brought to Italy and they flourish to become important elements of Italian religious landscape.

The Greek-Catholics: With immigration the Greek-Catholic Churches from Romania and Ukraine are carried to the Italian religious landscape. The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church is the biggest Greek-Catholic Church in union with Vatican and second Church in Ukraine after the Orthodox Church. It was united with the Russian Orthodox Church under the Soviet regime in 1946 and it had to underground. During the communist period in Ukraine all the churches and seminary schools were closed but the church lived and developed in diaspora with the support of the Vatican. Only after the dissolution of the Soviet Union the Church could resume its religious activities. The bishop of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church has his see in Rome. He is responsible for the ordainment of the priest and communication of priests. In Italy there are also two Greek-Catholic seminary schools to train future priests in Rome. Currently, there are 25 permanent priests and 25 students who study in different cities particularly in Rome that hold religious services. They hold meetings every three months in Rome. There are more than a hundred churches in entire Italy. They share the churches with the Italian parish communities. They only pay for the water, electricity, heating (but not any rent). <sup>279</sup>

During the fieldwork, I had the chance to interview the Greek-Catholic priest in Trento and get information about his parishes and the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Churches in Italy. Since 2001 there is officially a Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Trentino-Alto Adige region. The Ukrainians in Trentino have contacted the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Rome to have a church and a priest. Before the arrival of Father Augustyn Babiak in 2002,<sup>280</sup> the priests from Rome had come to Trento to conduct liturgies and to organize the community for the opening of the church. Before coming to Trento, Father Babiak has worked in France for 15 years for the Ukrainian community ("old diaspora").<sup>281</sup> The current Patriarch in Kiev has ordained Father Babiak for the Church of San Giuseppe in Trento and the Church of Tre Santi in Bolzano in Trentino-Alto Adige region.

The priest also visits the parishes in Rovereto, Cavalese, Merano and Riva del Garda. During week-ends Father Babiak is serving the Ukrainian community and during the week days he is working for the Italian Catholic Churches under the Archbishopric of Trento. In Cavalese there are 40 Ukrainians, 20 of them come to the church; in Merano 120 but 40 of them come to the church; in Bolzano there are around 300 (according to the statistics given by the municipality and local *Questura* but the priest thinks the number reaches up to 600 if the irregular migrants are included) 150-200 of them come to the church. At Easter and Christmas time the number reaches up to 300 and finally in Trentino region there are around 2000 Ukrainians (but there are also around 500 irregular Ukrainians). Out of 2500 only 150 Ukrainians attend the church services, while the number reaches up to 800 in Easter and Christmas. In recent years, since many are regularized, they

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>279</sup> Interview with Father Babiak at his house in Gazzadina on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2008.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>280</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>281</sup> Following the World War I, many Ukrainians have left home and settled in France. When Father Babiak worked as a priest in France, he was serving the third generation Ukrainians. In his opinion they were rather French. Some could also speak Ukrainian but the majority spoke French. He was of the opinion that they not only speak French but they live like French. He was celebrating the liturgy in Ukrainian (for the older members of the community) and French. There were also mixed marriages. The Church in France was always a reference point, a way of preserving the faith, culture and traditions and to keep in touch with the country of origin. For the last 15 years there is more exchange, since the frontiers are open. For 50 years when Ukraine was part of the Soviet Union, the Church was functioning as an embassy of Ukraine. It was also a "form of resistance" to the regime. The Church was not part of the political structure or regime in Ukraine. He states there are important differences between the two communities. In France the community was composed of families and they had maintained their faith. In Italy majority of the community members are women and some have lost faith and the religious tradition due to communist repression. Therefore, they learn more about their faith within the Italian context.

prefer to go to Ukraine during the Christmas break by finding another person to substitute them when they go home.<sup>282</sup>

The majority of the parishioners in Trentino-Alto Adige region are women.<sup>283</sup> More than half of the women who attend his church are the Orthodox but they come to the church because the liturgy is in Ukrainian, even though the priest is Greek-Catholic and there is an Orthodox (Romanian) Church in the city. Father Babiak says that the rite of the Greek-Catholic Church is the same as that of the Orthodox Church as well as the language, customs and traditions. Therefore, people prefer to come to the Greek-Catholic Church even though they are Orthodox. As Father Babiak puts it they say: "above all we are all Ukrainians".<sup>284</sup> The Church has a parochial council, which is composed of 10-15 members, majority of whom are women. However, recently due to family reunification more men have arrived and they joined the parish council.

The Church is a point of reference for Ukrainians. After the liturgy they can stay and exchange information and socialize. Every Saturday the priest teaches catechism for one hour to Ukrainian kids. 6-7 years ago, when the priest has arrived the problems were enormous. Getting the permit of stay or regularization procedures was more difficult and problematical. Many of the Ukrainians were irregular. Therefore, for the Church first 5 years it was more about welcoming the newcomers, helping them to settle, learn Italian and the Italian reality. Currently, the emphasis seem to be on religion. Apart from some difficulties during the Lent period, Ukrainians do not encounter great difficulties in practicing their faith. The Church puts more emphasis on reminding people about the moral principles, that there are limits to liberties, since away from family the risk of deviation from principles is greater. According to the priest, particularly the young people have contrasting ideas in mind; therefore, the church needs to help them more. There are specific

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>282</sup> The Ukrainians come both from rural and urban contexts and different parts of Ukraine. The majority comes from the Western part of Ukraine but there are also some from the Eastern part. The community has been stabilized, even though it is slightly diminished in size. It is mostly young couples that remain or want to remain. There are also some mixed marriages, which would make some to stay in Italy. However, it is a different world for many other and they are attached to Ukraine and their families back home. Therefore, they are returning or willing to return back.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>283</sup> The majority of Ukrainian migrants are women and they mainly work in care sector. Most of them come to Italy leaving their families behind, which makes the Ukrainian churches important points of reference not for only material needs but also for spiritual and psychological support. Some female migrants express that "we have earned a lot but maybe we have lost more than that." What they have lost is the time they could have spent with their families and in some dramatic cases their families. Due to the migration experience some marriages end up with divorce or divided families run into different types of problems. Therefore, the Church and faith becomes an important need. Interview with Father Babiak.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>284</sup> A Ukrainian Orthodox lady I met at a meeting also told me that she is Orthodox but she is going to the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. When she arrived in Italy, she was working in Naples and the first thing she did was to find a Ukrainian Church, a church where she can hear her own language.

catechisms about sexual relations or drug abuse and the Church puts emphasis on attracting the young people to the church.<sup>285</sup>

The Church collaborates with Caritas<sup>286</sup> for helping out the Ukrainians to satisfy their material needs. As Father Babiak calls it, Caritas is "ecumenism without boundaries, without limits". The Church is also part of the Tavolo Locale delle Appartanenze Religiose; it takes active part in inter-Christian dialogue and attends common prayers in the Cathedral such as Epiphany and week of prayer for Christian unity. There are also two Ukrainian associations that assist the Church. One is of cultural and religious nature: Associazione Cristiano Culturale degli Ucraini in Trentino Rasom (Ukrainian Christian Cultural Association in Trentino- Rasom (rasom means together) with its seat in Trento and Associazione Trentina Italia-Ucraina A. T. I. U. (Trentinian Italo-Ukrainian Association) with its seat in Rovereto, which was established on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2007 for increasing cultural exchanges among Ukrainians and Italians. Rasom instead, puts more emphasis on preserving the Ukrainian culture and traditions and gives particular attention to the young people.<sup>287</sup> It collaborates with the Church and organizes socio-cultural activities, represents the community in Festa dei Popoli and other cultural activities in order to introduce dances, national costumes, food and traditions of Ukraine. The Association Rasom also takes initiatives to send money to parish churches and hospitals in Ukraine.

**The Protestant Churches:** The term "Protestant Churches" is an ambiguous one. There are many different Christian denominations that are associated with the Protestantism. In Italy Protestant Churches include historical Churches such as Valdensen Church as well as the newly emerged Protestant churches;<sup>288</sup> those that emerged right after the Reformation such as the Lutherans or Anglicans, or Evangelical Churches that emerged as a result of revivalist movements within the Protestantism such as the Methodists or Baptists and those that belong to new religious movements such as the Pentecostalism. Since 1984 different

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>285</sup> Interview with Father Babiak.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>286</sup> I have visited Caritas in Trento a couple of times. During my first visit on June 6<sup>th</sup> 2006 I had the chance to talk to Caritas staff, who informed me that Caristas helps those in need (Italians or immigrants) on a case by case basis. It analyzes the applications and decides to provide food aid for 3 months and (second-hand) clothes aid every 6 months. It also hands out phone cards and medicine if the applicant is in need. If an immigrant with a stay permit needs to go to his/her country but does not have money, the Caritas funds the travel costs. However, it does not pay for the rent or bills. Caritas does not find jobs for the applicants but it informs them. CEDAS (branch of Caritas that assists migrants) also try to direct them to employers if they are regular migrants to *Cinformi* or *ACLI*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>287</sup> <u>http://www.tremembe.it/immigrazione/download/2007\_Pres\_comunita.pdf</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>288</sup> http://www.cesnur.org/religioni\_italia/p/protestantesimo\_01.htm

Protestant organizations entered into Italy and became very active especially in South Italy and in 2001 the number of the Protestants reached to 363,000. The Pentecostals are around 250,000 (Introvigne and Stark, 2005: 6-7). As has been stated in the 2006 Caritas report on migration, the spread of the Pentecostal churches is a concern for the Catholic Church. The report underscores the need to interrogate the reason why the Catholics are disaffected by the Church in which they have been baptized and spent an important part of their lives (Caritas, 2006: 213). There are 129,867 the Protestant migrants with the permit of stay and 363,000 Italian Protestant citizens according to Caritas December 2006 figures (Caritas, 2007: 194-5).

Immigration has given a new vigor to small communities of the Evangelical Methodists and Valdensens in North-East Italy. According to Köhn, who is a Protestant pastor in Udine, particularly the West African immigrants' arrival and becoming part of the native Italian Protestant parishes in Udine, Vicenza, Padua, Verona, Coneglio and Pordenone is a very important moment in the history of the Protestant Churches in Italy. The arrival of Africans increased the adherents of the small parish churches by 43% and also the number of those who attend the weekly prayers have increased considerably (Köhn, 2005: 161). In Udine the migrants' participation to the religious services started in the mid-90s. Two Methodist families from Ghana started attending the services. The Church inserted biblical readings in English to facilitate their integration to the community. Starting from 2002, the Twi language was added to the service and once a month the Church has a multi-lingual (Italian, English, and Twi) service, which attracts many other families from Ghana and Africa. The Church also offers Italian language courses to the African families. The welcoming stance of the Church is inspired by four conferences organized starting from 1989 by the "Essere Chiesa Insieme" to promote multiculturalism within the churches that are part of the Federation of the Evangelical Churches in Italy (Ibid: 170).

Even if the Christian migrants find it easier to adjust to the Catholic Italian context, there are cultural differences in practicing of faith; even within the Catholic world and arrival of the Christian migrant communities reveal this fact. Cingolani's work on the Nigerian "community"<sup>289</sup> in Turin (2003: 122) reveals the need they feel for religion which is something that gives meaning to their lives. The comparison with the Italian society is an important means for them to express their "difference". One of the main criticisms they

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>289</sup> Cingolani problematizes the use of community as a concept given the diversity of places of origin within Nigeria, religious faith and migration experiences as well as different ways of relating to the host society.

have regarding the Italian society is "the absence of faith" (Ibid: 124), while they define themselves as more pious (Ibid: 129). Even the Catholic ones that go to the Catholic Church in Italy are stating that back home things are different and more profound. They think the services in the Catholic Churches in Italy are very short and fall short of satisfying the religious needs and expectations of Nigerians (Ibid: 144-145). Non Christian Nigerians instead are complaining about intolerance and lack of understanding regarding their religious traditions (Ibid: 146). There are many among Nigerians that convert to the Pentecostalism, since it offers rebirth to the new members, which becomes very important within the migration context and which compensates for the feeling of loss, solitude, lack of family ties, deracination and suffering caused by the migration process.

V.2.3. The Buddhists, Hindus, and Sikhs in Italy: According to Caritas December 2006 figures there are 67,978 Buddhists in Italy that are regular migrants and 93,000 Italian citizens that belong to this faith (Caritas, 2007: 194-5). The Unione Buddhista Italiana (Italian Buddhist Union) is founded by the Buddhist centers in Italy that belong to different traditions in Milan in 1985. Currently, it coordinates 44 centers and its branches in Italy and its seat is in Rome. In January 1991 it was officially recognized as a religious entity in Italy<sup>290</sup> and the negotiations for a concordat was concluded in 2000. Further revisions to the concordat were concluded in 2007. The concordat will be valid after the approval of the Italian parliament. Main aims of the union are stated as making contribution to the Italian society and to the values stipulated by the Italian constitution, while emphasizing the integration and citizenship of the Buddhists.

Another Buddhist institution composed of centers that follow the Buddhism taught by Nichiren Daishonin is Istituto Buddista Italiano Soka Gakkai (Italian Soka Gakkai Buddhist Institute). It was established in March 1998 and recognized with the official decree of the Italian president in November 2000. Since 2001 negotiations have started between the Institute and the state for the signing of a concordat.<sup>291</sup>

There are different versions of Buddhism brought to the Italian territory through migration from China and Tibet to Sri Lanka. Immigration experience brings with it the possibility to enter into interaction with different expressions of the Buddhism, while introducing the Buddhism to the Italian society. According to Trombetta's preliminary

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>290</sup> <u>http://www.buddhismo.it</u>
<sup>291</sup> <u>http://www.sgi-italia.org/index.php</u>

research findings and interviews, the Sri Lankan Buddhists in Italy have a very strong sense of ethno-religious identity and resistance against assimilation into the Italian culture. Their language and Buddhist faith are the main elements that give them a sense of unity. The religion has a symbolic element of identity and unifying force (Ibid: 55). Immigration to Italy from Sri Lanka starts in the 1970s with the Catholic female migrants, who come to work in domestic and care work sector (2006: 54). The Sri Lankan Buddhist temples in Italy are connected at national and international level. The Buddhist Sri Lankan community also has transnational ties and culture, and therefore, contacts with temples and communities in Sri Lanka. The temples in Italy are a gathering and meeting place for many Buddhist Sri Lankans (Ibid: 56).

Despite the willingness to preserve the faith and traditions both pioneers and young generations that grow up in Italy, construct a Buddhism that is in touch with the Italian society and reality and try to avoid only looking to the past or the country of origin. The Sri Lankan Buddhists come in contact with other Buddhisms present in Italy. Trombetta mentions the case of a Sri Lankan Buddhist who after visiting a Korean Buddhist temple in Rome sets for a trip to Asia and stays in Korea, China and Taiwan and comes back as a Buddhist monk. He opens a Buddhist centre in Padua trying to reach a trans-cultural synthesis of Asian and Sri Lankan Buddhisms (Ibid: 58). There are also multi-ethnic temples such as the one in Milan with adherents from Chinese, Nepalese, Indian, Tibetan and Thailandese communities. The monks also have to go through certain changes within the Italian context. They are allowed to wear watches or ride bikes, work to get by and have closer relations with the people. However, difficulties arise when different cultural forms of migrant Buddhisms and Italian Buddhists interact. Cultural differences might come in the way of collaboration. Since many monks are invited from the country of origin, they do not speak Italian and are not familiar with the Italian culture, which makes it difficult to establish closer contact with the Italian society. There are difficulties also stemming from the fact that the Italian society is more familiar and open to Tibetan form of Buddhism and has difficulty in understanding the Sri Lankan Buddhism (Ibid: 59-60).

There are Sri Lankan Buddhist temples in Catania, Naples, Rome, Modena, Verona and Milan. They are structured in a congregational style and are self-financed with contributions of the community. The monks are the main point of reference for religious issues and problems related with immigration or sending money or help to Sri Lanka. The temples organize dance, music and language courses (Ibid: 61). However, the monks seem to be less interested in intra-religious dialogue and links with the Italian Buddhist Union is deemed important rather from a bureaucratical perspective. Among the Sri Lankan Buddhists there are some who convert into the Catholicism. At institutional level there are good relations and visits between the Catholic Church and Buddhist monks (Ibid: 64).

According to Caritas December 2006 figures there are 99,194 Hindu migrants with regular permit of stay (Caritas, 2007: 194) and according to CESNUR data there are 15,000 Italian citizens that belong to this faith (Ibid: 195). The Unione Induista Italiana (Italian Hindu Union)<sup>292</sup> represents the Hindu population in Italy, which is officially recognized on December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2000 by the Italian President as a religious confession. On April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2007, the Union has signed the concordat with the Italian state.<sup>293</sup>

Another religious tradition that originates from Punjab (divided between India and Pakistan) has its followers due to immigration as well as the Italian converts, whose number reach up to 1,5000 (Caritas, 2007: 195). The Sikh community does not have concordat with the Italian state. Indian Sikh migrants are living in different parts of Italy and have temples in different cities but they are more numerous in Emiglia Romagna region. In 2000 the Sikh temple (gurdvara) Singh Sabha was established in Novellara in Emiglia Romagna region (Sai, 2008: 118) by the local Sikh community. It is one of the biggest in Europe. Therefore, it is a temple used and visited not only by the local Sikh community but also by the Sikhs coming from England, Germany, France, India and other countries. It works as a "catalyzer" for more immigration into the town (Ibid: 122).

Opening of places of worship by other non-Christian migrant communities by the Hindu or Sikh communities do not attract media attention or do not lead to conflicts as in the case of Muslim communities, even though their outlook and traditions as well as temples make them as visible as the Muslim communities (Saint-Blancat and Schmidt di Friedberg, 2005: 1100). However, testimonies of Sikh migrants show that many Sikh before or just after their arrival in Italy, shave off their beard and cut their hair and do not use their religious symbols in order to be more easily accepted at work place and by the Italian society. After they get settled and bring their families to Italy, they put more emphasis on religious practices, opening temples and showing their religiosity (Ibid: 140-2) and many claim to be more religious in Italy (Ibid: 145). However, younger generations tend to negotiate their identity at school or with friends, since they are growing up in Italy.

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>292</sup> <u>http://www.hinduism.it</u>
 <sup>293</sup> *Ibid*.

V.2.4. The Judaism in Italy: The Jewish community has always been part of the Italian religious landscape and its roots in Italy go back to the time before Christ. However, while new religions emerge within the Italian religious landscape or the existing ones grow in size due to immigration, members of Judaism is decreasing in size. The Unione delle Comunità Ebraiche Italiane (Union of Italian Jewish Community),<sup>294</sup> which has its seat in Rome, represents the Jewish community in its relations with the Italian authorities and institutions and abroad. Besides religious activities, it organizes cultural and social activities for the Jewish population in Italy. According to the Union's official website there are around 30,000 Jews in Italy, half of whom lives in Rome and 10,000 in Milan. There are also Jewish communities in Turin, Florence, Trieste, Livorno and Venice. The Union coordinates the activities of 21 communities within Italy.<sup>295</sup> According to Caritas December 2006 figures in addition to 29,000 Jewish Italian citizens, there are 8,942 Jewish migrants with regular permit of stay in Italy (Caritas, 2007: 194-195).

The relations with the Jewish community were normalized with the end of the World War II and with the Vatican Council II, which lifted the "deicide" accusation from the Jewish people. The concordat with the Italian state was signed in 1987, which was approved in 1989. In 1996 it was revised and approved the same year.<sup>296</sup> The Jewish community continues to be an important and traditional part of the Italian religious landscape.

**V.2.5.** The Catholic Church: As the Church of the majority in Italy, the Catholic Church is one of the main actors of the changing Italian religious landscape and one of the main contributors to the construction of the religious pluralism in Italy. The Catholic Church sees itself as the protector of the Italian national identity (Pace, 2003: 439); it is a claim which is reaffirmed within the Italian political and public sphere (Ibid: 440). The presence of the Vatican in the Italian peninsula has an important affect on the level of religiosity in Italy (Davie, 2005: 21). In Italy Catholicism is part of national identity and as compared to other European countries, the role played by the Catholic Church in Italy with its human resources and organizational structure is different (Garelli, 2006. 16-7). We are also witnessing the "[r]eligion's reconquest of the public space (Casanova, 1994: 3) in the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>294</sup> http://moked.it/

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>295</sup> <u>http://www.cesnur.org/religioni\_italia/e/ebraismo\_02.htm</u>
 <u>http://moked.it</u>

Italian case. For the last ten years, the Church is more active in voicing its opinion and taking sides in the public debate on certain important and diverse issues. The Catholic Church considered the flux of immigrants into Italy as a chance to spread its message and to further inter-religious dialogue (Caritas, 2006: 206) as well as the ecumenical dialogue with other churches (Ibid: 209).

In this new activism of the Church, we see a shift in the activities of the Church from social Catholicism to the cultural Catholicism, by means of defining itself as part of the Italian cultural identity (Garelli, 2006: 19). Moreover, In Italy even though the number of practicing Catholics is decreasing, it is still higher than the other European countries (Ibid: 2; Pace, 2007: 88). A recent survey about the religious and moral pluralism of Italians shows that around 80% of the Italians from the age of 18 to 74 define themselves as Catholics, while only 2% claim to belong to other religions (Garelli, 2006: 145). Recent surveys also reveal the different ways Italians conceive and practice Catholicism and identify themselves with it. Therefore, Garelli suggests using the "Catholicisms" instead of Catholicism in Italy.

This new activism of the Church and emergent religiosities within Catholicism preceded the emergence of migrant religions and religiosities; however, grows in parallel to migrant religious activism. Moreover, the new activism and stance of the Church has implications for the relations with migrant religious institutions and religious pluralism. The activities of the Church are not limited to the initiatives to improve the ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue. The Church's support to Christian migrant churches in opening their own churches by means of giving the Catholic Churches for the use of migrant communities, providing them with a Catholic priest if they do not have their own priest or opening the doors of the Catholic Church to all Christians is very important for the Christian migrant communities. The Catholic Church also provides material and financial support and assistance to all migrants through its organs such as Caritas and shows that it cherishes migrants' cultures and traditions through the organization of cultural festivals by *Fondazione Migrantes* in different Italian cities.

However, the emergence of migrant religions and religious organizations in Italy has implications on the Catholic Church as well as the Italian Catholics. In Italy, rather than a decline in religious participation, we see an increase in competition among different religious organizations and within the Roman Catholic Church, which gives vigor to the religious life (Introvigne and Stark, 2005: 4). With the impact of immigration different

ways and forms of practicing Catholicism in Italy becomes more visible. Religious pluralism induces Italian Catholics to reevaluate their belief and traditions (Garelli, 2006: 11) and express it more openly and confidently. In this process of reevaluation and expression of diversity in belief and practices among Italian Catholics becomes more visible. Don Antonio Sebastiani has confirmed this development during our short interview.<sup>297</sup> Imam Bregeiche also states that presence of Islam in Europe and in Italy makes a positive contribution to the majority religions of the host society:

I believe and I am convinced and I believe I am not the only one, also our non-Muslim friends, Christians in particular, I believe that the Islamic presence in Europe, in the West, in Italy has contributed to this reawakening, we can say, return to religiosity even for the indigenous populations. Assisting and living with people coming exactly from the Islamic world, living here in Italy, in Europe that they are trying despite all the difficulties to maintain their religious roots, religious practices and by living personally more practicing, we can say, of their faith, of their principles, of their religious practices, they [indigenous populations] have also realized the importance of rediscovering their own religion that this I believe is a good thing, a good thing for all, especially for the believers because the religions teach and they have to teach common values of brotherhood, peace, solidarity, altruism etc. For his reason, thanks to Islam Europe has become a little more Christian. This is to be underlined. And [he smiles] this does not displease us. To us, Muslim, this is not displeasing because the Quran says you will find friends, closer are also the ones that call themselves Nazareni<sup>298</sup>", which means Christians.<sup>299</sup> So here more religiosity, more adhesion to faith for us is a positive motive that despite everything that happens. But common values unite us.  $[...]^{300}$ 

However, despite the good relations and interactions there are also tensions (as has been discussed for the case of Muslims) and problems. Canta is of the view that majority of Italians view religious pluralism as a "threat" and the prejudices get in the way of collaboration (2002: 254). Don Giuseppe, the Head of *Fondazione Migrantes* in Trento, argues that despite the presence of migrant religions and growing religious pluralism, Italians seem not to know much about newly emerging faiths in their territory. There is the need for more initiatives on their part to facilitate integration of different migrant communities and religions, with a particular emphasis on the second generation.<sup>301</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>297</sup> Interview with Don Antonio Sebastiani, Diocesan Office for Ecumenism on January 18<sup>th</sup> 2008.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>298</sup> The Qur'an refers to the early followers of Jesus as "Nazarenes".

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>299</sup> Imam Bregeiche is referring to Surat al Maidah Verse 82 of the Quran. "You will find that the worst enemies of the believers are the Jews and the idol worshipers. And you will find that the closest people in friendship to the believers are those who say, 'We are Christian.' This is because they have priests and monks among them, and they are not arrogant." [5:82]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>300</sup> Interview with Imam Dr. Aboulkheir Bregeiche.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>301</sup> Interview with Don Giuseppe, *Fondazione Migrantes* on February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

Dahrendorf argues that pluralism is defined as a "desirable" condition that we all should hope for (2005: 223). On a similar line, Werblowsky defines pluralism as an "ideological attitude" that asserts plurality (diversity of individuals and collective identities) as a fact, which is desirable, unavoidable and a value in itself (2005: 183). Pluralism ensures pluralities coexisting together that they would not lose their identities in encounter with the others (Ibid: 186). However, one question is critical: "how much plurality can pluralism bear?" (Ibid: 189). Dahrendorf argues that pluralism does not facilitate unity nor inspire common sense of belonging but rather a co-existence and toleration of clearly defined differences (2005: 225). Therefore, to have a peaceful coexistence and fruitful dialogue and to avoid chaos and conflict, there is the need for basic set of values and institutions (Ibid: 227). The Italian multicultural model is "variegated, polycentric and diffuse" due to the nature and patterns of immigration (Canta, 2002: 251). There is the need for a more systematic and vigorous effort to formulate common values in dialogue with different migrant communities and their representatives and to deconstruct the discourse picturing diversity as a "threat" to the nation. The emergence of migrant religious organizations should be seen as a way of integrating into the social fabric. As Ben-Rafael and Sternberg argue the tension between pluralism and homogeneity is one of the main driving forces of transformation in modern societies (2005: 14) and this transformative force should be channelled into making a positive contribution to more interculturalism in Italy.

## V.3. The Orthodox Christians and Churches in Italy

Even though it became an important element of Italian religious landscape after the 90s, the Orthodoxy arrived in Italy long time ago. It was first Italo-Albanian minority that arrived in Italy through different migratory waves starting from the15<sup>th</sup> century. Italio-Albanians settled in Southern Italy and in time went through Latinization (Berzano and Cassinasco, 1999: 25). After the World War II, Italo-Albanians started immigrating to Northern Italy, particularly to the Lombardy region (Ibid: 26) and established their own churches. The first ROC in Turin was born out of the hospitality of the Italo-Albanian community.

Biritualism, conduct of liturgy in accordance with the Orthodox rite by a Catholic priest, was an interim and transitory solution for the celebration of liturgy for different

Orthodox people present in the Italian territory that did not have their separate parishes (Ibid: 34). In the 50s Italo-Albanian community of the Orthodox rite in Turin were served by the Catholic priests. Starting from 1977 a Catholic priest started regularly celebrating the Orthodox liturgy in Greek in accordance with the Orthodox calendar (Ibid: 35). The parish community was composed of different nationalities and in time they started separating from the parish. It was first the Romanians that formed their parish in 1979. Pr. Vasilescu, who came to Turin as a deacon and researcher at the University of Sacro Cuore in Milan, was ordained as a priest to the Italo-Albanian Church in 1979 (Ibid: 135). The Copts established their own parish and left the Italo-Albanian Church in 1984 and Greeks in 1988. In addition to the separations, the Balamand Document signed in 1993 in Lebanon by the Orthodox delegations defined Uniatism as a form proselytism, which created problems for biritualism (Ibid: 36).

Within the changing Italian religious landscape, the Orthodox creed and different Orthodox Churches began to occupy an important place after the 90s. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and communist regimes, increasing amount of immigration from the Balkans, Eastern Europe and Russia and increasing number of Greek students at Italian universities facilitated direct contact of Italians with the Orthodoxy (Piovano, 2001: 73-74). By the end of 2006, the number of the Orthodox migrants reached to 918,375<sup>302</sup> out of 1,791,758 Christian migrants and 3,690,053 migrants in general (Caritas, 2007: 194). According to the figures of the last two years, while there is a fall in the number of the Protestant and Catholic migrants, the number of Orthodox population keeps on increasing. The Orthodox Community in Italy is composed of Greek, Romanian, Moldovan, Serbian, Macedonian, Russian and to a lesser extent Ukrainian, Bulgarian, Coptic (Egyptian), Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrants as well as Armenians, whose presence predate the recent migratory waves, and the Italian Orthodox.

Owing to the recent immigration flows from different countries, rather than the Orthodox Church, there are the Orthodox Churches in Italy. In order to ensure continuity of the ethnic identity and tradition in time and space the Orthodox Churches besides their main mission of performing religious services and ceremonies, put emphasis on the unity of the community and reproduction of the culture and ethnic traditions through language. This maintains the place of the Church at the heart of the Orthodox communities in diaspora

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>302</sup> 20,000 Italian citizens are of the Orthodox Christian creed (Introvigne, 2001: 9).

(Berzano and Cassinasco, 1999: 14-15) as a symbol of belonging and a point of reference (Ibid: 17). However, the unity within the Church of people of the same ethnic and linguistic background brings division and fragmentation among the people of the Orthodox creed.

The emergence of the Orthodox Churches in diaspora that is dispersed all around the world and maintain a network of social, cultural and religious relations with the homeland turns the Orthodoxy into a global religion and urges the churches to put more emphasis on ecumenical dialogue (Ibid: 14). Pr. Traian Valdman of the ROC in Milan also argues that the presence of the Orthodox Churches in Italy gives the Italians the chance to get to know the Orthodoxy and for the Catholic Church to engage in active dialogue to "stabilize ecumenical relations" (Piovano, 2001: 90). However, the importance of the language in the liturgy and emphasis on the ethnic identity render the universal and ecumenical dialogue difficult (Berzano and Cassinasco, 1999: 18) and lead to the reproduction of rich, complex and fragmented picture of the Orthodox world within the Italian religious landscape reflecting the internal diversity and divisions of the Orthodox world.

As temporary migration gains a more permanent status, different Orthodox Churches under the jurisdiction of different patriarchates gain more root in the Italian territory. The most numerous Orthodox community in Italy is the Romanian community and the ROCs has a well-organized and efficient network as compared to other Orthodox Churches in the Italian territory with its Diocesan Bishop in Rome, which is discussed in the next chapter.

The only Orthodox community that has a Metropolitan Church in Italy is the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Metropolitan Gennadios in Venice has been officially recognized by the Italian state. The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Italy, which seeks to become the "official interlocutor of the Italian state" (Pacini, 2000: 97) has three ecclesiastical regions; North, Centre and South Italy. In Turin, the Saint Andrew Apostle Church is under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan See of Ecumenical Patriarchate, which was founded in 1988. It has 1500 believers composed of Greek inhabitants and students. Since there is no parish priest, the liturgy is celebrated by the priests of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Genoa, Milan or Venice. With the help of the Greek Consulate in Turin, the church offers free Greek language courses for the community and anyone that is interested (Berzano and Cassinasco, 1999: 93-95). Another church under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Piedmont is the Church of San Basilio, which is actually a monastery.

Father Livio Tassello, who converted into the Orthodoxy from Catholicism, was ordained as a priest in the Polish Orthodox Church. In 1993 he established the parish. Due to the canonical problems with the Metropolitanate of Warsaw, the church turned to the Ecumenical Patriarchate and came under the jurisdiction of Metropolitan Gennadios in Venice. The majority of parish members are Italian Orthodox and the liturgy is conducted in Italian. Even though it is a small parish community with recent influx of the Orthodox immigrants the number of members is increasing (Ibid: 97-9).

Besides the ROC and churches of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, there are different Slavic Orthodox Churches in Italy. The biggest is the Russian Orthodox Church. There are more than 40 Russian Orthodox Churches in Italy. If those that are not registered are included, the number reaches up to 68 churches. The Russian Orthodox Churches in Italy do not have a bishop yet; however, a bishop will be ordained soon. The Moscow Patriarchate is also planning to build a Church in Rome close to or at the premises of the Russian Embassy. For the time being the churches are under the jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Diocese of Chersonese in Paris.<sup>303</sup> There is no concordat between the Russian Patriarchate and the Italian state but negotiations are underway.<sup>304</sup>

Long before the 90s, there were Russian communities in Italy. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century Turin became one of the European cities that attracted Russians and after the French Revolution the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Patriarchate has decided to open a church for Russians in the city. When the Russian ambassador's wife to the city died, King Vittorio Amedeo III donated a chapel for the ambassador's wife (Berzano and Cassinasco, 1999: 143-4). The Russians also founded a church in Turin in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Ibid: 103). In the 19<sup>th</sup> century many Russian intellectuals visited or settled in the city (Ibid: 145). Following the Bolshevik Revolution a massive amount of Russians left Russia and Piedmont was one of the destinations. With the newcomers an Orthodox community was formed and with the assistance of the Church of Valdese they have started celebrating religious services. The Church of Valdese and the community also formed a community centre, l'Uliveto, in 1954 for the refugees that arrived from Russia. Since there was no Russian Orthodox priest, an old opera singer took priesthood responsibilities (Ibid: 149-50). The first priest was Father Igor, who started visiting the community to celebrate the liturgy and services starting from the 60s (Ibid: 156). The faith, which gave them hope and the

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>303</sup> <u>http://www.egliserusse.eu/; http://www.ortodossia.org/</u>
 <sup>304</sup> Interview with Father Veniamin Onu at the Russian Orthodox Church in Vicenza on August 9<sup>th</sup> 2008.

icons that helped them maintain their origins and identity were very dear to the refugees. Religious services became an indispensable part of their lives.

The number of Russians in Italy before the 1917 Revolution was limited and throughout the communist rule even though there were some exiles, they tended to prefer France as the country of exile. The divisions within the Russian Orthodox Church after the Russian Revolution had and have implications for the Russian diaspora and the divisions among the Orthodox Churches also affected the Russian Orthodox Churches in Italy. There are Russian Orthodox Churches in Florence, Brescia and San Remo that are under the jurisdiction of the Archbishopric for the Russian Orthodox Churches in Western Europe, which is located in Paris and is under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.<sup>305</sup>

There are some other churches that were under the jurisdiction of Moscow Patriarchate; however, changed their jurisdictions later on. Father Gregorio, who during his stay in Paris met Russian refugees and converted into the Orthodoxy in 1947, through his missionary work succeeded in creating the Church of Santi Basilio in Italy. His Church came under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Moscow. During the 70s and 80s with the opening of the ROC in Turin, he participated in the celebration of the liturgy and other services many times. In 1983 the Archimandrite of Russian Orthodox Church in Milan left the Moscow Patriarchate and entered the Church of Old Calendarists of Greece. Father Gregorio followed him. However, since the Old Calendarists is a non-canonical church, their ties with the Orthodox world were severed. In 1986 the Metropolitan of Old Calendarists in Portugal, who consecrated the two priests, came under the jurisdiction of the Autocephalous Church of Poland. Father Gregorio and Father Evloghios did not follow him but entered another old calendarist church of Greece and in 1988 they were welcomed by the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church in Exile in the US (Berzano and Cassinasco, 1999: 111-2). After the collapse of communism and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Father Evlophios's church became part of the Patriarchate of Kiev, while Father Gregorio's health deteriorated and he could not continue his pastoral work. The new priests that were ordained failed to live up to his success and the parish life lost its vigor. Some of the faithful passed to the Russian Orthodox Patriarchate and joined to the community of San Massimo in Turin (Ibid: 114).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>305</sup> There are more than 90 parishes and communities in Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, The Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Great Britain and Ireland that belong to Archbishopric <u>http://www.exarchat.eu/;</u> <u>http://www.ortodossia-russa.net/</u>

When Father Gregorio Baccolini decided to leave the Moscow Patriarchate some of the Italian Orthodox maintained their allegiance to Moscow and evolved into a parish in time (Ibid: 117). The faithful occasionally participated in the liturgies organized by the Milan parish of the Russian Orthodox Patriarchate. Up until 1997 the community of San Massimo did not have a church. In 1997 a private hall was rented for celebrating the liturgy. The community has played an important role in translation of texts on Orthodoxy into Italian. Since the community developed good relations with the ROC, this served as a point of departure for improving relations with other Orthodox communities and churches. The community played an important role in the organization of Giornate Popolari Ortodosse and improving ecumenical dialogue among the Orthodox Church became the main priority for the community (Ibid: 120).

The oldest Russian Orthodox Church is in Rome and it is open since the end of the World War II. Santi Sergio e Serafino Russian Orthodox parish in Milan emerged in 1983 with the blessings of Bishop Serafim of Zurig; however, until 1985 the faithful had to celebrate liturgies in private houses. Starting from 1985 Father Dimitri celebrated the liturgy in the Church and the Church is open to the Orthodox people from different nationalities. Father Dimitri was actively involved in the organization of the San Massimo parish in Turin, which soon turned into a Church itself with the ordination of Father Ambrogio Cassinasco, who is one of the authors of the book on the Orthodoxy in Piedmont region (Cristiani d'Oriente in Piemonte), which has also informed this study.<sup>306</sup> The San Massimo Russian Orthodox Church in Turin, which was established in 1993, is also celebrating liturgies in Russian, Italian and Romanian.<sup>307</sup>

The story of the Russian Orthodox Church in Merano is an interesting one. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there was a very well-organized Russian community in Merano and they had a church and a Russian priest. However, in time the number of Russians started decreasing as Russians started immigrating and the community reached a point that it could not maintain the church any more or pay for the expenses of the church. Eventually, the church became the property of the municipality. It was the first Orthodox Church in Trentino-Alto Adige region. Now there is a small community of Russians in Merano that have arrived after the 90s and they have a Russian priest, who celebrates liturgy two times a month.<sup>308</sup>

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>306</sup> <u>http://gdrtest2.altervista.org/index.php</u>
 <sup>307</sup> <u>http://www.ortodossia.org/sanmassimo/#</u>
 <sup>308</sup> Interview with Pr. Milăşan at the ROC in Bolzano on January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2008. My efforts to contact the priest of the Russian Orthodox Church in Merano unfortunately failed.

In Vicenza there is a Russian Orthodox Church and the parish community is composed of Ukrainians, Russians, Moldovans, Bulgarians, Poles and Romanians. The Church conducts liturgy in Russian, Romanian and Italian; in Romanian for Moldovans and Romanians, in Russian for Ukrainians, Bulgarians, Poles and Russians and in Italian for some other nationalities that do not speak Russian or Romanian such as Slovaks and some Italians that attend the liturgy. This is also the case for the Russian Orthodox Church in Fidenza, which was opened in 2003. In the Orthodox Church in Vicenza there are two priests; Father Onu and Father Giovanni, who are both from the Metropolitan Church of Chisinău, which is an autonomous church under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate. Rather than the migrants, it was Father Onu who took the initiative for the organization of a church in Vicenza. However, in other cities the migrants took the initiative. Father Giovanni has been ordained to be the priest of the Russian speaking Orthodox community in Trento. The Russian speaking Orthodox community that does not speak Romanian and cannot follow the liturgy in the ROC in Trento wants to have its own church. They have been continuously sending letters to the Moscow Patriarchate to ask for a priest and a church of their own<sup>309</sup> and there are initiatives for it since a long time.<sup>310</sup>

The Russian Orthodox Churches use the Catholic Churches for celebrating liturgy. The churches in Vicenza and Fidenza are given to the full use of the community; therefore, they have the iconostasis. They only pay for the electricity, water and gas that they consume, but they do not pay the rent for the churches. There is no Sunday school but the priests are trying to give some basic teachings about the faith after the liturgy, even though it is not very regular and organized. Since the Moscow Patriarchate is paying for the salaries of the priests and churches, the priests do not have to work. As the priests have stated during the Lent period some Orthodox migrants encounter difficulties. The need to maintain religious identity and faith is balanced with the need to respect the Italians and their culture. Therefore, the priests have decided that if faithful cannot fast during all 40 days, they can fast at least for a few days so that they can take the communion.<sup>311</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>309</sup> Interview with Father Veniamin Onu.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>310</sup> Information received from Bernardo Clesio Centre in Trento.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>311</sup> Interview with Father Veniamin Onu. Besides Russian Orthodox Churches, there are also different Russian cultural associations in Turin such as *Russkij Mir*, *Zemljiacestvo* and *CoRuss*. *Zemljiacestvo* was established in 1982 with the aim of maintaining Russian cultural identity. With the association *CoRuss*, established in 1993, and Russian Orthodox community *Zemljiacestvo* have organized a common cultural and religious centre in Turin in 1996 (Berzano and Cassinasco, 1999: 123).

Another Slavic Orthodox Church in Italy is the Serbian Orthodox Church. The bishop of the Serbian Orthodox parishes in Italy is Metropolitan Jovan with his see in Zagreb. The Serbian Orthodox priests in Milan and Rome also have administrative duties for all the Serbian Orthodox Churches within Italy (*Una Fede si Racconta*, 2008: 47). The Serbian Orthodox community has had a Church in Trieste since 1753. The Church has become more active after the 90s and there is also an Orthodox cemetery in the city. The dissolution of Yugoslavia and immigration of Serbs to Italy led to the emergence of the Serbian Orthodox Churches in Vicenza and Venice. Since 1996 there is a Serbian Orthodox Churches in Vicenza and Venice. Since 1996 there is a Serbian Orthodox community of Pistoia, the majority of which are Italians, chose to be under the jurisdiction of the Serbian Patriarchate in 1991. As compared to other communities, the Serbs seem more reluctant to attend religious services in other Orthodox churches, if there are no Serbian parishes in the city or town they are living in Italy (Berzano and Cassinasco, 1999: 184).

The Autocephalous Church of Poland and Bulgarian Patriarchate have small number of Churches in Italy. In Turin the Bulgarian Orthodox community has a Bulgarian priest, who occasionally visits the community and celebrates liturgies at the Romanian and Russian Orthodox parish churches (Ibid: 182). Serbs, Bulgarians, Poles who do not have their own churches tend to attend the Slavic Orthodox liturgies; therefore, the Russian Orthodox Churches (Ibid: 121). Even though theologically different, there exist Coptic and Armenian churches and communities as well (Piovano, 2001: 79- 83). The Patriarchate of Kiev has three bishops and some churches (in Milan, Turin, Rome, Genova) under its jurisdiction, while the old-calendarists have their own churches.

Old believers emerged in the 17<sup>th</sup> century during Patriarch Nikon in Moscow as a reaction to the reform movements in the church. The Old Believers (*Starovjery*) and the Old Ritualists (*Staroobrjadzyi*) have started a passive resistance against the tsar and the Patriarchate, which led to their persecution and eventually their exile. Some of them settled in Romania. New divisions emerged within the movement (Berzano and Cassinasco, 1999: 162-3). Even though they were safe from persecution in Romania, when the ROC started using the Gregorian calendar, they resisted against this move and there were tensions. After 1989, due to deterioration of their economic conditions many of them had to immigrate to Belgium, Greece, Israel, US, Canada and Italy (Ibid: 164).

The Old Believers of the Orthodox rite also has a parish community in Turin since 1998. The majority are from Tulcea in Romania from a locality where 90% of the faithful are Old Believers. Before the ordainment of Father Pavel Vasile, the main reference point for the community was the ROC in Turin. Later on the Patriarchate of Moscow ordained Father Pavel for the community (Ibid: 161-2). Their liturgical language is Slavonic.

The presence of the Orthodox Churches creates the room for more interaction and inter-Orthodox and inter-Christian cooperation. Even though the Orthodox Churches are accused of lack of interest for sister Orthodox Churches, there are initiatives for increasing dialogue and cooperation among the Orthodox Churches in diaspora. The first meeting among Orthodox Churches in Italy was in 1994 in Italy. One year later, there was another meeting with more participation. Starting from 1996 the meeting was transferred to Modena (Ibid: 168). Ecumenical dialogue between the Catholic Church and Orthodox Churches takes different forms. Besides the dialogue at institutional level, there is growing collaboration among the communities. The Church of Santa Anastasia in Magliano Alfieri, which was consecrated in 1997, is another Russian Orthodox Church (Ibid: 125); however, is different from others, since it brings together different Orthodox communities and Catholics. In this Church, different Orthodox priests celebrate the liturgy, but they mention the name of the bishop of the Russian Orthodox Church for Italy, who is in Paris. The parish is open to all Christian confessions but mainly to the Catholics. The Church is also a reference point for the Orthodox communities in Milan, Turin, Alba, Genoa, Florence and Pistoia for prayers, baptisms and marriage ceremonies. Therefore, the Church plays an important role in the ecumenical dialogue. Another interesting example is in the diocese of Alba. Growing number of the Orthodox migrants from Macedonia, Romania and Moldova led the diocese of Alba to organize different religious and cultural activities to bring Orthodox and Catholic communities closer together. For important religious holy days an Orthodox priest (Romanian or Russian) visits and celebrates liturgies, baptisms and marriages (Ibid: 80-81).

However, despite their increasing visibility in the Italian religious landscape and collaboration among the Orthodox Churches, there is no representative body encompassing the entire Orthodox multi-ethnic community in Italy.<sup>312</sup> Pr. Valdman on behalf of Orthodox

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>312</sup> Diversity within the Orthodoxy in the Italian landscape does not mean that there is no contact among Orthodox Churches or Orthodox Churches and Catholic and Protestant Churches in Italy. There are different initiatives at local and transnational level. Search for ecumenical dialogue is the most important sign of collaboration. Conferences about

communities in Italy expresses the need to establish a pluri-jurisdictional representative body of all the Orthodox Churches in Italy and the need to enact a framework bill for the recognition of different Churches and religious practices (Piovano, 2001, 90).<sup>313</sup> This will create the conditions for better functioning of churches in serving their communities, while providing more room for furthering the collaboration and dialogue.

Even though recent and small in scale, religious pluralism in Italy forms the basis of religious co-existence in the Italian territory and is expected to grow in the future. Since it is a very dynamic process, religious landscape of Italy keeps changing through various migrant religious and religious organizations that are emerging and taking root in the Italian territory. Migrant religious organizations undergo a process of adaptation, while they transform Italian religious landscape. They try to come up with the means to organize themselves in a new setting in order to better "integrate" their own followers, while working for the maintenance of the religious roots, despite some changes or adjustments in religious practices. Throughout this process they confront similar as well as different type of problems and develop various mechanisms to cope with the challenges. Italy, which is becoming more multi-ethnic and multi-religious due to migration, is also trying to come up with legal/institutional mechanisms to accommodate migrant religions and provide the conditions for peaceful coexistence of different religious traditions. There are also initiatives of Italian state as well as other public actors, especially the Catholic Church, to induce inter-religious dialogue. If what we mean by pluralism is "the recognition of alternative truth claims" (MacHacek, 2003: 150) and "meaningful diversity" (Ibid: 155); exchange, communication and dialogue with the Italian state and among religious institutions are vital for managing (religious) diversity (Naso, 2007: 334). Italian religious landscape is under reconstruction and active engagement on the part of the state and religious organizations will lead to a viable solution. The Orthodox Churches, particularly the ROC with very high number of churches and adherents will play a key role in making a meaningful contribution to the reconstruction of the Italian religious landscape.

Protestantism and Orthodoxy, religious services held in collaboration with and at different churches, common prayer week for the unity of all the Christians are the different forms of collaboration that takes place among the local churches. <sup>313</sup> The same concern was expressed by him during my short visit to the ROC in Milan on March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

## **Chapter VI. The Romanian-Orthodox Transnational Space and Its Actors**

The ROC within the framework of this research initiative is an important transnational actor, the practices and agency of which deserve scholarly attention. The end of the Cold War and the communist regime, meant a new era of opportunities and liberties as well as challenges for the ROC. As it was trying to reconquer what has been lost during the communist era within Romania, it is pulled into the Italian religious landscape through transnational migration. The redefinition of space and extension of the Church's jurisdiction beyond its traditional homeland due to these forces, while providing the Church with the possibility of access to and agency within the transnational space, have put its abilities in an enlarged space with a bigger agenda to test.

In this chapter we discuss how the Church confronts the challenge of transnational migration within the Italian religious landscape based on the empricial data collected throughout the fieldwork from December 2006 up until September 2008 in Trento. The empirical data of the fieldwork that inform this chapter is comprised of participant observation at religious services in the ROC in Trento and visits to the ROCs in Bologna, Milan, Verona, Bolzano, Turin (2 churches), Ivrea, Padua and Venice-Mestre, interviews with 10 Romanian Orthodox priests in Italy, interviews with two Romanian Orthodox priests (the Patriarchal consultant in external relations commission and a theology professor/priest) and two Romanian political exiles in Bucharest, interviews with three Romanian associations in Turin and Padua and participant observation at the activities and meetings organized by the Romanian Association in Trentino. The findings of archival work on the official bulletin of the ROC also inform this chapter. Based on the research findings the first section seeks to describe the formation and evolution of the ROCs in Italy and map out the well-functioning network of the ROCs within the Italian religious landscape. While the first section focuses on the ROCs and the relations amongst them, the second section evaluates the agency of other institutional actors within the Romanian-Italian transnatioal space and their relations with the ROCs in Italy.

## VI.1. Mapping Out the Romanian Orthodox Churches in Italy

The ROCs entered into the Italian territory following its faithful. It was the large scale Romanian migration after 1989 that pulled the ROCs into Italy and the number of parish churches grew in a short span of time due to the devotion and initiatives of the faithful as Pr. Lupăştean states:

[...] They have maintained the religion. Not everyone, not everyone but the majority has maintained the religion. For this reason, by maintaining the religion, but maintaining the part they have brought down from Romania, their common part, we can say, with their country, you cannot think anything else but our community is based on these people. Because we do not come to open parish churches. We do not go to look for. They are themselves here and they ask us "We also want". They are the ones that come together in a city here in Trento or in another place that they gather: "Look we need someone who will take care of us".<sup>314</sup>

Even though large scale Romanian migration to Italy started with the fall of Ceausescu and intensified after 2002, there were also Romanians in Italy, even before the establishment of the communist regime in Romania. During the years 1939-44, there were refugees running away from Antonescu's regime that took refuge in Italy (Nicolae, 2003: 3). In Rome in 1940 a community of 80 Romanians established a parish church for a short time (Ibid: 11). Throughout the Cold War years intellectuals and political dissidents running away from the communist regime arrived in Italy. After the short-lived parish experience in Rome in 1941-42, the first ROC in Italy was established in 1975 in Milan. On February 1975 a group of Romanians gathered and participated in the Divine Liturgy in the church at the Giulini Street celebrated by Pr. Traian Valdman, who was in Milan for his studies at the Catholic University of Milan (Ibid: 15). The community has decided to organize a parish and the news has been sent to Patriarch Justinian in Bucharest with a telegram asking for the recognition of the parish church by the Mother Church as its branch in Italy. With the approval of the Patriarchate, Pr. Valdman officially established the parish church on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1975 at Giulini Street. From April 1996 onwards the community moved to the church at de Amicis Street, 13 in Milan, which it is the current location of the Church and Pr. Valdman is the priest of the Church for more than 30 years.

The ROC in Turin, the Church of Santa Parascheva, emerged in 1978 as a branch of the ROC in Milan and became a parish church in 1979 (Berzano and Cassinasco, 1999:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>314</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview with Pr. Lupăștean at the San Marco ROC in Trento on August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

134). Up until the 90s, the Church had a small community composed of Romanians married to Italians and Italians that immigrated to Romania in the first half of 19<sup>th</sup> century and returned back after the World War II. Two other churches were founded before 1989; one in Florence in 1981 and another in Bari in 1983. Pr. Mihai Driga, who was also a student with a scholarship in Italy, has been ordained as the priest of the community in Bari from 1983 onwards.

The ROCs in diaspora during the Cold War years were limited in number, since most of the Romanians in the West were political exiles, who were againt the communist rule and the way they perceived the regime had consequences for the way the ROC in diaspora was perceived. According to the account of Prof. Adrian Niculescu,<sup>315</sup> who has been one of the founders and vice-president of INMER<sup>316</sup>, the priests of the ROC in diaspora were seen as "agents of the state" or "men of the regime" by the Romanian exiles during the Cold War years because of the ROC's "collaboration" with the Communist regime.<sup>317</sup> While the masses even under the communist rule respected and revered to the Church, for the exiles, even for the very religious ones, the Patriarchate was "Sovrom Patriarhia" (Soviet Romanian Patriarchate). 318 As has been stated before under the communist regime, it was only the ROC that was allowed to send priests to Romanian communities in Western Europe and the US or theology students to study abroad and there are claims that those priests, who could go abroad had to provide information to authorities about the Romanian communities abroad (Stan and Turcescu, 2005: 666). In Niculescu's opinion, the priests that came out of Romania in the 70s and 80s to set up parish churches abroad had connections with the *Securitate*. Therefore, this alienated the majority of the Romanian exiles from the ROC and the way the Romanian exiles perceived the ROC was important, since it affected how the West sees the ROC.<sup>319</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>315</sup> Dr. Adrian Niculescu had been in exile in France and Italy during the communist era. He arrived in Italy in 1985 but was always in contact with the Romanian community in Milan, working at the Sacro Cuore Catholic University of Milan. Interview with Prof. Niculescu.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>316</sup> INMER is the National Institute for the Memory Of Romanian Exile was established in 2003 with the purpose of forming and archive and publishing documents and research about the Romanian exiles in between 1948-89 and solve the legal problems of the exiles. <u>http://memoriaexilului.ro/</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>317</sup> Mr. Dinu Zamfirescu, who is the current president of INMER and who has lived in exile in France for 13 years was also of the same view. Interview with Mr. Dinu Zamfirescu at his office in INMER, Bucharest on April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2007. <sup>318</sup> Interview with Prof. Niculescu.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>319</sup> While in his earlier years, Ceausescu's positive image discredited the exiles' claims about oppression of the communist regime, as his popularity in the Western world started to plummet, the exiles started to gain more credibility. Since Prof. Niculescu argues that in 80s it was the Romanian exiles that represented the country in the Western world not the Romanian authorities and he himself was writing for some Italian newspapers about Romania. Interview with Prof. Niculescu.

Among the exiles, there were the Greek-Catholic and Orthodox priests, who ran away from the regime. While for the Romanian Greek-Catholics organizing parishes in diaspora were relatively easier with the support of the Catholic Church, Romanian Orthodox priests who ran away from the regime had two choices. One is to turn to the Patriarchate in Istanbul. However, due to the fact that power and influence of the Patriarchate in Istanbul was limited and from the viewpoint of the exiles it was under Moscow's influence - for this reason they called the Ecumenical Patriarchate "short arm" of the Moscow Patriarchate, the exile community was left with only one choice. They turned to the only "anti-communist church", the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad in New York. There was also a ROC in Paris, which was established in 1948 with links to Istanbul; however, it was under the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church in exile. In Paris there was also a ROC with a pro-Ceausescu priest using a Protestant church; however, most of the exiles in Paris preferred to go to the other Romanian Church, which they considered to be independent from the regime in Romania.<sup>320</sup>

Prof. Niculescu's account also reveals that there were similar divisions and problems during the establishment of the ROC in Milan. According to Prof. Niculescu, up until 1975 there was a Greek-Catholic Church in Milan and in those years Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate was searching for means to establish connections with the Romanian communities abroad. The priest of the Greek-Catholic Church was in contact and had good relations with the Romanian Patriarchate and his parish was sending aid to Romania such as monetary support for Romanian flood victims. The Romanian Orhodox Patriarchate wanted to found a parish church in Milan and with the arrival of Pr. Valdman Romanian Greek-Catholic and Orthodox priests and communities started celebrating the liturgy together. However, in two years time the Church was transformed into an Orthodox one in 1977.<sup>321</sup> The Romanian community was divided into two; those who did not go to the Church, were critical of the Romanian Orthodox priest and were "totally hostile" to the Church and those who revered to the new ROC in Milan.

With the fall of the communist regime in Romania, the ROC started working with a newfound legitimacy and vigor within and out of Romania. While the fall of communism badly damaged other political institutions in Romania, the repression of the Orthodox Church and religious belief under communism, damage and loss of trust that other

<sup>320</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>321</sup> *Ibid.* 

institutions incurred and effective use of nationalist discourse provided the legitimacy for Orthodox Church in post-communist era. While the Church grew in strength and influence through its reconstruction effort inside Romania, its jurisdiction started to expand with growing emigration after 1989 and the change of perception regarding the ROC within Romania affected the way it is seen in diaspora. Both of the exiles I have interviewed stated that the ROC in diaspora during communism and after communism are two different things. The ROC in diaspora now is seen as the protector and transmitter of the Romanian Orthodox values, culture and identity and the formation of the Romanian Orthodox parishes in diaspora is seen as something "natural".

With the arrival of the Romanian migrants into Italy after 1989, the Romanian community grew in size considerably. The main destinations were big cities of Italy such as Milan, Rome and Turin. Before 1989, in addition to the ROC in Milan, there was a ROC with a small community of Romanians in Turin. Pr. Gheorghe Vasilescu was the deacon of the Church in Milan and was also continuing his studies with a scholarship at the Catholic University of Milan. Then, he was ordained as a priest for the Church of Saint Parascheva in Turin by Patriarch Justinian ((Nicolae, 2003: 17). The local Orthodox Church in Turin has acted as a bridge between Turin and Marginea (a town in Romania) and attracted Romanian immigrants beginning from the 1990s. Pr. Vasilescu describes the transformation of the community as such:

The community has changed its face after the fall of the atheist regime in Romania and freedom gave the Romanians the possibility to emigrate. They came here, we did everything possible to welcome them, to support them, to direct many of them to work where they can earn their daily bread and like this the second part of our story has later changed, has grew from that number. But even even before to respond a little to the needs of the Romanians scattered in all Piemonte. Because I was the one who is responsible, – I am talking about the 80s and 90s – I was responsible for Piemonte, Val d'Aosta and Liguria. Now I know small groups, small communities in parishes. We were only 4 parishes in Italy, now we are ...<sup>322</sup>

According to the figures provided by the *Questura* of Turin, the Romanians make up 56% of the foreigners in the city (Cingolani and Piperno, 2005: 5). The lack of any associations or institutions that could help newcomers, the Church had to provide social and cultural assistance for facilitating the "integration" of the Romanians into the new context. For social assistance the Church collaborated and collaborates with certain institutions, especially the Catholic Church (which also contributes to the ecumenical

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>322</sup> Interview with Pr. Vasilescu at Saint Parascheva ROC in Turin March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

dialogue). Church attendance among Romanians is quite high and when the small Church of Saint Parascheva was not sufficient to accommodate the community enlarged with newcomers, this gave birth to another ROC in Turin (Berzano and Cassinasco, 1999: 135-139). The second Romanian Orthodox parish in Turin is opened in 2001 at Academia Albertina Street, 11 (Nicolae, 2003: 31). Pr. Roşu, who has already been a priest at the Church of San Demetriu in Genoa since 2000, has been ordained by the Metropolitan Church to Turin to become the priest of the second parish church starting from 2001.<sup>323</sup>

Pr. Mihai Driga of the ROC in Bari, besides his pastoral work in Bari, has also worked in the organization of the Romanian community in Rome (Nicolae, 2003: 18). One of the parochial council members' of the ROC in Milan also took an active part in the organization of the parish church in Rome (Ibid: 21). Through correspondence with Rev. Geoffrey B. Evans the Anglican Church of All Saints in Rome was given for the use of the Romanian Orthodox community in 1996 for the week-ends (Ibid: 23). Currently, there are four parishes in Rome. The second Romanian Orthodox parish in Rome was opened on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2000 as Pr. Balauca as the parish priest (Ibid: 29); the third one on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2001 was established with the south east Rome and Borghesiana under its jurisdiction and finally the fourth one for North West Rome and Ladispoli was opened on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2001 with Pr. Bogdan Petre as the priest (Ibid: 30).

In time the number of churches in bigger cities started to grow in different parts of Italy due to the increase in number of the Romanian communities in Italy. A new parish church was opened in Padua in 1998 (BOR, 1998, CXVI, 7-12: 417). The Church in Pordenone started celebrating the liturgy in October 1999. After being served for 12 years sporadically by Pr. Gheorghe Vasilescu and deacon Milăşan Roşu, on October 30<sup>th</sup> 1999 the Romanian Orthodox community in Genoa has established the parish church. Pr. Milăşan Roşu has served the community from 2000 to 2001 and starting from 2002 Pr. Constantin Sorin Filip has been ordained as the parish priest (Nicolae, 2003: 25). In 2000 Pr. Gheorghe Verzea was officially ordained by the Metropolitan Iosif of Paris as the priest of the Romanian community in Padua. 217 Romanian Orthodox migrants have organized a general meeting on November 14<sup>th</sup>, 1999 to establish a parish church in Treviso. In 2002 Pr. Marius Giani Kociorva has been ordained as the parish priest. With the efforts of Pr. Traian Valdman, the Romanian Orthodox community in Brescia has organized itself in 2000 and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>323</sup> Interview with Pr. Roşu at the Saint Cross ROC in Turin on March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

Pr. Timis has been ordained by the Metropolitan in Paris. Again with the efforts of Pr. Valdman the community in Viterbo organized a meeting with 58 Romanians on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2000 (Ibid: 26-7) and in June 2000 an affirmative response has arrived from the ROC's administration. 105 Romanian nationals, who were the residents in Verona and Veneto region, organized a meeting on November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2000. In 2001 Pr. Valdman started the correspondence for the ordainment of a priest to Verona and starting from December 2001 Pr. Gabor Codrea, who was studying at the Ecumenical Studies Institute of Venice, has been ordained as the priest of Verona parish.<sup>324</sup> From January 2002 onwards up until 2007 the community has used the Church at del Portiere Street, 30 (Ibid: 28). With the official confirmation on January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2002 Pr. Ioan Virgil Florea has started working as the parish priest in Tivoli (Ibid: 30-1). More parishes were formed in different parts of Italy such as Naples in 2001, Ostia in 2002, and Cremona and Pavia in 2003 (Ibid: 36-8). By 2002, the number of churches reached to 25 with some branches, 24 priests and 4 deacons in Italy (Ibid: 14). While at the end of 2004 the number of parishes was 37, by the end of 2005 it doubled in number. Due to the rapid growth of the Romanian Orthodox parishes, its activities also intensified.<sup>325</sup>

First parish churches were few in number and had a vast territory under their jurisdiction, sometimes the whole province, and it was not possible to hold liturgical services every Sunday. As new parishes emerge out of the existing ones, the territory under the jurisdiction of the older churches changes, which makes it difficult to give an exact number of the parish members. Pr. Codrea tells the formation and the evolution of the parish church and community in Verona until it reached its current form:

[...] at the beginning of the 90s, almost until the end of 2000 here there were very few Romanians. When their numbers started to increase, the community is organized and they have prepared a statute of the community. Then there were, I guess, 150 or something signatures and this request is sent to the Metropolitan See asking for the formation of a parish and sending of a priest. Some time back there was a bishop here, he was an unmarried priest, who was studying in Padua and was coming here two times a month to celebrate the liturgy. Then he was ordained as a bishop in Romania, he was substituted by a priest in Padua, who continued celebrating the liturgy two times a month, and since I was studying at Venice at the Ecumenical Institute, I have been asked to come here to celebrate the liturgy. Then

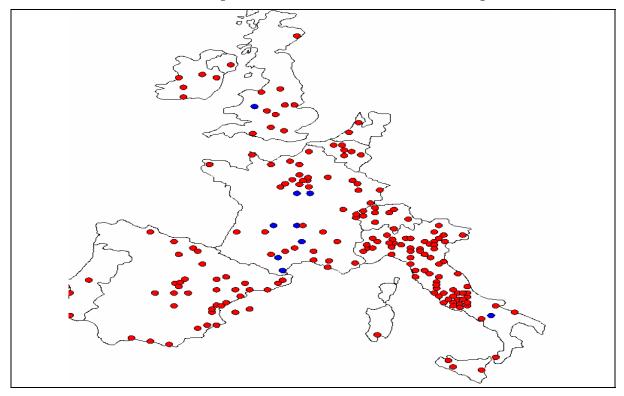
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>324</sup> Interview with Pr. Codrea at the ROC in Verona on July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>325</sup> On May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2007 in Groppoli, Mulazzo, (which used to be the See of the Vicariate in Italy until the Vicariate is elevated to the Diocese and the See is transferred to Rome) the Romanian Orthodox priests in Italy convened to discuss the issue of non-recognition of ROCs and pastoral work in Italy. At this meeting it has been stated that in 2006, 6126 baptism ceremonies, 1027 marriage ceremonies and 142 funerals were conducted (Pr. Gabriel Ioniță, (June 2007) "Adunare Extraordinară în Vicariatul Italiei", *Foaia Sfântul Ioan Casian*, No.276, 15).

slowly the community started growing, I have been asked to be here, serve here, stay here.326

Well at the beginning our parish was quite vast, a part of the province of Vicenza, a part of the province of Rovigo, all the community of Mantova, all the province of Verona, all the province of Trento, all the province of Bolzano. This was our parish. Then they started separating. We have organized a community in Trento; we have organized it starting from 2001. Then a community is organized in Trento, in Mantova, another community in Bassano del Grappa. So it is a little bit the result of our activity because we are so many here. Nobody would know ever because there cannot be, there cannot be in evidence exact number of the members.<sup>327</sup>

## Figure 2. Distribution of the ROCs in Europe under the jurisdiction of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolitanate of Western and Southern Europe<sup>328</sup>



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>326</sup> Interview with Pr. Codrea. <sup>327</sup> *Ibid.* 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>328</sup> <u>http://www.mitropolia-paris.ro</u>



Figure 3. Distribution of the ROCs in Italy<sup>329</sup>

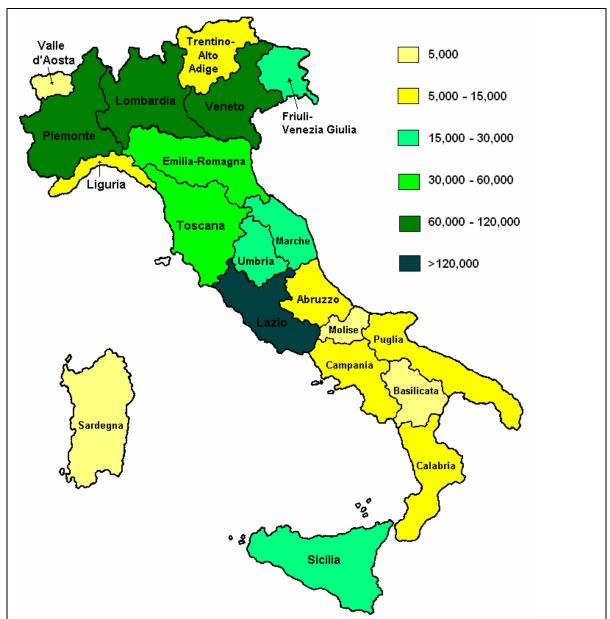


Figure 4. Distribution of Romanian nationals per region in Italy according to ISTAT 01/01/2008 figures<sup>330</sup>

As the Romanian Orthodox diaspora grew in Italy, the number of churches has increased (See Figure 2, 3, and 4) and activities intensified and today reached up to 76.<sup>331</sup> Despite their growing presence, the ROCs in Italy did not get official recognition from the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>330</sup> ISTAT (2008), "La Popolazione Straniera Residente in Italia al 1º Gennaio 2008", http://www.istat.it

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>331</sup> According to the information given by Mihaela Toader (a researcher from INMER) during our meeting at the Romanian Institute of Recent History on April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2007 in Bucharest, there is one dissenting church in Italy. Church of Santo Stefano in Rome is a ROC under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul. She visited and interviewed the people staying at the Church, even though this Church maintains contact with the Romanian Patriarchate through the visits of the priest to Bucharest and visits from the Romanian Patriarchate to the Church, the priest chose to be officially under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul. Even though it is a Church established in the 90s, the "collaboration" of the ROC with the Communist regime was an important factor in the priest's decision.

Italian state yet and negotiations are underway since a long time. On September 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> 1994, the Eparchial Council for Italy and Italian Switzerland under the Romanian Orthodox Archepiscopate for Western Europe has been constituted. Since the ROCs in Italy were not recognized by the Italian authorities, while the Archepiscopate in Paris was recognized by the French authorities, the ROCs in Italy were placed under the jurisdiction of the Archepiscopate in Paris (Nicolae, 2003: 12). However, this did not bring the expected results i.e. official recognition. A year later on December 4<sup>th</sup>, 1995 the Romanian Orthodox priests gathered under the presidency of Pr. Valdman in Milan to agree on the Status of the ROC in Italy and Southern Europe. They decided to form a vicariat in Italy with the title "Romanian Orthodox Archepiscopate in Italy and Italian Switzerland" (BOR, 1995, CXIII, 7-12: 48-49) and to remain as an Eparchial vicariate until an archbishop is nominated. This decision that defined all the Romanian Orthodox parishes in Italy as the branches of the Archepiscopate without a separate juridical personality has been recognized by the Italian state (Nicolae, 2003: 13). The Vicariate had two decanates; Milan was the centre of the North and Rome was the centre of the central and southern decanate and Pr. Valdman became the Vicar of the ROC for Italy (BOR, 2006, CXXIV, 7-12: 97).<sup>332</sup> A year later discussions took place at the canonical commission of the Holy Synod in Bucharest about the unclear situation regarding the ROCs in Italy whether to create an Archepiscopate for Italy and Southern Europe or to put the Vicariate under the jurisdiction of the Archepiscopate in Paris (BOR, 1996, CXIV, 7-12: 421). Finally, new statute of the Archepiscopate in Paris has been adopted on November 25<sup>th</sup>, 1996 and the limits of its jurisdiction have been redefined. According to this new formulation France, Italy, Spain, Ireland, Great Britain, Iceland, Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland came under its jurisdiction (Ibid: 442).<sup>333</sup>

Since the Italian state did not grant recognition to the ROC yet, the ROCs in Italy remained under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan See in Paris and the ordination of the priests and the opening of new parish churches were coordinated by Paris. However, the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>332</sup> Pr. Traian Valdman played a pivotal role in the organization of the Romanian Orthodox communities and opening of new parishes in Italy. As the first Romanian Orthodox priest, Pr. Valdman indulged in and took active part in ecumenical dialogue. He was the president of Council of Christian Churches in Milan starting from 2003 with a mandate for four years (Nicolae, 2003: 17).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>333</sup> The title of the Archepiscopate in Paris has been changed to the "Romanian Orthodox Archepiscopate of Western and Southern Europe" (BOR, CXV, 1-6, Jan-June 1997, 318). On 29 November 1997 an eparchial assembly has been organized in Paris for the election of the Metropolitan and Pr. Iosif Pop has been elected as the Metropolitan of the See in Paris (BOR CXV, 7-12 July-December 1997, 355-6). Metropolitan Iosif Pop was enthroned on March 15<sup>th</sup>, 1998 in Paris (BOR, CXVI, 7-12, July-December 1998, 451).

rapid increase in the number of the parishes in Italy and growth of the Romanian Orthodox community led to the initiatives for the reorganization of the ROCs in Italy as a diocese. On February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2007 at the extraordinary assembly convened by the Metropolitan See in Paris with the participation of all parish priests from Italy and from other countries under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitanate,<sup>334</sup> headed by Metropolitan Joseph (Iosif), Pr. Siluan has been elected as the only candidate for the position of Diocesan Bishop for Italy.<sup>335</sup> Pr. Siluan has been the vicar of Italy since 2004<sup>336</sup> and was coordinating the activities of churches in Italy, Spain and Portugal (Nicolae, 2003: 8). Therefore, as Pr. Lupăştean expresses, during this time he had the chance to get first hand information about the "Italian reality" (2008: 2).

The Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate has elected Ps. Siluan as the Diocesan Bishop of Italy on March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2008.<sup>337</sup> The enthronization ceremony took place on May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008 and Pr. Siluan has become the Diocesan Bishop of Italy. In his message on the occasion of the enthronization of Pr. Siluan, Patriarch Daniel stated that the new bishop will have the responsibility to cultivate common Latin culture and good relations between the ROC and the Catholic Church as well as Romanian and Italian people (Pr. Lupăștean, 2008: 6). He emphasized that the mission of the Church should be to propose solutions for pastoral-spiritual and social problems that the Church and the Romanian Orthodox people encounter within the new migration context.

On September 7<sup>th</sup> 2008 the Divine Liturgy has been celebrated at 10.00 in one of the ROCs in Rome at Via Ardetina, 1741 for the inauguration of the Romanian Diocese in Italy. The President of Romania, Traian Basescu has also attended the liturgy. This is the first official visit of the President to the Romanian Orthodox community living in Rome and the areas in the vicinity of Rome. The liturgy was conducted by Metropolitan Iosif (Pop) of Paris. The Diocesan Bishops Pr. Siluan (Span) of Italy and Pr. Timotei (Lauran) of Spain

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>334</sup> Besides those in Italy, the ROCs in France, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, UK, Ireland, Netherlands and Belgium fall under the jurisdiction of the under the jurisdiction of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolitan Church of Western and Southern Europe. http://www.mitropolia-paris.ro.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>335</sup> Before the election of the new bishop, Pr. Valdman was arguing that the new bishop needs to be a person who can listen to the faithful, establish dialogue with the Romanian Orthodox community as well as other churches, particularly the Catholic Church in Italy. Therefore, he needs to be an "open person, with an ecumenical spirit".Marco Baratto (Associazione Dacia) (28 February 2008) "Una diocesi Ortodossa in Italia", *il Cittadino*, 27.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>336</sup> Pr. Traian Valdman was in charge of the vicariate. On July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2004 Metropolitan Iosif has nominated Pr.Siluan as the vicar of Italy and representative of the ROC in Italy and administrative, pastoral and missionary head of the ROCs in Italy (BOR, CXXIV, 7-12, July-December 2006, 99).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>337</sup> <u>http://www.mitropolia-paris.ro/?subject=pssiluan/index&lang=ro</u>

and Portugal, priests and faithful from parish churches in Italy have participated the liturgy.<sup>338</sup>

There are 76 parish churches and two monasteries under the jurisdiction of the Diocese. The Diocesan Bishop's new See in Rome has been opened very recently with the funding from the Romanian state. A big building has been bought and transformed to be used as the See. The See is the seat of the central administration. In addition to the central administration and secretariat there are 9 sectors and 18 departments for the administration of the Diocese. The pastoral-liturgical sector is headed by Pr. Gheorghe Verzea of Padua. There is a separate sector for the church administration and 2 inspectorates, one for North and one for South Italy. There are also 2 other sectors for catechism and missionary work and cultural and youth affairs. Pr. Milăsan of Bolzano, who is a very young priest himself, is in charge of the youth. Economic affairs sector has three sections. Pr. Milăşan Roşu of Santa Croce Church in Turin is responsible for the economic affairs. Pr. Gavril Popa is in charge of material issues and Pr. Mihai Oancea is in charge of workshops for the production religious objects. Another sector is in charge of icon workshops. The socialphilanthropic affairs sector has 4 sub sections; social work, family, homeless, hospitals and prisons. The sector for dialog has 2 subsections; Inter-Orthodox and Inter-Christian subsection and Dialogue with the authorities. 2 priests are in charge of the dialogue with the authorities, one in Rome and one in Milan. The one in Milan is headed by Pr. Traian Valdman. Pr. Ioan LupăStean of Trento is in charge of the last sector for information, mass media and public relations. The Romanian Orthodox parish churches in Italy are organized into 10 zones, each under an archpriest.<sup>339</sup> In August 2008 the new website of the Diocese has also been launched to communicate the information to the Romanian Orthodox people in Italy.<sup>340</sup>

As Pr. Lupăștean states, the enthronement of the Diocesan Bishop and the inauguration of the Diocesan See is a very crucial development for the life and future of Romanian Orthodox community in Italy:

This means a lot because...yes. Because it means that there is a very strong community. There is a community that has taken root here. There are many, 85 parishes here. Therefore, there are many. Also the number of the faithful is very very high. They talk about a million but let's not exaggerate [he starts laughing].

<sup>338</sup> http://www.lri.it; http://episcopia-italiei.it

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>339</sup> Trento is in the 5<sup>th</sup> zone under the arch-priest Pr. Codrea in Verona.

<sup>340</sup> http://episcopia-italiei.it

But anyway they are many. I always say, this means that slowly it starts to put a very strong base here. Because the people...we put the base, the people put the base. There are people that want to stay here or stayed here, are here for many years, they have created, they are creating a new life here and in their lives they have not changed their religion.[...]<sup>341</sup>

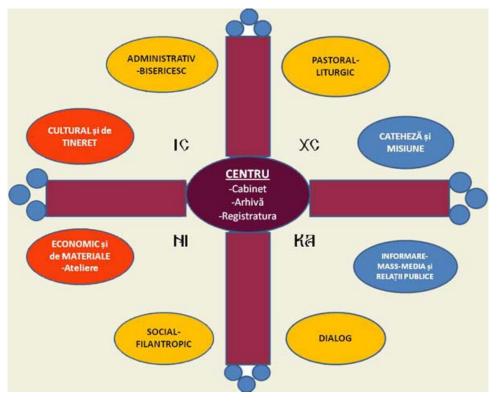


Figure 5. Administrative Structure of the Romanian Orthodox Diocese in Italy<sup>342</sup>

The formation of the Diocese will have positive implications in terms of improving the functioning of the parishes and communication within the network of the ROCs in Italy. Pr. Roşu thinks that the inauguration of the Diocese will make an important contribution in terms of the organization of the parish churches and activities and precipitating social integration of Romanians in Italy, while further improving the ecumenical relations. The other priests also share the view that it will have important consequences regarding the relations with the Italian state and the Vatican. The fact that the ROCs in Italy have a representative that knows closely the needs and the problems of the Romanians would be better than being represented by the Metropolitan Church in Paris:

Because by being a diocese we can represent ourselves in the dialogue with the local institutions in Italy and we can form our own laws in accordance with our

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>341</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview with Pr. Lupăştean.

<sup>342</sup> http://episcopia-italiei.it

needs. Because those in Paris have their own particular issues and we have our own.  $^{\rm 343}$ 

Pr. Verzea is also content to have an interlocutor for the relations with the Italian state.

I am very optimistic because with the new entitled Episcope because it is just a few weeks...months ago he was only the vicar. He depended always on the Metropolitan in Paris for his decisions. Now he will have more authority. Or rather he will have absolute authority. And then he can precipitate somethings and not some other. We have problems in the parishes and suggestions. I believe that it is a very very good thing.<sup>344</sup>

After the election of the Diocesan bishop, the next step would be the official recognition of the ROC. The main obstacle for the well-functioning of the ROCs' network is the issue of official recognition of the Romanian Orthodox Diocese by the Italian state (Piovano, 2001: 90). While the Italian state recognizes the Orthodox churches under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, there is no a concordat between the ROC and the Italian state. The ROC is critical of this fact given the ROCs and their adherents in Italy are much greater in number. The official recognition of the Metropolitanate in Venice of the Patriarchate in Istanbul gave it the right to represent all the Orthodox living in Italy and the Orthodox Churches, including the Romanian Orthodox Vicariate. However, the Vicariate wanted to be recognized as a separate entity. During his visit to the Vatican and Italy the Patriarch Teoctist in 2002 has brought the issue to the attention of the state and church authorities. Since 2000, the Orthodox Churches in Italy have initiated a dialogue with the Catholic Church for the signing of a concordat with the Italian state (BOR, 2006, CXXIV, 7-12: 97-8), which is not concluded yet.

When the concordat will be signed, there will be important changes for the Romanian Orthodox parishes in Italy. Since the Romanians in Italy will be able to pay 0.008 of their taxes to the ROCs, the parish churches will have more funding to better organize the parish life and activities. The priest will also have their own salaries.<sup>345</sup> Furthermore, a concordat will give the priests the right to access to the hospitals, prisons, military barracks and the certificates given by the Church will be recognized. While the priests can enter institutes it is on informal bases:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>343</sup> Interview with Pr. Babula at Sfântul Leontie ROC in Ivrea on March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>344</sup> Interview with Pr. Verzea at Saint Apostles Peter and Paul ROC in Padua on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>345</sup> Interview with Pr. Milăşan.

-Because in prison I can only go with with....with the Catholic Church. I can enter like this. For the hospitals I can enter, but it is not a free access. We can once is for sure, once a week. I go if the faithful ask me to go. Not the hospital, the faithful.<sup>346</sup>

- Is it possible to say the most urgent problem for the ROC in Italy is official recognition?

- Yes yes yes. A total recognition. Now we are recognized, but partially. This is a big problem since a long time, because we are here, but the documents, all the other things are arranged in time. We did not know what to do. They [the Italian authorities] do not have everything. Like this, slowly. This is the biggest, without any doubt without any doubt.

- Does this mean the churches will have funding?

- Exactly but not only that. We enter with another, we can say...with another face, we can say. It will be also us, because now if you look at the documents are other, but then it will be also us.

- It will be possible to go to the hospitals, prisons without a pri...

- Yes exactly, exactly. Even now we go, even now we go. But like this we have an understanding with the doctor, with also the police, we go, we have an understanding. But from that point on everything will be official.<sup>347</sup>

[...] now they are doing the formalities to have the recognition. It is obvious that it will be particularly significant at the social level. Because at the moment when the church is officially recognized, the Orthodox priest will have the right to go to the prisons for religious assistance, to go to schools, to teach, teaching ... to go to hospitals. We go anyway. Because the Italian society is an open society. The Catholic Church accommodates us well. It realizes that the Orthodox that are in, need this but today what we do we do as a result of the nicety of the majority church. But not in an official way. I don't know how to put it, no? Instead, the recognition would bring other ... how to say, other rights, but certainly will give birth to other duties, which means the Orthodox priest has to come down the altar ... to go and search those in the prison, those in the hospital, those who are in difficult situations.<sup>348</sup>

While for the time being the support of the Catholic Church and good will of the Italian officers and people facilitates the access of the priests to the hospitals and prisons, the Romanian Orthodox priests want to have legally recognized rights in order to have more freedom to act and organize themselves in Italy.<sup>349</sup> Obviously, the organization of the ROCs in Italy is mainly shaped and defined by the resources that the ROCs have at their disposal mainly with the contributions of the Romanian migrant, and to a lesser extent with the contributions of the Patriarchate, and recently with funds and the support from the Romanian state. However, non-recognition of the ROCs by the Italian authorities and support of the Catholic Church play important roles in constraining and extending resources

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>346</sup> Interview with Pr. Matei at the Saint Martyr Lucia ROC in Venice-Mestre on July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

 $<sup>^{347}</sup>$  2<sup>nd</sup> Interview with Pr. Lupăștean.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>348</sup> Interview with Pr. Valdman at the Pentecost ROC in Milan on July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>349</sup> Interview with Pr. Matei.

available to the ROCs in Italy and have an impact on their functioning and transnational agency.

## VI.2.Institutional Actors in the Romanian-Italian Transnational Space and their Relations with the Romanian Orthodox Church

The presence of the ROCs in Italy is a recent phenomenon and through migration the ROC gains a new form of agency and access to an enlarged transnational space.<sup>350</sup> While it is the principal actor, it is not the sole actor within the Romanian-Italian transnational space. There are other institutional actors such as the other Romanian churches, other Orthodox Churches, the Catholic Church as well as the late comers such as the Romanian state and the associations.

**VI.2.1. Other Romanian Churches**: Organizational differences among religious institutions impact the organization of religious migrant networks and institutions. A comparison between the ROC and the other Romanian churches shows that the ROC, rather than playing a proactive role in the migration process, followed the faithful and after entering into the Italian religious landscape managed to organize itself in a short period of time and succeeded in establishing a well-connected and functioning network of parish churches.

The Pentecostals were among the pioneers in Romanian migration. The contacts they had with the Pentecostals in different parts of Western Europe facilitated migration, finding a place to work and stay and get integrated into the new setting (Ciobanu, 2008: 61-2). The members of the Adventist, Baptist or Pentecostal denominations in Romania had links and networks abroad that facilitated emigration from their localities earlier than the Orthodox community, since the Orthodox people lacked the religious networks the other denominations had. Conversion to the Protestant denominations was also used as a strategy by Romanians to facilitate migration (Ibid: 11). In the case of the Protestant denominations the religious networks prevailed over the family ones (Ibid: 12).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>350</sup> The main organization of the ROCs in diaspora is as follows: The Romanian Orthodox Metropolitan Church of Western and Southern Europe in Paris, Romanian Orthodox Metropolitan Church for Germany and Central Europe, The Romanian Orthodox Episcopate in the US, The Autonomous Metropolitan Church for Besarabia in Chisinau and Romanian Orthodox Episcopate Dacia Felix in Serbia-Montenegro. http://www.patriarhia.ro/Organizare/structura.html#diaspora

The Adventist network played a key role in migration from Romania to Spain. The connections it provided were instrumental in facilitating migration journey to and settlement in Spain (Sandu, 2000: 82-3). The migration network from Dobroteşti to Spain started in 1990 with two Adventist brothers (Ibid: 98). Two main destinations in Spain are Almeria and Madrid (Şerban and Grigoraş, 2000: 101). Cosmin Radu's (2001) work also shows the involvement of the Adventist Church in different stages of the migration process from Teleorman region to Spain. Since during the communist era, the Adventists did not have the right to hold weekly masses, the adherents opted for jobs with flexible working hours. One of the main occupations they preferred was the construction sector. After the fall of communism, many Adventists immigrated to Madrid, which offered opportunities for construction workers (Şerban and Grigoraş, 2000: 116) and to Coslada area (close to Madrid), which attracted the Romanian Adventists with its booming construction industry (Sandu, 2005: 563).

The Adventist network does not only connect Romania and Spain. The Adventist priests take care of different communities in Romania and they play a key role in transmission of information among different communities (Şerban and Grigoraş, 2000: 115). Since the Adventist network has a strict control over its members and it is obligatory for the members to attend the mass regularly on Saturday, the circulation of resources and information within the Adventist network is faster and efficient (Ibid: 115).<sup>351</sup> While Adventist migration was through a very well-structured network up until 1999, the Orthodox Romanians were migrating through family networks, which were loose networks as compared to the Adventist one. Only after 1999 Romanian Orthodox migration grew to a big scale and networks become more structured and intense (Şerban and Grigoraş, 2000: 117). The differences between the two faiths and timing of the migratory waves created the difference between two networks.

Similar to its active involvement in migration process between Romania and Spain, neo-Protestant churches and networks are active in the migration from Romania to Italy. Based on his fieldwork in *Marginea*, Cingolani talks about the role of the Pentecostal Church in the migration process from Romania to Turin. Pr. Matei, whose grandmother has converted into the Pentecostalism when his father was a child, states that the Pentecostals arrived in Romania, especially after the World War II, because during the war many

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>351</sup> The Adventists not only helped their own adherents but also the Orthodox arriving from Romania (Sandu, 2000: 82-3).

soldiers went to different places out of Romania and they met different people and faiths and some carried these new faiths back into Romania. Then the missionaries arrived.<sup>352</sup> The Pentecostalism arrived at *Marginea* following the end of the World War II through German soldiers (Cingolani, 2008: 2). However, it was the fall of the Ceausescu regime that led to the sudden increase in the number of the Pentecostal Churches in Romania. Additionally, the ties of the Pentecostals with other churches all around Europe and financial support and collaboration they get from the Netherlands and the US and immigration to different European countries, particularly to Turin in Italy, consolidate the Pentecostal Church and the network among its believers within and out of Romania (Ibid: 5-6).

Referring to the study conducted by a team of researchers headed by Prof. Luigi Berzano, Chiaramonte states that 10 years ago in 1997 there were already 10 Pentecostal churches in Turin. Today the number has increased considerably due to immigration. Among the new ones, there are 3 Romanian Pentecostal Churches, which did not exist in 1997 (2008: 17). The Romanian Pentecostal Church, the Church of Betania, was opened in 2002 and it has connections with the other 2 Romanian Pentecostal churches; namely Betel (founded in 2000/2001) and Eben Ezer. There is a 4<sup>th</sup> church that has been opened recently. The pastor of the church states that there are around 3,000 Romanian Pentecostals in Turin (Ibid: 67), even though the researcher observed that there are around 830 members of the 3 churches (Ibid: 83).

The Pentecostal Church has been a central element in the material and symbolic organization of daily life of the Romanian Pentecostals in Turin (Cingolani, 2008: 20). Being a member of the Pentecostal Church is provides the means for having access to and increasing the social capital and facilitates integration (Ibid: 21-2). With the 1998 amnesty, many irregular Romanian migrants have been regularized, which facilitates organization and practices of the church in Turin. There are transnational ties between the Church in Turin and *Marginea*. The priest in *Marginea* visits the church in Turin regularly, participates in the church activity and interacts with the believers through confession and gives them moral support (Ibid: 24). The priest of the Pentecostal Church in *Marginea* argues that the faith prepares the believers for the migration journey and when the migrants return back they will help building a new *Marginea* (Ibid: 31).<sup>353</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>352</sup> Interview with Pr. Matei.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>353</sup> There are certain elements that make the Romanian Pentecostals distinct from other Pentecostals in Italy. In terms of rite, the religious music, prayer and language, the Romanian Pentecostals are very close to the Romanian Orthodox liturgy (Cingolani, 2008: 8). While African churches allow women to be ministers within the church organization, Brazilian and

Stan's work reveals the active role played by the Catholic Church in Romania in initiating and sustaining migration networks to Italy (2005: 9). Stan has conducted fieldwork in two villages in Neamt County in Romania; in Temeseni where the majority of the population is Catholic and Piatra, which is an Orthodox village (Ibid: 3). Deindustrialization period that Romania went through after 1989 had a big impact on both villages and working abroad became the main socio-economic strategy. Italy became the main destination country for migrants from both villages. However, emigration from the Catholic village followed a different course as compared to that of the Orthodox village. The migratory networks from the Catholic village connected the village with big cities in Italy such as Rome and Turin, while the Orthodox village was connected to smaller towns and localities in Italy (Ibid: 5). Interviews with the Catholic villagers, who had migration experience, reveal the fact that they based their migration strategies on the Catholic Church's networks. The Church provided support in finding a place to work and stay in the destination country. "Delegate priests" visited the countries or localities that the villagers migrated in order to give material as well as spiritual support to their adherents in a new context. The support given by the Church better positioned the Catholic migrants as compared to the Orthodox migrants within the transnational migration space. Through its support the Church could also extend its social control over its adherents in a new setting. Since the Orthodox Church was less active in the organization of the migration process, it was the family networks that the Orthodox migrants depended (Ibid: 9). Both migrant communities had sent monetary support to their local churches in Romania (Ibid: 13).

In addition to the fact that Romanians were immigrating to a predominantly Catholic country, the differences between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches' way of organizing their relationship with their church-goers played a role in their migration patterns and settlement practices. As Rev. Prof. Stan states:

They never tell the parish. Do you know what happens with immigrants with the Catholic Church? Each Catholic believer or member of the Church has a file in in the parish. And that file is replaced at the other end, no? No Catholic can go without permission or without his parish priest knowing it. Everywhere in the world. We have not yet developed such a system. This is why there is a difference

Romanian churches do not. Romanian churches like the other two use singing during the religious services, but not dancing. Different from the African and Brazilian Pentecostals, Romanians show a more controlled and restrained mood within the church. Different from the other Pentecostal Churches, Romanian women cover their hairs in the church and in two of the churches they sit separately (Chiaramonte, 2008: 84), as is the case in the Orthodox tradition.

between the policy of the Roman Catholic Church and the Romanian or the Russian Orthodox Church. We don't send files; we don't have files for each believer.<sup>354</sup>

While the Catholic and the Pentecostal Churches keep a very detailed archive of their members, the ROCs in Romania keep a record of baptisms, marriages and funerals (Cingolani, 2008: 24, note 28).

Besides differences with the other churches in terms of organization and practices, the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate was caught unprepared for the sudden political, economic and social changes and lacked the resources to assist migrants. This could be stated as one of the reasons for initial reactive stance of the ROC. The establishment of parishes in Italy was rather a spontaneous response to the needs of the Romanian community that arrived in Italy with large scale migration in a short period of time. Pr. Mircea Uţa,<sup>355</sup> who is dealing with the relations with the Romanian diaspora, argues that Romanian migration and transformations it introduces to the Romanian society is rather a new phenomenon and an important challenge for the Patriarchate. He defines Italy as "dangerous" since it attracts young Romanians given the linguistic, cultural and geographical proximity of Italy and Romania. Pr. Valdman also underscores the sudden loss incurred due to immigration abroad from the Church's point of view and unorganized nature of Romanian migration:

It is a big loss, the new generation is lost. The population of Romania has fallen down a few millions. From 23 millions it became 22, 21, 20 and probably it will go down. This is a clear loss. The population that does not know how to keep itself, the mother who does not know how to keep her own kids means that certainly she leaves them. And we cannot talk about a regularized emigration, because the Romanian state has done nothing for the immigrants. Now someone wakes up and wants to organize immigration. It is better if late than never. But these people have left and the experience in the field teaches us that in many cases the members of a family came and then they have brought also their relatives, their countrymen and slowly at more personal level. Nothing was organized, not even, how to say, to canalize in the positive sense, to help the lives of the people. But this is a loss for our case, Romania and a loss for the Romanian Church. Instead of a church of 20 millions it will be a church of 15 million of believers. For this reason, its consistence falls, is diminished.<sup>356</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>354</sup> Interview with Rev. Prof. Alexandru I. Stan, who is a professor of cannon law and a priest, at his office/home on March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>355</sup> Interview with Pr. Mircea Uta at his office at the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate in Bucharest on March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>356</sup> Interview with Pr. Valdman.

While the presence of churches as in the case of immigration to Milan and Turin and the presence of some Orthodox priests as in the case of Rome<sup>357</sup> played an important role in attracting the Romanian migrants to these cities, it was the Romanian transnational migrants who have pulled the church into the transnational migration space. However, as stated by Pr. Uţa, the presence of the ROCs in Italy is indicative of the fact that the ROC is actively involved and is taking the challenge posed by migration seriously.<sup>358</sup>

The relationship between the ROC and other Romanian churches in Italy is affected by the way the churches relate to each other in Romania. Even though there are contacts among the churches, the level of collaboration is limited. Pr. Roşu of the Santa Croce ROC in Turin states that they have contacts with the Romanian Pentecostals and also the Romanian Catholic Church,<sup>359</sup> but it is more at cultural level, which means rather than relations at organizational level they have contacts as "Romanians". He argues that they have personal and friendly relations with the other priests and they collaborate for social causes. Recently, they have collected money together to send a deceased person back to Romania and for the funeral.

According to Pr. Matei the Romanian Pentecostal Churches are not willing to have relations with the ROCs. He argues that ecumenical dialogue is among the institutionalized churches as well as the Protestants, Reformed Churches and Lutherans. Pr. Matei defines the Pentecostalism as a movement rather than a church, which has many diverse branches and argues that the Pentecostal or neo-Protestant churches are less interested in the ecumenical dialogue. Moreover, he is critical of proselytizing attempts of neo-Protestant churches in Romania. Pr. Lupăștean states that there are Romanians, who have converted to the Pentecostalism before coming to Italy, while some convert after their arrival. He thinks that as long as they clearly inform people of their activities conversion would not create big problems among the Churches.<sup>360</sup> However, in diaspora the presence of the Romanian

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>357</sup> At the beginning of the 90s, an Italian Orthodox priest, working in *Campo di Carne*, played an important role in the creation of ties and networks between *Focşani* (another town in Romania, close to the border with Moldavia) and Rome and provision of assistance for the newcomers. According to 2004 figures of Caritas, there are 66,411 regular Romanians in Rome (Cingolani and Piperno, 2005: 6).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>358</sup> Interview with Pr. Uţa.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>359</sup> Migration of the Romanian Catholics to Italy started after 1990s. The majority of them are from Iaşi and to a lesser extent from Bucharest and Satu Mare. The pastoral coordinator of the Romanian Catholic community is Bishop Anton Lucaci since 2002, who was actively involved in the organization of the Pope's visit to Romanian in May 1999. He is also in charge of the Romanian section of Radio Vatican. In Rome there are Romanian Catholic parishes. <u>http://www.romcatroma.ro/storia.html</u>. In Turin there is one Romanian Catholic Church and the priest of the parish church is Gheorghe Miclaus. <u>http://roma.mae.ro/index.php?lang=it&id=63702.</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>360</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview with Pr. Lupăștean.

Pentecostal Churches is at a small scale and in case it starts growing through conversion, it might lead to problems between the ROCs and the Pentecostals.

Besides the Romanian Pentecostal Churches there are the Greek-Catholic Churches in some parts of Italy. The Greek-Catholic Churches get support from the Catholic Church, which facilitate their organization in Italy. Unresolved issues between the Orthodox and the Greek-Catholic Churches in Romania also have implications for their co-existence within the Italian religious landscape. Rather than their differences their similarities seems to be the problem. The liturgy celebrated in both churches is very similar and in some parts of Transylvania it would be very difficult to guess whether it is an Orthodox or Greek-Catholic Church.<sup>361</sup> The ROC suspects that the Greek-Catholic Church is trying to benefit from this similarity to gain new adherents to its Church from among the Orthodox community. This suspicion is also expressed by some Romanian Orthodox priests in Italy. Pr. Matei of the ROC in Venice-Mestre was complaining about some Greek-Catholic Churches, which do not clearly state that they are Greek-Catholic. They write at the door of the church "Here we hold liturgy in Romanian" but do not clearly state to which church they belong and some Romanian Orthodox go to these churches without realizing it is a Greek-Catholic mass. The priest thinks that by this way they are hoping that some people would convert into the Greek-Catholicism. To avoid confusion the Romanian Orthodox calendar sold at the ROCs in Italy has all the addresses of the ROCs in Italy. This serves the purpose of informing the faithful, which churches to go when they visit another Italian city. Therefore, the faithful should be careful about which churches to attend. Long-lasting divisions and problems among the churches within Romania are carried to the new landscape and reproduced, which makes collaboration difficult.

**VI.2.2. Other Orthodox Churches:** Besides Romanian churches that are founded in Italy throughout Romanian migration process, there are other Orthodox Churches, which have emerged following the influx of immigrants from Eastern Europe and Russia in Italy. The Romanian Orthodox priests state that there are friendly relations and dialogue with other Orthodox Churches at institutional level and they are part of the ecumenical dialogue initiatives in their cities. They also hold liturgical services together at the week of prayer for the unity of the Christians if there are other Orthodox Churches in their cities. Pr. Codrea of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>361</sup> I would like to thank Iuliana Conovici for this information.

the ROC in Verona states that even though some Russian priests do not speak Italian well and this creates some obstacles in communication, there are good relations between the two Orthodox Churches. He also goes to visit the Metropolitan of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Venice on certain occasions such as Christmas and Easter. Pr. Roşu has been elected by the Romanian, Russian and Greek Orthodox Churches in Turin as the representative of the Orthodox communities at the platform for dialogue of religions in Turin, which was established just before the 2006 Olympics with the initiative of the mayor, contribute to the preparations for the Olympics.<sup>362</sup>

The liturgical language is one of the main elements that differentiate different Orthodox Churches. Since each Orthodox Church celebrates the liturgy in its own national language, it becomes difficult for non-national Orthodox to participate in the liturgy and this impedes the interaction among different Orthodox communities and leads to the emergence of different Orthodox parish churches in the same city or locality. For instance even though there is a Romanian Orthodox community in Trento, Russian speaking Orthodox community wants to have their own church and according to the information from Bernardo Clesio Centre in Trento they have asked for a Church. The Centre first thought about asking the Romanian community to share the Church of San Marco with the Russian speaking community. However, they have dropped the idea due to differences in liturgy times and other issues. When I went to meet the priest of the Russian Orthodox Church in Vicenza, who was from Moldova himself, there was another priest from Moldova, who has been ordained as the future priest of the Russian speaking Orthodox community in Trento. When asked about the issue, Pr. Lupăştean said:

- That speak Russian.

-Yes yes yes, that speak Russian. The Russians are 5 5 [he keeps on showing me his five fingers with an amused expression on his face]. You can have 3 parishes, I can have 3 parishes. I see that even for me it is difficult, they maintain me here, they manage with the situation. Imagine if comes another one [priest]. He will come two times a year for something for the kids. As I have said at the beginning there are no problems. It is enough that they are clear and everyone knows, where, when and how they do it. If you do something quickly it does not matter, in Russian language they do it slowly, there are no problems. For me it is enough that it is something legal. There are not things that are hidden. If everything is untroubled,

<sup>-</sup>Yes yes yes. Yes but you know, everybody wants, everybody wants but they have to have the people. In theory in theory there are 5 Russians in Trento [he raises his right hand and moves his fingers to show me five]. The others are Ukrainians, Moldovans...

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>362</sup> Interview with Pr. Roşu.

everything is OK like here, everything is clean...At this moment we do this, at this hour...all the discourse, it is OK like this. Not...because it needs to be clear. Also for us, between us, also for the faithful to know. Look, if one wants to listen in Russian language for me there is no problem, if someone wants to go, he will never go but if he wants to  $go...^{363}$ 

It could be inferred from the above given statement that despite good relations among the Orthodox Churches within the Italian landscape, the fragmentation in the Orthodox world is reproduced in the Italian context and all the Orthodox Churches are trying warily to keep their faithful tied to their churches, since they form the base on which their churches are constructed.

**VI.2.3.** The Catholic Church: Another very important institutional actor within the Romanian-Italian transnational space is the Italian Catholic Church. While the Romanian migrants played a pivotal role in the transplantation of the ROCs in Italy, it would not be possible without the support and good will of the Catholic Church in Italy. It is the universalistic stance of the Catholic Church that makes it reach out to migrant communities in Italy, which leads to the provision of assistance to migrants from their arrival to settlement in Italy (Frisina and Cancellieri, 2008: 32). As the majority church and given the Vatican's presence in Italy, the Catholic Church has the decisive power in terms of formulation of relationships with other religious minorities in Italy. Two documents, Decree on Ecumenism Unitatis Redintegratio at the Vatican Council II on November 21<sup>st</sup>, 1964 and the council statement *Nostra Aetate* on October 28<sup>th</sup>, 1965 have paved the way for more open stance towards ecumenical dialogue with other Christian churches and this change inspires the relationship of the Catholic Church with other migrant religious bodies (Cancellieri and Longo, 2008: 23). Fondazione Migrantes not only provides religious assistance to migrants in different cities in Italy but also organizes cultural festivals. This support and collaboration can take different forms and can be more vigorous depending on the support from the local Catholic bishops. Another Catholic aid agency, the Caritas is also a very important religious institution not only for the Romanian migrants but all the migrant groups in Italy.<sup>364</sup> Some of the Romanian Orthodox priests also confirm the fact that their parish members seek aid at Caritas.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>363</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview with Pr. Lupăștean.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>364</sup> Out of 1464 immigrants and 73 nationalities that have applied to the CedAS (*Centri di Ascolto e Solidarietà*) Trento and Rovereto in 2007, the Romanian migrants take the lead, who are followed by Moroccans and Moldovans. <u>http://www.webdiocesi.chiesacattolica.it/</u>

Non-Muslim and especially Christian migrant groups do not encounter serious problems in having access to or founding places of worship due to collaboration of the Catholic Church (Cancellieri and Longo, 2008: 22). Good ecumenical relations and collaboration with the Catholic Church played a considerable role in the growth of the ROCs and expansion of resources at the disposal of the ROCs in Italy. All the churches used by the ROCs belong to the Catholic Church and given by the local authorities of the Catholic Church, with the exception of one of the ROCs in Rome, which uses an Anglican Church (Introvigne, 2001:112). The Romanian communities either do not pay any rent or pay a very symbolic amount and pay for the water, gas and electricity they consume. Some of the Romanian communities have the churches for their community's use exclusively. It was the case in most of the churches I have visited such as the Church in Milan, two churches in Turin, Padua, Venice-Mestre, and Bologna;<sup>365</sup> while in Bolzano, Trento, Ivrea the communities use the churches for only Sunday prayers and on certain occasions such as Christmas or Easter. Therefore they are "part-time Orthodox Churches". However, regardless of the fact that the churches are full-time or part-time churches, the Romanian communities are the guests of the Catholic Churches and the Catholic Church's support alleviates the obstacles that arise due to non-recognition of the ROCs by Italian authorities. Besides provision of the worshipping place, up until the opening of the ROCs in Italy, the Catholic Church welcomed the Romanian faithful that wanted to attend the Sunday mass and other religious services. If there is no Orthodox church in their city or town some Romanian Orthodox migrants still go to the Catholic Church. The Romanian Orthodox priests consider this solution acceptable:

[...] because there is no different God for the Catholic Church. There is respect for the Catholic Church. But they don't take communion. They light candles, pray, and assist the liturgy; the Catholic mass but they maintain their faith.<sup>366</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>365</sup> When I have visited the church in Verona, the community was using an old Catholic church, which has been converted into a museum and later on given to the use of the Romanian community. Even though the Church was given to full-time use of the Romanian community in Verona, since it was a museum-church they have decided to keep the icons and the iconostasis only for the prayer times and remove them, when there is no prayer. The priest was also telling me that the frescos within the church were very beautiful but they were baroque style, which did not seem to go well with the Orthodox icons. In order to respect the ambiance of the church, the priest told me that they were removing the icons after prayers. During the interview with Pr. Milăşan in Bolzano, who has been the deacon of the Church in Verona before his ordination, I have been told that the community had to move to another church for the restoration of museum. However, I do not have information on whether they share the new church with the Catholic community or not.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>366</sup> Interview with Pr. Matei.

Ecumenical dialogue and relations between the the two Churches improved considerably due to Pope John Paul II's visit to Bucharest on May 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>, 1999 and Patriarch Teoctist's visit to Rome in October 2002 (*News Bulletin*, August 2007: 9). As stated by the *News Bulletin* of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate these reciprocal visits had a positive impact on the way the Romanian Orthodox is perceived in Italy and Spain (Ibid). All the Romanian Orthodox priests I have talked to have expressed their appreciation for the support of the Catholic Church and good ecumenical relations at local level, which facilitated the emergence and spread of the ROCs in Italian religious landscape. Pr. Lupăștean argues that the presence of the ROCs in Italy makes an important contribution to the ecumenical dialogue between the ROC and the Catholic Church and awareness about the Orthodoxy in Italy:

Look, it is an exchange exchange of every day...exchange of gifts. If on the one hand we have a modern church, the Catholic Church, a church which is very modern, up-to-date, on the other hand we have Orthodox Church, which is traditional that binds itself. The important point is we have 1,000 years together...we try to make up [for the lost time], to find the common points in this 1,000 years. There are many saints that we have in common. There are many, we can say, traditions. There are many moments in which we find the common points. We begin to get to know more about the way in which the society has evolved in the entire West and they return to and start finding the ancient things, the things that were lost slowly. But I was saying that it is a reciprocal exchange of gifts.<sup>367</sup>

Pr. Milăşan of the ROC in Bolzano states that the encounters with the Catholic priests and ecumenical dialogue meetings allow them the chance to get to know each other and see that the things that unite them is more than the things that keep them apart. He underscores the commonalities despite certain differences:

There are not many differences because the sacraments are 7. So there are sacraments and then icons. OK their icons can also be small statues but icon is always the same, Orthodox or Catholic icon. There is only one thing that they are a little shocked to see. I am the first priest in the history of Bolzano and Alto Adige, an Orthodox priest. And all know more or less there are some small differences between the two churches. But when they see me the difference is this [he raises his hand to show the ring] and this is because I am married. They all look at me and say: Oh my God, a married priest! How come? How come?<sup>368</sup>

The week of prayer for the Christian unity towards the end of January every year is one of the main ecumenical and social activities that the ROCs take an active part within

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>367</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview with Pr. Lupăştean.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>368</sup> Interview with Pr. Milăşan.

Italian territory (Nicolae, 2003: 51). The priests also have friendly relations with the Catholic priests. For instance the new Catholic bishop of Verona has studied at the same ecumenical institute with the Romanian priest. The fact that they have studied together and have the same principles facilitated their dialogue. Almost all the priest I have talked to have come to Italy to study and during their studies they had interactions and developed friendly relations with their Catholic colleagues. It is not only the Catholic priests they establish good relations and friendship also sometimes Catholic movements such as Focolare Movement.<sup>369</sup>

The Catholic Church also shares the same convictions with the Romanian priests about similarities and things that bring the two Churches closer as could be seen in the below statement of Don Antonio Sebastiani:

From the Christian point of view, we can also accept the people that come mainly from the world of the Orthodoxy because we have the same faith in common. We can also share with them the Eucharist in situations in which they don't have the churches, the priests, they can receive confession, communion, baptism services. But ... this happens only in the case of emergency. But since the Eastern tradition is very different in rituals also in terms of praying, in terms of singing, also in terms of discipline they are very different from ours; it is fair that they turn to their own priests of the Eastern rite, which has the same meaning with our rites. But for us it is different. The Bible is the same but in the East the Gospel is sung, at the celebrations it is sung at the Latin liturgy, ours is simpler.<sup>370</sup>

As is clear from the above statement, similarities as well as the differences between two Churches in dogma, faith and practice are the reason behind the support of the Catholic Church to the ROCs in Italy. This arrangement and collaboration is also seen as a way of avoiding problems that can hamper the ecumenical dialogue and good relations:

Then from our point of view, we try not to do proselytizing, in other words not to call them to our church. We welcome them. If they want we can give them the sacraments but we try to direct them if possible to their pastor, their priest. Because it is better that they celebrate it in their own language. Then if a person from Romania or Moldavia gets married here, their children will become Catholics probably because here it is like this.<sup>371</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>369</sup> At a Focolare meeting organized in Trento they have showed a video about the two-day congress bringing different church movements all over Europe at Stuttgart, which gave me the chance to see that Pr. Codrea of the ROC in Verona had attended the Stuttgart meeting.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>370</sup> Interview with Don Antonio Sebastiani, the Diocesan Office for Ecumenism in Trento on January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2008. Don Antonio Sebastiani is the Catholic priest, who has been holding prayer services with the Romanian Orthodox priest on the Prayer Week for the Unity of Christians in the Church of San Marco and at the Cathedral as well as at the Orthodox Easter. <sup>371</sup> *Ibid*.

While the ROC is disinterested in proseltyzing, it is very keen on maintaining the Romanian Orthodox community intact in the new setting and is very sensitive about any kind of proseltyzing activity among its own flock. Pr. Valdman's words reveal the delicacy of the issue. He reacts to some statements that disregard the differences between the two churches and appreciates the stance of the Catholic Church on the matter:

"So you are Catholics, it is the same thing, come to our church". Instead you cannot resolve the problem in this simplified way. For...the problem is more more more delicate. It is obvious that the ecclesiastical authority has understood this; it knew it from the start. For this reason it gave the Orthodox the Church to pray in accordance with their own tradition, in their language.<sup>372</sup>

**VI.2.4.** The Romanian State: Besides religious institutions there are secular actors within the Romanian-Italian Orthodox space that is under construction. One of these actors is the Romanian state, which is a latecomer in terms of getting actively involved in the migration process from Romania to Italy. Large scale migration in a short period of time was difficult to cope with for the Romanian state. Rather than official channels supported by the state, many Romanians immigrated to Europe through irregular channels (Razvan, 2006: 4) and up until 2002 many Romanian citizens worked and lived in Europe with irregular status. During this period, the role of the Romanian state was more of a reactive one. Romania's first state institution the Office for Labor Migration (Oficiul pentru Migratia Fortei de Muncă) dealing with migration is established in 2001. In 2004, the Romanian government approved the National Migration Strategy and developed an interinstitutional mechanism for better implementation of the new strategy. For implementing the strategy to manage migration the institutions formulated annual strategies (Mircea and Pristavu, 2008: 303). Due to recent developments (increasing economic collaboration as well as the rise of anti-Romanian feeling due to involvement of some Romanian citizens in crimes in Italy) bilateral contacts, visits and collaboration increased between two countries. Additionally, Romanian's accession to the EU changed the legislation, perspective and stance of the Romanian state towards its citizens abroad. In order to reach out to its citizens, besides its diplomatic missions in Italy, the Romanian state collaborates with the ROCs and Romanian associations.

Up until recently, the ROCs did not receive much support from the Romanian state. They tried to organize the parishes with the help and financial contribution of the parish

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>372</sup> Interview with Pr. Valdman.

communities. While their resources are sufficient to maintain the Churches and celebrate liturgies, for organizing Sunday schools or other socio-cultural activities some lack contributions and some have to come up with interim solutions. One of the main actors that the priests expect to be more active is the Romanian state. Some of the priests are critical of the Romanian state for not doing enough for the Romanian migrants in Italy. Pr. Valdman, who is the priest of the first Romanian Orthodox parish in Italy and living in Italy for more than 30 years, is critical of the Romanian state because it "has done nothing for the immigrants." Regarding recent activities of the state he says: "Now someone wakes up and wants to organize immigration. It is better if late than never."<sup>373</sup> Other priests present similar views. Pr. Matei says that up until now he personally has not received any help from the Romanian state:

I know only that they have given help for the Diocese, to organize the See of the Bishop [...] I have not received many things, personally I, my parish has not received anything from the Romanian state. A few books on religion but these came from the Metropolitanate. I know that the Metropolitanate receives some money to organize the schools but it is, it is not enough.<sup>374</sup>

He is of the view that more can be done if the state helps the parish churches:

The schools in each parish is organized but it is not something organized in accordance with the maximum parameters because these people are volunteers and it is correct if they receive something, it is better because you stimulate them to do something. Then also you need also the materials to have a school, it is not only you do, because I have the school here in church, I put a table, one there, one there and it gives you the feeling of something temporary, trans...transitory...that I do not think that it is not serious but it is not something steady in every sense. Instead, if the state helps every parish for maybe to have a centre an oratory like the Catholics have with classrooms, with professors that come, that I know that there is a fixed program, that does everything, maybe this kind of work develops further. I am now, no, there are offers. I see that they move in this direction. Maybe they go very slowly because it does not all depend on the Romanian state. It depends also on the Italian state; it depends on many other things that exist  $[...]^{375}$ 

Pr. Codrea also argues that the state has not done much up until now and only recently he started getting one year funding for courses for the Romanian children from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania. He receives 500 euros a month, which hardly covers the materials they use for teaching and does not allow them to invest in arranging a teaching hall or classroom. He is also critical of the Romanian politicians for disregarding

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>373</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>374</sup> Interview with Pr. Matei. <sup>375</sup> *Ibid*.

the problems of migrants. In his opinion the time is crucial since the second generation is already growing up in Italy and the state has not done enough for the education of the Romanian children in diaspora. He criticizes some politicians who say:

"But in the month of August they go to Romania." So what does it have to do with it? Because in two weeks the kids do not understand anything. They cannot learn Romanian. They cannot understand the basis of their faith  $[...]^{376}$ 

However, in recent years, especially with the prospect of entry and from 2007 membership in the EU, the Romanian state started to get more actively involved in projects to help and strengthen the ties with the Romanian diaspora in Europe.<sup>377</sup> The education of the Romanian youth became an important concern also for the Romanian state. The Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has a project for the education of the Romanian youth in diaspora in Romanian language in collaboration with the ROCs in diaspora, which is yet to be implemented. Active involvement of the ROCs in the lives of the Romanian diaspora makes them important partners in dissemination of knowledge about the Romanian language, culture and identity.

The Department of the Relations with the Romanians Abroad, which is a department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, aims at providing financial and diplomatic support for Romanians living abroad and preserving and promoting their ethnic, linguistic, religious and cultural identity in accordance with the EU standards (MFA Activity Report, 2006: 1). With a draft law in 2006 the activities of the Department are now adjusted to the EU standards to make the department a "modern, European institution". The Department also held the first Conference of the Romanian Communities in Europe on October 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> 2006. The main goal was to better manage the strategic advantage for Romania within the EU context. The representatives of the Sector of External Relations of the Patriarchate, the Romanian Orthodox priests of the communities living abroad have participated in the conference as well as the Romanian authorities (BOR, 2006, CXXIV, 7-12: 100).

In providing support to Romanians abroad the department collaborates with "credible" Romanian associations and other organizations abroad, which in turn serves as a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>376</sup> Interview with Pr. Codrea.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>377</sup> The first step that the Romanian state took to get involved in the migration process was through the establishment of the Office for Labour Force Migration in 2001. The Office competes with private agencies in labour recruitment of Romanians to work abroad (Sandu et al. 2004: 10). The Department for Labour Abroad is another new state institution established in August 2004. The department is part of Ministry of Labour, Social Solidarity, and Family and it aims at improving social and economic conditions and protecting rights of Romanian citizens working abroad (Ibid: 11).

contribution to the better formulation of Romanian foreign policy with the input and creativity of the Romanians abroad. The programs that the Department funds are basically on Romanian language and culture, which includes the preservation of religious identity (MFA Activity Report, 2006: 3). Among the partners are the ROCs abroad; Metropolitan Sees in France, Germany, the US and Canada (Ibid: 5). The Department provided support to the Romanian Metropolitan Orthodox Church for Western and Southern Europe in Paris for the coordination of education and catechism centers, which are 3 in number (one in Turin, Italy) and they coordinate 25 parochial schools in France, Spain, Italy, Portugal, England, Belgium and Switzerland (Ibid). In Italy parochial schools in Genoa, Lucca, Milan, Padua, Rome, Turin and Verona were opened. With the same goal the Department extended support to the Romanian associations abroad, which have a professional attitude and promote Romanian as well as European values.<sup>378</sup>

Pr. Roşu is the coordinator of the project of the Metropolitan Church in Paris for parochial schools in Italy (Rontu, 2007: 10). Therefore, he puts a lot of emphasis on the education of the youngsters and children and resolution of their problems. The priest is of the view that children and young people should be given more space and chance to get involved into the parish life. In his parish he is trying to implement what he suggests. Within the Church complex there is a community hall used for lunch and for dance courses for children, a ping-pong table and drawings and icons made by little kids on the walls. There is another room for catechism, a small room full of toys for children to play, when their parents are participating in the liturgy. Since the Church it is not big enough to take everyone there are two different screens outside the prayer hall for those to watch and listen to the liturgy if they could not get into the prayer hall. They are planning to publish a Church journal about the activities of the church, giving more space to the kids and youngsters to express themselves:

[...] we have an association, it is called Nepsis, which was born with the blessing of our Archbishop Metropolitan Iosif of Paris, [he] took very much to heart the problems of young people, which functions also in this parish church, we are part of the founding group of this association Nepsis. With young people we organize meetings on different themes. For instance one of the themes is what it means to be a young Romanian Orthodox and to live in an Italian context, how to behave. So they were impressed by how they could express themselves in the church, talk,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>378</sup> With this goal in mind meetings took place between Italian and Romanian authorities and mayors of Turin and Tivoli on 23-30 November 2006 and first elementary Romanian schools were started in Italian public educational institutions (MFA Activity Report, 2006: 7). 6 projects of Romanian associations in Northern Italy were financed (Ibid: 13) and the Romanian state gave scholarships to young Romanians living abroad to study in Romania.

have a word. They have never talked. They were telling us "Father up until now we were used to what the priest preaches to us [...] But today we give them the right to talk. So for us it is a new fact, no? And you see this way they feel that they participate and they can express themselves and they can bring in their ideas, their contributions.<sup>379</sup>

Besides the catechism and courses in Italy, the Department of the Relations with the Romanians Abroad funded 145 projects and distributed 11,646,020.96 RON in total to different partners in 2006. Among the major projects there was the camp "Know and Accept Your Fellow" organized by the Metropolitan Church in Paris with the participation of 40 Romanian kids from Western Europe. The camp activity was consisting of workshops on Romanian folk dances, icons, woodcut, theater and excursions (MFA Action Plan, 2006: 11). 19 kids from the parish of Church of Santa Croce in Turin have participated in the Summer Camp at Tismana Monastery in Romania organized by the Metropolitan Church (Rontu, 2007: 10). For 2007 the Department decided to fund projects on education, culture, religious service and mass-media in Romanian, while it keeps on funding the parochial schools for Romanian kids in different localities abroad. Italy and Spain are the priority areas and schooling of the Romanian kids in the Romanian language is one of the main goals (MFA Activity Report, 2006: 25).

The collaboration between the Romanian state and the ROC can take different forms. Even though the Romanian state is a secular state, it is not at an equal distance to all the denominations in Romania. Since the Orthodox Church is the church of the majority, there is a close and special relationship between the state and the Church not only within Romania but also in diaspora. Due to the growing number of the Romanian Orthodox parishes abroad, the ROC becomes an important actor abroad and the state by supporting the Church tries to reach out to the Romanian diaspora and find another channel to further relations with the European authorities where the Romanian Orthodox communities are settled. The close relations become visible at religious or state ceremonies attended by both secular and religious figures. Before the Romanian Orthodox Patriarch's visit to Munich

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>379</sup> Interview with Pr. Roşu. Immigrant parents see their religious institutions as a refuge for their kids from the harmful influences they might be exposed in a different cultural setting (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2000: 120), as the main source of moral education and as a safe and controlled space of socialization. Even though all the migrant congregations tend to have youth associations in the US, Ebaugh and Chafetz state that only a small portion of youth is actively engaged in the parish life. The youth that is actively involved share their parents' concerns and ideals (Ibid: 124) and try to get support from other young people in the congregation who face similar problems of living in two worlds by sharing with them their experiences (Ibid: 128). Another reason that alienates the youth is the fact that they have limited access to leadership roles and do not find channels to make a contribution. Therefore, the initiative of the Pr. Roşu and Metropolitan See can be seen as a way of preventing alienation by getting young people more involved in the parish life and activities.

the Romanian President visited the Patriarch at the airport to wish him a nice trip to Germany (BOR, 2003, CXXI, 1-6: 5). When the Patriarch reached Germany the Romanian Consul General in Germany organized a welcoming ceremony. At the ceremony there was a group of Romanians with children in Romanian national dress (Ibid: 6). Patriarch Teoctist visited Germany also on May 11<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>, 2006 (BOR, 2006, CXXIV, 4-6: 38). The purpose of his visit was to put foundation stone to the ROC that is being built in Berlin and to bless the Cathedral of the Metropolitan Church in Nuremberg and thanked the Bavarian authorities for their support. During the Patriarch's visit the Romanian ambassador gave a reception in honor of the Patriarch at the Romanian embassy in Berlin. During the reception the ambassador read the message of the Romanian President Băsescu, in which the President stated that the construction of the church is a sign of spiritual connection with the "motherland" and an important contribution for Romania's European vocation (Ibid: 75; 165). German authorities present at the ceremony delivered speeches about the Romanian cultural and religious identity and the Orthodox values, expressed support for Romania's accession to the EU, while Patriarch Teoctist has stated that putting a foundation stone to a church in the German capital is also a very historical event regarding the relations between two countries (Ibid: 145). Therefore, while the state supports the ROC in diaspora, the ROC works to further Romanian national interests and a religious event in diaspora gains a national character with the involvement of state officials and organs.

Also within the Italian context, it is possible to observe that the Romanian state assists the ROC and collaborates with it. For instance, the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs Răzvan Ungureanu underscoring the importance of the official recognition of the ROC has argued that there should be "permanent dialog" between Pr. Siluan and the Romanian ambassador to Italy for identifying solutions and for reaching the goals at the end of the process (BOR, 2006, CXXIV, 7-12: 99). The Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate also deems it necessary for the Romanian Orthodox priests and laymen as well as the representatives of the Romanian state in Italy to continue to push for the recognition of the ROCs in Italy.

It is possible to give other examples to the collaboration between the Romanian missions and the ROCs in Italy. When the Minister of Foreign Affairs Adrian Cioroianu has participated in the official inauguration of the Romanian Consulate in Turin, the Romanian Orthodox priests of the city were also present at the meeting and the Minister has promised the Romanian state's support for the construction of a ROC in Piedmont

region of Italy (Lupu, 2007c: 3). This was also the case during the Romanian ambassador's visit to Trento, when he promised his support for the construction of a church for the Romanian Orthodox community. Recently, the Romanian state has funded the purchase of the Romanian Orthodox Diocesan See in Rome. Having the support of the state is an important development, which would have implications for the relationship between the ROC and Italian authorites as stated by Pr. Lupăştean:

This means that also the state, our state, has understood that here there is a big community and wants, we can say, puts the base. Now the Italian authorities cannot say, because we have also property, the papers, they are all arranged. What remains is to sign it [concordat], to carry it further.<sup>380</sup>

The Romanian ambassadors or state officials attend liturgies to show their support for the Romanian Orthodox diaspora and the churches. When the Metropolitan Iosif and Vicar Ps. Siluan have visited the *Sfântul Ioan Gură de Aur* parish in La Spezia in Italy on November 5<sup>th</sup> 2006 to celebrate the Divine Liturgy, the Romanian Consul General in Milan, Prof. Dr. Mircea Gheordunescu has attended the liturgy and underscored the importance of the presence of the ROC for the maintenance of Romanian unity and identity.<sup>381</sup>

The Romanian officials also attend important religious celebrations in diaspora as was the case at the Easter celebrations in Rome. Metropolitan Iosif and the Romanian Association of Italy (ARI) with the support of the Romanian Ministry of External Affairs have organized the Easter celebrations at Giovanni Paolo II Square in Rome with the participation of 10,000 Romanian Orthodox. At the ceremony besides the hierarchs of the ROC from within and out of Romania, there were Romanian ambassador to Italy and cultural attaché and representatives of the Romanian state as well as the Italian politicians and statesman and representatives of the Catholic Church. The main reason for the organization of the meeting in Rome was the fact that it is one of the cities that has the highest number of Romanian nationals and as the capital of Italy, which is home to around 1,500,000 Romanian citizens.<sup>382</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>380</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview with Pr. Lupăștean.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>381</sup> Pr. Paroh Mihai Oancea, (December 2006) "Hram la Massa-La Spezia" *Foaia Sfântul Ioan Casian*, No. 270, 15. This practice is not limited to Italy. Metropolitan Iosif after participating in the liturgy of the Romanian Orthodox community in Cork, Ireland on January 15<sup>th</sup>, the next day has met with the Romanian Ambassador to Ireland, Silvia Davidoiu Stancu, to discuss the problems and practical aspects of the Romanian Orthodox diaspora in Ireland. (Pr. Călin Florea, (February 2007) "I.P.S. Iosif în Irlanda", *Foaia Sfântul Ioan Casian*, No. 272, 18).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>382</sup> After the liturgy the organizers expressed the need to conclude the negotiations for the official recognition of the ROCs in Italy, given the fact that religious communities with lesser number of parishes and adherents are granted recognition by the Italian state, while the ROC with a very high number of adherents and parish churches lacks recognition. Pr. Gabriel Ioniță, (May 2007) "Paște Ortodox la Roma- Bucurie Românească", *Foaia Sfântul Ioan Casian*, No. 275, 15.

While the Romanian statesmen and ambassadors attend the religious meetings, the ROCs and the priests reciprocate by attending the embassy's meetings. January 24<sup>th</sup>, which is the day of unification of Romanian principalities, and December 1<sup>st</sup>, which is the day of unification of Romanian state, are national holidays that are celebrated at some parishes in Italy. On the day of celebrations of the national day of Romania, besides the Consulate staff and the representatives of the Romanian associations, priests and religious representatives attend the meetings.<sup>383</sup> The Churches in Milan and Verona have actively participated in and organized activities for the national day celebrations at the Consulate in Milan.<sup>384</sup> The young priest of Bolzano also stated that when he was a deacon in Verona he formed a choir group and they have visited different Romanian parish churches in Italy to sing both religious hymns and folk songs:

We went to the community of Padua and Venice. Also to Trento, when Father Lupăştean has celebrated his first mass, when he was officially nominated, I, with my choir group went there. We sang songs. And also we were going to Milan also to Pr. Valdman who knows me and the group, I was also going to the Romanian Consulate General in Milan. They were calling us for out national day on December 1<sup>st</sup>. And for many other meetings they had and for different festivals, when they needed a choir group that had to sing popular and religious songs they were calling us. We were wearing the traditional dresses, everyone with the dress of the region of the country he is coming from. Because in Romanian each region we can say has its traditions and dresses, and everyone was seeing us saying "look how nice their costumes are". Also in Verona we had many exhibitions of our traditional dresses, we were explaining how they are made.<sup>385</sup>

The Romanian state's change of strategy regarding the diaspora is not only restricted to collaboration with the ROCs abroad. The state also tries to establish contact and cooperation with Romanian associations in diaspora. The Romanian Secretary of State, Mihai Gheorghiu during his visit to the Romanian Consulate in Turin stated that the Romanian state is willing to collaborate with the Romanian associations in constructing a viable dialogue between Romanian and Italian authorities for the well-being of Romanian communities in Italy (Amaritei, 2007: 5). The Romanian state is also trying to get involved in the organization, collaboration and better functioning of the Romanian associations in Italy. On May 24<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> 2008, the Romanian Embassy in Rome has organized a forum for

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>383</sup> Sometimes the Church hierarchs also attend the national day celebrations in diaspora. Metropolitan of Ardealului in Romania has participated in the celebrations of the national day of Romania in Brussels, Belgium on November 28<sup>th</sup>,-30<sup>th</sup>, 2006 (BOR, CXX, 1-3, Jan-March 2006, 34).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>384</sup> The celebration of national days is not a recent development. In 1988 at 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the proclamation of the independence of Romanian state has been celebrated at the Church in Milan and in Florence (Nicolae, 2003: 44). On October 27<sup>th</sup>, 1979, Stephen the Great has been commemorated at the Church in Milan (Nicolae, 2003: 45).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>385</sup> Interview with Pr. Milăşan.

all the Romanian associations in Italy. The meeting at the Romanian Embassy in Rome has been moved to Milan given the fact that most of the Romanian associations are in Northern Italy. During his visit to Turin, the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs also suggested that it is difficult for the Romanian state to fund all the projects of the Romanian associations in Italy, since there are more than 80 and it would be more convenient for the state to fund 3-4 projects at regional or national level (Lupu, 2007c: 3).

**VI.2.5.** The Romanian Associations: As Nicolae states even though there are Romanian associations in Italy, up until now the main meeting point for Romanians have been the churches (2003: 20). Most of the associations have either the backing of the Italians or are Italo-Romanian associations. They are socio-cultural associations and organize cultural activities to introduce and maintain Romanian culture and to induce integration of Romanians to Italy. It is possible to argue that in most cases, associations work in close collaboration with the ROCs and rather than a competition or clash between the local ROC and the association there is a division of labor. Certain things that are beyond the capacity of the ROCs are arranged in collaboration with the Romanian associations such as the provision of information and guidance regarding official documents, stay and work permit, the organization of the Romanian language courses as well as cultural activities.

Even though it is a recent phenomenon, the number of the Romanian associations is increasing and they are establishing coordinating organizations. On May 28<sup>th</sup> 2005, with its first national congress in Milan the League of Romanians in Italy (*Lega dei Romeni in Italia-Liga Romanilor din Italia<sup>386</sup>*) was established, which is a forum for the Romanian associations in Italy. The idea behind the creation of *LRI* is to be an interlocutor between Italian authorities and a representative of the Romanians who live, work and study in Italy (Cionchin, 2006:198).

When I have visited Turin and Padua to interview the Romanian Orthodox priests I had the chance to talk to the representatives of 3 Romanian associations and got information about their activities. It also gave me the chance to see the level of cooperation between the ROCs and the associations. In 2008 a new Romanian association is established in Trento and I have attended their meetings and participated in almost all of their activities

<sup>386</sup> http://www.lri.it

during my fieldwork, which gave me the chance to learn more about the Romanian community in Trento.

The most important activity of the association *Carpatina*<sup>387</sup> is publishing of a newspaper. *Obiektiv* as the only newspaper that is in Romanian and Italian is published since September 2007 in Turin. It costs 50 cents and is sold in Turin and Asti but the editors are planning to distribute it in Bergamo as well. The publishing and other activities of *Obiectiv* are financed by a Romanian entrepreneur. Different from the Romanian newspaper published in Rome, which is only in Romanian and published in Romania, the *Obiektiv* defines itself in the heart of the Romanian community and is a bi-monthly and bilingual newspaper.

The news regarding the Romanian community in Turin and in Italy are published both in Romanian and Italian. A page is devoted to the news and announcements from the Romanian Consulate in Turin in order to better inform the community about their rights and duties. There is also emphasis on bilateral relations between Romania and Italy between the local as well as national authorities. The newspaper publishes information about how to work legally in Italy. Certain problems of the community such as finding a job, recognition of diplomas, housing, health issues, high death toll of Romanian workers at work, education of young generations, problems concerning the Roma population of Romanian origin, xenophobia against Romanians, divided families owing to migration, crime and prostitution are discussed and covered by the newspaper as well. Apart from the news about the community with a particular emphasis on the young generations, the Romanian students and their experiences at schools, Italian institutions teaching Romanian and scholarship opportunities for Romanians and sport events there are news about Turin. There are also news about the Romanian cultural associations and their activities such as the conferences on Romanian history, exhibitions or festivals. The ROCs' activities and important religious holy days such as the Christmas or the Catholic and the Orthodox Easter find their place in the pages and issues of the newspaper. The news of the enthronement of Metropolitan Daniel of Moldova and Bukovina as the Patriarch of the ROC on September 30<sup>th</sup> is given on the first page of the newspaper on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007. Important national or cultural days such as the establishment of the Romanian nation-state

<sup>387</sup> http://www.carpatina.it/

on December 1<sup>st</sup> 1918 or *Martişor<sup>388</sup>* (Little March) on March 1<sup>st</sup> are celebrated by the newspaper, while the community is invited to vote for the EU Parliamentary elections or municipal elections in Turin. The recipes for Romanian cuisine are published at the last pages of the newspaper. Two or three pages of the newspaper covers the news from different regions of Romania (only in Romanian) and finally there is a reader's page for suggestions, complaints, requests for help, advertisements of those looking for a house for rent or a job and advertisements for houses for rent and job offers. The advertisements of Italian and Romanian firms, shops, money transfer agencies are also published in the newspaper.

The establishment of the association *Carpatina* was decided in order to give support and legal standing to the newspaper. Besides the publishing of the newspaper, *Carpatina* is planning to bring books for Romanian kids, for children's sports activities to discover new talents but also to teach kids Romanian games their parents were playing back in Romania but here they do not have the chance to learn, theatre for kids in Romanian and CDs of fairy tales in Romanian. So far they have organized courses to teach how to make *Martişor* and color Easter eggs. They have financed these activities with the funds from the municipality and with the support of the Romanian state they have brought a theatre from Romania. In the future they want to take part in the organization of touristic activities.<sup>389</sup>

According to the information given by Irina Niculescu, the secretary of the Association *Ovidio*,<sup>390</sup> the association has been established in 2003 with the request of the municipality of Turin to make a contribution to the intercultural dialogue and integration of the Romanians into the Italian society. The association has been transferred to Chieri in June 2005. The mission of *Ovidio* went through certain changes in time and due to changes in the Romanian migratory patterns. When the association was established they were giving assistance to Romanians about stay permits and other documents. The debate on the Bossi-Fini law and rights and duties related with this law was one of the activities organized in July 2004. However, in time the association's focus shifted to issues on "integration". The association is a member of the *LIR* in Italy.<sup>391</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>388</sup> It is a small ornament attached to a red and white string that people in Romania give to each other on March 1<sup>st</sup> as a wish for a healthy year and a sign of friendship and affection. It is a tradition that symbolizes the beginning of the spring. At the beginning the strings were only black and white. White represented the good and black, the evil. Then, the strings became white and red, which represent winter and summer. Later on they have started using different colors.

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>389</sup> Interview with Magdalena Lupu, President of the Cultural Association Carpatina Onlus, Turin, on March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008.
 <sup>390</sup> http://www.ovidio-torino.com/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>391</sup> Interview with Irina Niculescu, Secretary of the Italo-Romanian Socio-Cultura Association OVIDIO in Chieri on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

Since 2004 the association has organized many conferences, gatherings and activities on the occasion of the national day of Romania and Christmas. It organized conferences on the accession of Romania into the EU and on historical figures such as *Vlad Tepes* (known as Dracula). The association with the support of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized free of charge courses for two months on Romanian language and literature, dance and theatre for 80 students (Italian and Romanian) at schools in Chieri. With the EU funds the association organized management and computer skills courses from May 2007 to February 2008. It has also invited a theatre from Romania.<sup>392</sup>

According to the information given by the President Elena Radulescu the sociocultural association Columna<sup>393</sup> was established on March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2005 with 15 members. The main goal of the association has been to organize Romanians and cultural activities that will keep the Romanian culture and traditions alive in Padua, while contributing to the integration of Romanians to the Italian society. On December 1<sup>st</sup>, the National Day of Romania, Columna organizes conferences and activities. Also on every Christmas Eve it has organized feasts. In 2007, for the Easter week, the association organized activities to introduce the Romanian Easter traditions. The association sells some handicrafts from Romania during their activities. Besides cultural activities, the association has a front office for those who need information on Italian legislation and Italian institutions. At the office of the association, it is possible to see Romanian national dresses and handicrafts. There are also some books and brochures about Romania as well as brochures that give information in Romanian about documents, finding a house, being legal in Italy. It is also part of the LIR in Italy.<sup>394</sup> In the garden of the ROC in Padua there is the notice board of the association, where it announces information and its activities. Pr. Verzea of the Saint Apostles Peter and Paul Church in Padua also told me the president of the association is a practicing Orthodox and the Church and the community collaborate to help the Romanians and organize activities together.<sup>395</sup>

Both Magdalena Lupu and Irina Niculescu are not church-goers but they are in touch with Pr. Roşu, who is the younger priest of the Church of Santa Croce in Turin and who is involved in the organization of the cultural activities. Pr. Roşu has also told me that

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>392</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>393</sup> <u>http://www.ass-columna.org</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>394</sup> Interview with Prof. Elena Radulescu, the President of the Association Columna at the association's office in Padua on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>395</sup> Interview with Pr. Verzea.

his Church collaborates with some associations to organize Romanian folk dance courses and other cultural activities. I could not meet the representatives of the Association of Romanians of Ivrea and Canavese, but the Romanian Orthodox priest told me that the Church and the association work in close collaboration:

[...] We go to the prison and work. We go to the prison together and they have a counter, where the Italians looking for a caregiver, Romanians, Romanian women can find a job through it. First of all this is very important here in Italy because the Romanians that come here find another world. It is very important to be informed and this association provides information. The Romanians come, "What can we do...if it happens like this?" "This thing, can we do it?" The association informs. And the association and the Church we are all, we are all a community. We are not divided.<sup>396</sup>

Up until recently the ROC in Trento was the sole actor in terms of reproducing and representing the Romanian culture, language and identity. However, limited time and resources of the priest and parish community led to the creation of a socio-cultural association. A parochial council member of the ROC in Trento, who is also one of the founding members of the Romanian association in Trento states that the idea of establishing an association was always on the agenda. However, the idea has been postponed since many Romanians in Italy were irregular migrants and regularization procedures were slow and lengthy. However, in 10 years time since he has arrived in Italy things have changed considerably for the Romanian community in Trento and the obstacles in the way of establishing an association are eliminated:

We went to the Orthodox Church for a meeting three years ago. No. A year ago. We went to the Church. One was saying the kids want trips, other was asking for a feast for Romanians and other ... in the Church. The problem is that certainly English, Italian, Romanian courses are needed, the documents are needed. All the problems related with emigration to a country. And here there are many kids that forget Romanian. All these are the problems they have. So I stood up and said: "Guys, the Church has to conduct prayers and that is it. If you want parties, you have to have an association. If you want trips, if you want that we have a database, if you want something like this we have to have an association. The association can also get contributions, which can have an office. I can prepare the statute for instance and I know what to do and what an association means."<sup>397</sup>

After making the suggestion and getting people's approval and support, he went to talk to the lawyer Francesco Romano, who was part of the initiatives to help Romanian kids in Romania and asked for his support. Then he went to houses of Romanians living in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>396</sup> Interview with Pr. Babula.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>397</sup> Interview with the parochial council member.

different parts of Trentino-Alto Adige and collected 500 adhesions from Romanians, which formed the base for the establishment of the Romanian association Arta-a. In addition to the initiative of the church-going community, another initiative emerged from among the non-church-going Romanian community. Associazione Romeni del Trentino Alto Adige, Arta-a<sup>398</sup> (The Romanian Association of Trentino Alto Adige) is founded on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2008 and it is presented to the public on March 9<sup>th</sup> with an inauguration meeting. The founders of the association define the association as important as water for life for the Romanian community (Trentino, 3 March 2008). As the president Dan Ioan expresses, one of the goals for the association is to overcome isolation and dispersion that has characterized the Romanian community up until now, and increase the contact among the Romanians (Trentino, 3 March 2008). The association for the time being uses the office of the Italian lawyer, who is also the secretary of the association. However the members want to have their own office, which will not only be a meeting point for the members but also a place where they can socialize, dance and eat together. The association is planning to organize activities in four areas. The first group of activities could be defined as sociocultural; second provision of information and assistance to Romanian citizens about their rights or questions regarding citizenship, recognition of diplomas and other bureaucratic issues; third (since the Provincial administration is interested in it) organization of touristic trips to Romania and taking initiatives for creating twin cities in Italy and Romania and finally the organization of sports activities.<sup>399</sup>

Starting from late January some Romanians started distributing leaflets of the new Romanian association in the Church and the priest started mentioning its inauguration meeting during his sermons. Some of those, who were distributing leaflets, were church-goers and/or volunteers but some association committee members were coming to the Church only to make announcements about the new association such as the president of the association.<sup>400</sup> Almost half of the committee members are church-goers and they decided to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>398</sup> Arta-a is an abbreviation; however, arta also means "art" in Romanian and the name makes a reference to one of the fields of activity the association will work.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>399</sup> Up until now the association has collaborated in the organization of an art exhibition "Sotto la cenere, donne che lasciano il segno" ("Under the Ashes. the Women who Leave a Mark"), and a conference on "Romania e Trentino: Ieri e Oggi" ("Romania and Trentino: Yesterday and Today" at Pro Cultura on April, 18<sup>th</sup> 2008. On March 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Association distributed *Martişor* with the cards of the association attached at the back of it to people at the Church. Recently, the Romanian association took the initiative to organize a feast for the celebration of the National day of Romania in Trento at the end of November 2008.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>400</sup> When I asked him why they have decided to found an association now, he told me that it was the right time for it. The main reason is that the Romanians are so many in Trentino. There are more than 5,000 in Trentino. Secondly, the province is supporting this initiative. Before there were initiatives but it never worked and third reason is that the initiative has the support of the Romanian embassy.

take part in this initiative to do something with the Church and for the Church. Therefore, they saw the association as a complementary organization that can assist the Church and work in collaboration with the Church. However, the association is a secular socio-cultural association and this has caused tensions among the committee members from the start. When one Church-going lady suggested that the priest should bless the inauguration ceremony of the association, the secular-minded members reminded the others that the association is a secular one and the inauguration ceremony will not be a religious gathering; therefore, the priest cannot bless the gathering but he will be invited to give a talk.

The problem turned into a crisis on the day of the inauguration. The priest, who was announcing the news about the newly established association and reminding the people about the inauguration day during his sermons, did not invite the people to the inauguration ceremony on the day of the inauguration. The church-going members of the association were concerned that the priest would not attend the meeting, which would mean that the parish community will not attend. After heated debates and phone traffic, the association committee was relieved to see the priest and his wife at the inauguration ceremony.<sup>401</sup> The priest gave a short speech at the meeting. He started his speech by explaining that the association is a secular one and why it should be so. However, he also added that regardless of the fact that it is religious or not, the Romanians should embrace the association:

[...] When Jesus Christ was asked about the secular part of the state has responded like this and I will respond like this: "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and give to God what is God's". We have continu...we have taken this initiative. We are leaving into the hands of the association. An association should have been here long long time ago. Look at other provinces, look at Milan, Turin, Rome, which have all these associations that are good for the community. The way in which it will develop, the way in which it will succeed, also yours will succeed. You have to say ours. You should not stay silent. You should not whisper. You have to say things loudly. This is how also the Lor..the Church teaches here. [...]<sup>402</sup>

The emergence of Romanian associations in Italy is an important but recent development and has implications regarding the organization of the Romanian communities. Since the ROC is the main actor involved in community building and leadership, the associations enter into dialogue and negotiate their role and scope with the ROCs. The

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>401</sup> After the establishment of the association, I kept inquiring regular church-goers if they will attend the activities of the association. While some were enthusiastic and willing to participate, in general I have seen lack of interest. Regular church-goers were telling me that they have limited time and prefer to devote it to the Church. When I asked Pr. Lupăştean if the association assists the Church in arranging the teaching activity or other cultural activity, he told me that the association is at its initial stage and trying to solve its own problems yet.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>402</sup> Pr. Lupăștean's speech at the inauguration meeting of the Romanian association Arta-a on March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

Romanian Orthodox priests see the role of associations as auxiliary and complementary to the mission they are performing. Pr. Matei argues that the ROCs are the right partners for the Romanian state to collaborate in diaspora due to organizational factors:

[...] For the time being the direction of the Romanian state is to work with the churches maybe because the churches are safer, more stable ...because they are controlled by ...the parish churches are controlled by the Bishop, by the council members, what is done, what is not done. Always with email they ask us "But how does the school go? How many children? How many things? The results? The work? What did you suggest to do this year? ... things in this sense. Instead if there is only an association I am not saying anything, maybe they also do because I have heard that there are associations that work on but if there are many associations, each one with its type...so each one puts its imprint on this school. The state cannot work with too many Romanian associations. So maybe it prefers the churches in big cities or a parish church, a parish church...<sup>403</sup>

According to the Romanian Orthodox priests "the people need somebody to represent them" and the priests become the leaders and representatives of the community in the absence of other organizations. However, Pr. Matei implies that in the Italian context it is the Church that counts and this is also people's preference:

[...] and you as a parish church you have to be present there because I am invited, they have invited me, because they want the Church to be present, because this gives them a little bit of representation. There are not many politicians. The associations are not taken very seriously, we can say, in the Italian world. Instead, if there is the Church, if there is the priest, the community sees it in a different way, there is somebody who responds. [...]<sup>404</sup>

The communist legacy also haunts the migrants in Italy and creates obstacles for migrant associationism, which privileges the Church:

Since during the communist years the people did not trust each other, the associations could not resist at all during Ceausescu rule. Then, later on this habit of not trusting each other remained but they trust in the Church. Because there is a great religiosity in people, in Romanians.<sup>405</sup>

Organizational problems of the Romanian political and cultural associations in Italy create skepticism not only among Romanians but also among the Romanian Orthodox priests, which is another obstacle for the associations to attract new members:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>403</sup> Interview with Pr. Matei.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>404</sup> *Ibid*. He argues that having this responsibility is not always easy. The priest becomes the reference point for the Italian authorities all the issues that concern the community, even a car that is parked at the wrong place or in a wrong way. <sup>405</sup> *Ibid*.

[...] Generally it is done like this, a person prepares a statute, he is the president, two treasurers, two cashiers, and the wife is the vice-president, the brother is, I do not know, cultural or economic councillor and this is the association. They are composed of 3 5 people, that in general it happens ... it happens like this. And this does not have, small closed circles, they do not take care of these things. Even if they have the name "cultural association", still they are not lucrative associations. Usually it is like this. [...]<sup>406</sup>

However, this does not mean that the priests are against all forms of associations. There are associations that collaborate with the ROCs.<sup>407</sup> In Milan,<sup>408</sup> in Ivrea, in Trento and in Verona associations were created in order to respond to the needs and wishes of the parish communities that the Churches do not have the resources or time to respond. Pr. Codrea explains the birth of the association Accord Onlus and its main activities:

[...] Then there are also good experiences with certain environments, in which associations have done something. For instance here at our place in Verona in order to separate the parish this kind of commitment at cultural level an association of the Romanian Orthodox community is born. We call it Accord Onlus, it is born in the community to separate the cultural and social aspects. The scope is this. In the association, the major part coincides with the people who are part of the parish. But we have preferred to define a new well-defined mission for helping the community. And they take care of mainly the relations related with shows, organization of exhibitions, for instance on December 1<sup>st</sup> of the last year together with the Verona municipality the Romanian culture days in Verona.<sup>409</sup>

[...] So it is a very very vast activity with exhibitions of culture, handicrafts and shows. We have invited different coral groups from Romania, a really strong commitment that we have had with the municipality of Verona and with the help of Romanian Consulate in Milan. Then we always at every festival on the occasion of the national day of Romania in Milan we have done our part with the exhibition of the icons, handicrafts, paintings [...]<sup>410</sup>

The cultural association of the church also organizes activities to introduce the Romanian national cuisine and folk dances. Sometimes they also invite famous television figures or comedians from Romania for live performance to Verona.<sup>411</sup>

It is possible to argue that the stance of the Romanian Orthodox priests and parish communities have an impact on the Romanian associationism in Italy. The associations that

<sup>410</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>406</sup> Interview with Pr. Codrea.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>407</sup> The collaboration between the ROC and the association is not restricted to Italy. The Metropolitan Iosif has visited the Romanian Orthodox community in Zaragoza that is willing to open their own parish church. The meeting was organized by Maria Mureşan, the vice-president of Romanian Intercultural Association in Zaragoza and a member of the parochial council of the parish. (Preot Paroh Aurel Nae, "Înalt Prea Sfințitul Mitropolit Iosif la Zaragoza", *Foaia Sfântul Ioan Casian*, No.280, November 2007, 16).

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>408</sup> Pr. Valdman is one of the founders of the *Asociația Românilor din Milano* <u>http://www.lri.it/article\_read.asp?id=2</u>.
 <sup>409</sup> Interview with Pr. Codrea.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>411</sup> Interview with Pr. Milăşan.

emerge from the parish communities are acting as the extensions of the Churches and helping them to organize socio-cultural activities.<sup>412</sup> This does not mean that the Churches do not collaborate with secular associations; however, different worldviews and stances may hamper collaboration and common activities.

The discussion in this section of the agency of institutional actors rivaling or collaborating with the ROC is indicative of the fact that the ROC is not the sole actor active in the construction and/or maintanence of the transnational Romanian-Italian space. The ROC has to coexist and compete or collaborate with other religious and secular actors to get the allegiance of Romanian Orthodox migrants. Positioning of the ROC vis-à-vis the other actors within the transnational space could be better understood if we study the internal dynamics and organization as well as the resources of the ROC. How the ROC adapts and organizes itself within the Italian landscape, with what means it responds to the demands of Romanian migrants in Italy and articulates ties between Romania and Italy, is the main focus of the next chapter.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>412</sup> Pr. Babula of the ROC in Ivrea told me they have established the association because the ROC is not officially recognized yet, and therefore, to give an official standing to Church's activities.

## Chapter VII. Adaptive Practices of the Romanian Orthodox Churches in Italy and the Construction of the Romanian-Italian Religious Space

It is the task of this chapter to analyze and evaluate the transnational agency of the ROC in constructing and maintaining the Romanian-Italian transnational landscape based on the empirical data collected throughout the fieldwork from December 2006 up until September 2008 in Trento. The participant observation in weekly Sunday prayers and other religious services in the Catholic Church of San Marco in Trento used by the Romanian Orthodox community, activities that the Church has organized or participated; interviews with 10 Romanian Orthodox priests in Italy, interviews with two Romanian Orthodox priests in Bucharest as well as interviews with 11 ROC-goers in Trento and visits to the houses of some church-goers provides us with the means to better understand and evaluate the importance of religion in migrants' lives, different forms of religious practice and transnational ties with the Romanian culture and identity and localities in Romania. The findings of the archival work on the official bulletin of the ROC also inform this chapter.

Religious organizations go through an adaptation process within a new setting. Adaptation means change; however, the extent of this transformation depends on the particularities of migration patterns and migrant community as well as the particularities of receiving context and ties with the sending context. The fieldwork reveals important changes that the ROCs and the Romanian Orthodox communities in Italy go through, which can be categorized in four groups: change in the role of the Church and its adaptive organizational practices, transformation of the role of the priest, increasing migrant religiosity as an adaptive mean and the transnationalization of the parish church and communities through the articulation of transnational ties with the sending context. As has been discussed in the second chapter, migrants try to create their home country organizations in a new setting. Since it is not possible to bring the whole social order of the original setting, transplantation of religious organization leads to a process of adaptation and change. Religious organizations face the challenge of maintaining religious and cultural traditions and ties with the home country, while meeting the demands of the migrant community and integrating into the religious landscape of the receiving country. As religious organizations indulge in community building, they turn into community centers, take on new roles and responsibilities and cease to be exclusively religious space, which is

the case for the ROCs in Italy. The adaptive process that transforms the religious organization has implications for the role of the priest. The priest, who is the religious leader of the community and a holy figure, becomes a community worker and leader, representing the community in its relations with (secular and religious) local institutions and authorities. The change in the role of the priest is paralleled with growing involvement of laymen in the parish life. For the migrant religion is a way of adapting to the new setting and creating ties with the new environment as well as with Romania and preserving ethnoreligious identity. Within a process of rapid change and discontiunity of the social order such as immigration, migrants turn to symbols and organizations that create spaces and feelings of familiarity and continuity. Therefore, religion becomes more relevant, since it is a means of dealing with change and hardships. As they devote more time and energy to bring and sustain the ROCs they provide the ROCs with more resources and opportunities for the creation of transnational connections with Romania. These four changes are discussed in detail respectively in the following sections.

Since the San Marco ROC in Trento is the main setting, where the fieldwork is conducted, in the first section the formation, adaptive experiences and practices of the ROC in Trento are discussed with reference to the conduct of religious services, participation in the Church activities, division of labour among the members of the parish community and the relations of the Church and the parish community with the Italian society. The following four sections analyze adaptive organizational practices of the ROCs in Italy and their agency in community building, integration and reproduction of the Romanian Orthodox identity; change in the Romanian Orthodox priest's role as community leaders and workers; redefinition of religiousity within a non-Orthodox context; and finally the agency of the ROCs and the Romanian Orthodox communities in construction of transnational religious connections and space.

## VII.1.The Church of San Marco: The Romanian Orthodox Church in Trento<sup>413</sup>

VII.1.1. Environment and Physical Setting: The Church of San Marco is a Catholic Church, which is used by the Romanian Orthodox and Catholic communities

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>413</sup> Trento is the capital of the Trentino region at North East of Italy. The region due to its location as a passage between South and Central Europe has been the meeting place of different traditions and cultures. The region is also an important commercial and touristic center. Main economic activities in services, agriculture and industry make it an attractive zone for influx of immigrants, since main motivation of the majority of the migrants in the region (59%) is to find a job. Family unification and studying are the other motivations. (Ambrosini, Maurizio et al. (eds.) (2008) *L'Immigrazione in Trentino: Rapporto Annuale 2008*, Trento: Provincia Autonoma di Trento).

together. On Saturday's and Sunday's at 18.30 the Catholic community uses the church, while on Sunday morning it is used by the Romanian Orthodox community. Therefore, it is a "part-time" church and a research site under constant construction. The Church is reconstructed internally and "converted" into an Orthodox Church every Sunday and for special religious feasts such as Easter and Christmas and the space is reorganized for religious services and after religious services as the Orthodox "make up" is removed to turn the Church into a Catholic one.

The process that led to the birth of the Church starts with the request made by more than 200 Romanian migrants in Trento to the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate in 1995 to ask for the ordination of a priest to Trento. The ordainment of the priest was indispensable, because, as Krindatch states, for the majority of the Orthodox laity, it is not possible to have a parish church and meaningful sacramental life without ordained clergy (2008: 47). Starting from 2000, the Churches in Treviso and Verona try to give spiritual and social assistance to the Romanians of Trento. For some time the Romanian and Moldovan community have attended the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore, where the Sunday mass was celebrated by a Catholic priest. The Romanian Orthodox priest in Mestre, who has lived in Trento for three years, while continuing his studies in Venice, has served the Romanian community in Trento for a short time before the arrival of Pr. Lupăştean. Both the community and the priest himself were expecting the ordainment of Pr. Matei as the priest of the Romanian Orthodox community in Trento. However, the Metropolitan Church has decided to ordain him as the priest for the community in Mestre, since he was studying in Venice and the Romanian Orthodox community of Mestre needed a priest.

On November 17<sup>th</sup> 2002, 161 members of the Romanian Orthodox community came together with the initiative of Pr. Codrea of the ROC in Verona to form the *Sf. Ioan de la Suceava* parish in Trento. The current parish priest Ioan Catalin Lupăștean was the vice president, while Simeon Ichim was the church councillor, Dino Ivasco was the cultural councillor and Dan Cutean was the economic and social councillor (Nicolae, 2003: 31). With the collection of signatures and formation of the parochial council another demand was made and in January 2003 the Archbishop of Trento Monsignor Bressan gave the Church of San Marco to the Romanian community for partial usage. On February 12<sup>th</sup>,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>414</sup> Interview with Pr. Matei.

2003, Pr. Lupăștean<sup>415</sup> has been officially ordained as the parish priest and in March 2003 he arrived in Trento. Since the Church of San Marco was given to the community, the name of the parish was changed (*Una Fede Si Racconta*, 2005: 43; Nicolae, 2003: 31-2).

The Church of San Marco is located at Piazzetta Agostiniani, a small square at the end of San Marco Street. If you go out of the Church and turn right you will see Buon Consiglio castle, one of the main tourist attractions of the city. I have seen this church many times before I started my research, when I was passing by or going to the *Questura*, which was at that time located next to the Church, to apply for or renew my stay permit. It is 10 minutes away from the train station and easily accessible for those who are coming from outside of Trento. It is a very old church<sup>416</sup> and starting from 2003 it has been given to the Romanian Orthodox community, since it was among the few that were available.<sup>417</sup>

It is a white and pretty church. Even though it is quite an old church, it looks very clean and well maintained. There is a little fountain in the Church's garden with a statue of San Giovanni Nepomuceno, which was erected for the protection against floods. It looks like a small Church from outside but it is quite big inside. Until you walk closer and push the dark brown door of the Church, it is hard to see any sign or touch of the Romanian Orthodoxy from outside except the warning in Romanian telling people to turn off their mobiles for a proper and decent service. On the door of the Church there is also a time schedule for the Catholic community.

On Sundays as you get close to the door you can feel the smell of incense, burning candles and hear the hymns that the choir is chanting, which gives you the feeling that you are about to step into the rich Orthodox spirituality. When you enter, at the narthex (the entrance of the Church) you can better feel the scent of candles and incense that fills the church. The burning candles at the narthex that represent the light of Christ illuminate the gloomy Church. As you enter the Church, you do not meet an attendant that is charged with greeting or welcoming those who enter the Church. Actually, that is not necessary, since Jesus and Mother Mary icons are right at the door to welcome you in.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>415</sup> The priest has arrived Italy as a student in 1995 and after finishing his studies, he became a deacon at the ROC in Milan. Following the request of the community, he has been sent to Trento as the parish priest. Interview by Valentina Sandri with Pr. Lupăştean at the San Marco ROC in April 2008.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>416</sup> This Church was built in 1273 and was used as a convent of Augustinian monks, the monks that were living on the other side and they were entering from the other door to pray in the Church. In 1363 it was expanded and in 1660 it was rebuilt. The monks were few and in time they disappeared and the Church was given to the German community. From 1885 up until 1965 the Church was used by the German community. However, following the war they were reduced in number. This Church has never been a parish church. It is part of the San Pietro Church, which has two parishes; San Marco and Santissimo Sacramento.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>417</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview with Pr. Lupăștean; Information about the Church at the entrance of the Church.

As Clément states, icon is like the name, the first thing that gets you introduced into the Orthodox tradition and to the Church (2005: 115). In the Orthodox tradition, the sacred is represented through images i.e. icons. Icons, rather than religious art, should be seen as a theological creation and pictorial manifestation of the Bible (Binns, 2002: 98). Icon is not seen only as a representation of God, but is revelation of God to human beings (Ware, 1997: 206). When God became human, He has gained the quality of being describable (Binns, 2002: 101). Icon is "an expression of the sanctified deified humanity" (Enev, 2001: 134). Icons and relics are the means through which the believers have access to the sacredness by touching or kissing them (Binns, 2002: 98-99, 103). Icon manifests the real face of the human beings, the eternity (Clément, 2005: 114), while the light on the icon is the eternal light. The veneration of icons is part of the dogma of the Orthodoxy since the 7<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Council and it is integral part of the liturgy (Ibid: 112). When people venerate the icon, they do not venerate the image or the matter but the Creator of the matter (Ibid: 102; Enev, 2001: 135). The most important icon for the Church is the icon of the Jesus, which indicates his incarnation (Clément, 2005: 113).

The Jesus icon in the Church looks directly into the eyes of the observer. He is wearing a light red robe with a dark green cloak over it. He holds the Gospel in his left hand, which is open to display a passage. His right hand is slightly raised. The index finger of the right hand is straight, the middle and little fingers are curved, and the thumb is touching the middle finger. He has a slim face, with his thin lips are closed and he has long light brown hairs and beard. He reminds me of some Romanian priests that I have met or seen in the books and on web pages throughout the research. On the left hand side of the narthex, there is the icon of the Mother Mary with Baby Jesus in her arms. She is dressed up in red. She looks to the observer with sad but graceful eyes. She is holding Baby Jesus on her right. Her head is slightly tilted down towards Baby Jesus almost touching his head, while He is stretching and reaches out to Mother Mary with his hands and looking both at the observer and the Mother.<sup>418</sup> The background of both icons is bright golden color and there is a halo around the heads of Jesus Christ and Mother Mary symbolizing their sanctity. As Orthodox people believe the light from the icons is the divine light, which also illuminates the Church.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>418</sup> In the icon there is a globe in front of Mother Mary and Baby Jesus and there is a big foot print. Orthodox people believe that on the day of Dormition, August 15<sup>th</sup>, Mother Mary was taken up to the heavens with body and soul. Once a group of men were praying to her and she appeared to them and then she stepped on the ground and left a foot print. This icon is made to commemorate this miracle, which is another proof for Orthodox that she is in heavens with body and soul.

The icons are placed on yellowish brown wooden stands. There is a vase full of flowers placed on each stand. The one on the stand of the icon of Jesus is placed on the right and the one on the stand of the icon of Mother Mary and baby Jesus is on the left. Around the stands of both icons there are long white clothes hanging, which have pink and red rose designs on them with embroidery at the edges. There are also small white embroidery just in front of both icons on the stands and candles within red glasses on the floor just in front of the stands

On the left of the narthex on the wall there is another icon of Mother Mary with baby Jesus. Again her head is slightly tilted towards the baby Jesus and their heads are touching. Around the icon there is again a white long cloth with rose designs and embroidery. Just in front of the door there are two black candle trays, which have small holes on them for people to place their candles easily. Below the thin layer with holes there is another layer where the melting candle gets accumulated. These two candle trays are reserved for those who are alive. On the right wall there are two paintings that belong to the Church itself. At the edge where the narthex ends and nave starts there is a small statute of San Marco. Just beneath the statute there is a small candle tray for people to put their candles after taking the Communion or when their kids take the Communion. Since the Church uses thicker candles for the door of entrance, just behind the high marble baptismal font, there are two more black metal candle trays with holes and these ones are reserved for the deceased.

Different from the Orthodox Churches I have been to in Romania and some in Italy, there is not a shop for the sale of candles and other materials. However, there is a table at the entrance on the right hand side of the door of the Church. On it there are candles, prayer books, Bibles, incense, ointment, *anafură* (bread)<sup>419</sup>, monthly journal published by the Metropolitan Church in Paris, the Orthodox calendars both the big ones that can be hanged on the wall and those small ones to be carried in the pocket or the bag; very small icons that can be carried in a pocket or a bag or put in the house or car. There are many small prayer books addressing different people (family, children) or different type of needs and issues

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>419</sup> Antidoron in Greek and *anafură* in Romanian is the holy bread used in the Eucharist in the Orthodox Church (*Apostolia*, 2008: 14).

(marriage, family life, and health). There are also personal prayer books for the faithful to pray in the morning and in the evening in front of the icons.<sup>420</sup>

In the middle of the table there is a big wooden case with small drawers, where they keep the coins and banknotes and on the upper part, the candles for the liturgy. There are also thicker candles for the Communion and plastic glasses for putting the Communion candle in, so that the kids or babies do not burn their hands during or after the communion. The candles are all kept in a basket, with some incense and ointment. Both the thin and thick candles cost 50 cents and Romanians consume quite a lot of candles before and during the service. There is always a volunteer that keeps cleaning the trays throughout the service to open room for new candles. Sometimes the kids and I also volunteer to help, since it is fun to play with melting candles. Behind the table there is a board where there are posters and information belonging to the Catholic Church. On Sundays the Romanians also hang the Orthodox calendar and sometimes some information but it is used by the Catholic community. After the establishment of the Romanian association in Trento, they also hang the poster of the association.

Since the beginning of this year, there is also a small table just in front of the door on the right of the narthex, on which the Church sells *piatra de temelie*, foundation stones to collect money for the construction of the Church of the Diocesan Bishop in Rome. The idea is by paying 1, 5, 10, 25, 50, 100 euros the faithful materially and symbolically put a stone or stones to the construction of the Church in Rome. It is written on the card that the faithful will be rewarded for their contribution and generosity with health and salvation from God and will be glorified now and for ages to come through prayers at the Church that will be constructed. Recently, in addition to the announcement poster, cards and wooden money collection box, there is a poster showing the picture of the new Church that will be constructed. The Church in the picture has two floors. An old guy, who is a volunteer, is in charge of the sale of the cards. When he cannot come to the Church, those in charge of selling candles and books attach the table to their table and sell the cards. The Church has collected around 800 euros for the new Church in Rome. In other ROCs I have visited recently I have seen or I have been told that they are also collecting money for the construction of the Church in Rome.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>420</sup> The prayers inside these prayer books are taken from public worship books (Ware, 1997: 303).

On the left hand side of the narthex, there is a small room, which is used as a storage room. On the door of the room there are posters giving information about events or courses for the Catholic community. The room inside is quite disorganized. There are two tables in the room. Over the table behind the door, there are two trays. In one tray there are religious books and papers in Romanian. Next to it there is one more tray, which is almost empty. When the liturgy is over, big white clothes that decorate the icons and scarves left on the marble back of the last pew on the left are folded and put in this empty tray. There are also some dusty icons, pictures and posters. On the other table that you see when you enter the room there are nylon bags, clothes, tissue papers and lots of other stuff. On the wall there are some wooden shelves, which are full of cartoon boxes. Beneath the shelves there is a seat attached to the wall, which however is covered with boxes. All the icons, icon stands, books, booklets, cards, candles, clothes, vases and all the materials used for the liturgy are kept in this room throughout the week. There are also brushes and mops to clean the church. The room also serves as a space to settle problems among the volunteers, particularly among women, and very rarely for some mothers to feed their babies.

The narthex of the Church is separated from the nave with two coloumns on both sides that are combined with the walls of the church through carved marble blocks on both sides. Just by the upper part of the columns there are two speakers on both sides at the entrance. There are six more, three on each side of the nave.

The nave is the main part where the parish community comes together to worship. The nave of the Church is quite big and long. It is divided into two with an aisle, which is covered with red carpet. On both sides of the aisle there are wooden pews; 20 pews on each side. The last pews on both sides are a little apart from the others and are combined with the columns and marble backing. Between the walls and the pews there is a narrow path. By the walls on both sides there are two confession cabins, which are kids' favorite play ground in the Church.

In Romania in the Orthodox Churches there are a few seats in the nave attached to the walls, mostly reserved for the elderly or sick people that cannot stand up all throughout the liturgy. Different from the Catholic or Protestant Churches there are no pews in the (Romanian) Orthodox Churches. However, in the Church of San Marco and in all the other ROCs in Italy (full-time or part-time) I have seen pews. In the case of Church of San Marco, since the Church is used by the community only on Sundays, the parish has to adapt to the architecture and internal organization of the Church. There are 40 pews in the church and many people prefer to sit down and stand up when they are asked to stand upright. In front of the pews on the left hand side there is a stall to put hymn books and a microphone. This is where the choir guy and sometimes a lady, who accompanies him, stand and chant hymns.

According to the Orthodox tradition, the sanctuary, where the altar is placed is the part of the Church that is reserved to the clergy. Altar is the mystical center of the church representing the Throne of God and the Christ's sacrifice (Döpmann, 2003: 128). For this reason in the Orthodox Churches, the sanctuary is separated from the other two parts with iconostasis and particularly women are not allowed to the sanctuary and to touch sacred things. The "periodic ritual impurity of women make them unfit to approach the unbloody sacrifice" (Binns, 2002: 249).<sup>421</sup> As the priest's wife's sister told me that the Orthodox Christians believe that in the chalice there is the body of Christ; therefore, it is untouchable for women. This also prevents the Orthodox women taking priestly duties within the Orthodox Church and the ROC in Trento.<sup>422</sup>

The iconostasis that separates the sanctuary from the nave "can be interpreted as a book, which talks to those who come in."<sup>423</sup> The iconostasis is a wooden screen with icons painted on it and it has three doors. It took its solid wall - therefore traditional - form in 15<sup>th</sup> century (Binns, 2002: 45). It represents the separation of mundane or secular from the sacred (Ibid: 46). During the services its doors are opened and closed. Through the doors of the iconostasis, the priest carries out the Gospel and the gifts to the nave and carries them back. In the ROCs that I have visited, the ones that have the church reserved only for the use of the Romanian community have the iconostasis brought from Romania. However, in part-time churches such as the Churches in Trento, Bolzano and Ivrea there is no iconostasis. In addition to the fact that these Churches are shared by two communities, the cost of bringing the iconostasis from Romania is high. Therefore, instead of iconostasis, two icons, which represent the iconostasis, are used in the Church. The altar is raised above the narthex. There are three steps separating the altar from the nave and just in front of the steps there are two icons; icons of Jesus Christ and Mother Mary. On the right there is another icon of Christ and on the left there is the icon of Mother Mary holding baby Jesus in her arms. There is a vase full of flowers placed on the stand of the icon of Jesus and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>421</sup> Krindatch argues that many Orthodox clergy in the US see "menstrual periods as being evil and unnatural" (2008: 110). <sup>422</sup> Priesthood of women within the Orthodox Church does not seem possible in the near future. Majority of the Orthodox laity in the US are against seeing women as altar servers, deacons or priests (Krindatch, 2008: 96).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>423</sup> Interview with Pr. Milăşan.

another placed on the stand of the icon of Mother Mary and baby Jesus. On the top edge of both stands they have hanged burning candles with red glass around them. When it is the day of a saint, a small icon of the saint is placed on a small stand, which is covered with an off-white bright cloth and situated close to the icon of the Jesus Christ.

There is a big wooden cross on the altar, which is half-covered on the top and the edges with a white cloth. There is three-branched chandelier in front of the cross and a vase full of flowers on the altar. Behind the altar, there is a huge dark brown wooden cross with the statute of the crucified Jesus is hanging behind the altar and there are fresco of a white sheep on the wall at the lower right part of the cross and there is a fish fresco on the left part. Above the cross, just beneath the ceiling there is a fresco showing Jesus with saints.<sup>424</sup> On the left hand side of the altar, a little ahead, there is a stand with a microphone where the priest gives his weekly sermon. It has been less than a year that they have brought two more icons that are embelisshed on a white shiny cloth ornamented with brigh yellow embroidery at the edges. They hang them on long T-shaped stands and put them on both sides of the nave, just at the point that separates the nave from the sanctuary. On the left hand side on the white shiny cloth there is the icon of Gabriel and Michael and on the right hand side there is the icon of Jesus. These have been brought at the beginning of this year by some faithful from Romania. Next to these icons there are low-rise stands with off-white with the design of cross over them.

**VII.1.2. The Structure of the Sunday Liturgy:** The main service of the Church is the Sunday prayers, which lasts around three hours. However, during other important religious days such as the Orthodox Easter or Christmas, the Church organizes other services. A typical Sunday at the Church of San Marco in Trento starts around 10.00. The doors of the church are open to Romanian church-goers starting from 08.30 but people start to come in from 09.00 onwards. The liturgy starts at around 10.30, but if people arrive early the liturgy may start a little earlier. The priest during his sermons a couple of times asked the people to come earlier if they can manage, so the liturgy can start earlier and they can finish before 13.00, before kids get hungry and tired. In some other churches I have visited in Italy I have seen that the liturgy starts earlier. Rather than being a rigidly fixed time,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>424</sup> Apart from that there are no other drawings on the walls. I have been told that there were paintings on the walls but the walls have been painted before the visit of a Pope.

10.00 or 10.30 is the most convenient time, since there are many Romanians coming out of Trento and different parts of Trentino-Alto Adige region.

Before the liturgy starts, the priest holds confession services. For the man who commits sins, confession and prayer are the means of purification from sins. As one faithful has told me the confession means the cleaning of the heart. For purification from sins what is necessary is sincere penance. Confession means that "the believer assumes responsibility for his actions and asks for forgiveness" (Crăciun, 1995: 90). The priest cannot forgive the sins of the faithful; he is just a witness and a minister (Ware, 1997: 289). The Orthodox Church rejects exalting of the priest above the laity during confession and the priest cannot act as a judge nor impose penalties, but rather can guide the believer to the right path (Enev, 2001: 144).

Since only God can forgive sins and the priest is only an instrument to talk to God, there are no confession cabins in the Orthodox Churches different from the Catholic Church. Confession in the ROC in Trento is done in front of where there is supposed to be the iconostasis. Since there is no iconostasis in the church, the confession is done in front of the icons that represent the iconostasis. The Romanian Orthodox people confess by kneeling down in front of the priest. The priest does it in front of the mass before the liturgy starts or after the liturgy ends. Some people can also confess on Saturday nights and certain occasions it is even possible to call the priest and ask for confession during the week days. Since the rules of the confession are not strictly defined, it is not obligatory for the people to confess every week before the liturgy.

At 08.30 on Sundays the doors of the Church are open to the faithful. Hymns played from the tape and very sleepy volunteer guy, who is selling candles and bread to those arrive early to confess, welcome the faithful. The church looks dimmer early in the morning and many of the pews are empty. The priest is sitting on a chair on the right hand side and there is a wooden thing for the confessors to put their arms and knees while they are kneeling down. The priest covers the head of the person with part of his robe. The priest sits on the right hand side in front of the icon of Jesus on a small chair and leans down towards the person, who kneels down on a small carpet and confesses by whispering into the priest's ear.

As people finish the confession they make the sign of the cross, some for one time, and some for three, and then they kiss the icons. Some people prefer to sit down at the front pews close to the priest but most people stand in the queue. While people are confessing, the volunteers prepare the Church for the liturgy by putting flowers and candles in front of the icons or carrying stuff to the altar from the chapel or small room. If there is going to be a *parastas* (memorial service) prayer, those who are going to offer food and drinks, try to prepare the *parastas* table, which is placed on the left hand side of the nave between the pews and the icons, while at the entrance some women write the names of the loved ones on pieces of paper to be given to the priest during the liturgy. Those who confess either go out to return back when the liturgy starts or spend time at the Church's garden with the kids or sit at the back pews chatting or reading prayer books. While the confession before the liturgy goes on, a layperson starts reciting the *Acatist* prayer, which is a six-seven pages long prayer. When the confession is over, the tape is turned off and the priest turns towards the altar and starts the liturgy prayer saying: "Blessed is the reign of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and always, and in centuries of centuries." The choir responds: "Amin".

When people enter the church, they make the sign of the cross. Then they walk towards the icons. They go first to the icon of Jesus Christ and then to Mother Mary's. They stand in front of both icons and make the sign of the cross three times in front of each icon and then kiss the icon. The Orthodox sign of the cross is different from the Catholic and Protestant tradition. In order to make the sign of the cross, the Orthodox people bring the thumb, index, and middle finger together, which symbolizes the Trinity and the two fingers, are kept folded touching the palm. This way divine and humane natures of Christ are brought together. The sign of the Cross is made by touching the hand at the forehead, at the stomach and at the shoulders from right to left. I have seen many people that bow after the first sign of the cross and touch the ground and do the second sign of the cross and touch the ground again, which is followed by the third sign of the cross.<sup>425</sup> Many mothers try to teach their kids how to make the sign of the cross as they enter the Church. Then, the kids clumsily make the sign of the cross as their mothers raise their kids to make them kiss the icons. I have seen some people kissing the hands of Jesus and Mother Mary or feet of Baby Jesus, while some kiss the edges of the icons. People also make the sign of the cross as they leave the church as well. When they leave the nave, they turn towards the altar, make the sign of the cross and walk towards the door. Some people also cross themselves in front of the icons.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>425</sup> I have heard different responses for why they do that. One church-goer told me that it symbolizes the fact that we, human beings, do good deeds but commit sins as well, while another told me it is to show respect for the cross.

As the confession goes on, it is possible to observe people lighting candles or writing the names of the people for whom they want the priest to pray on pieces of paper. Since the paper and the pens are put on the marble back of the last pew on the left, it is possible to see many people accumulated at that corner. Either they start writing names there or take a piece of paper and a pen and move to other pews to write down the names. On the papers the believers have to indicate for what (health) and for whom (alive or dead – or as Romanians prefer to call *adormiti*, those who are sleeping)<sup>426</sup> to pray. The names written consist of the names of family members, friends as well as the names of the local priests of the church in Romania they used to attend. Since someone's name is mentioned during the prayer even if s/he is not present in the church that person is considered to be there. People also write the name of the priest of the ROC in Trento and his family.<sup>427</sup>

As confession ends and people arrive, the liturgy starts at around 10.30. "Liturgy is the true life of the Church" (Döpmann, 2003: 117). The Orthodoxy does not only mean the right doctrine but also the right celebration of God; therefore, the liturgy. The liturgy is based on the Byzantine rite, which has evolved for thousands of years to take its current form (Binns, 2002: 44). The liturgy in its current form is composed of three parts. The first part is the office of preparation. It is also called *Prothesis*, which is a Greek word and which means setting forth or preparation of the bread and wine for the Eucharist before the Divine Liturgy by the priest.<sup>428</sup> This part is done separately before the liturgy starts and different from the other two parts, it is not conducted in front of the mass (Ware, 1997: 280-2). Therefore, it is possible to say that the liturgy is composed of two parts; the Liturgy of the Word and the Eucharist. The Liturgy of the Word is opened with the Litary of Peace, which is followed by psalms, hymns and the beatitudes and special hymns for the day; then follows the Little Entrance. Reading from the Scripture is composed of reading of verses from the Psalms, chanting of Alleluia and reading of the Gospel. The sermon that used to follow the Gospel reading is in time transferred to the end of the service. Intercessions for the Church are composed of Litany of Fervent Supplication, Litany of the Departed, Litany of the Catechumens and the Dismissal of the Catechumens (Ware, 1997: 283).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>426</sup> Romanian Orthodox people believe that they are not actually dead because there is another world after life; therefore they believe the dead are sleeping.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>427</sup> In Orthodoxy there are two types of priests; the white ones that are married and the black ones that are single. The priest cannot marry after he is ordained to a major order. Therefore, those who want to get married must do so before they are ordained as a deacon (Ware, 1997: 291).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>428</sup> Saints Constantine and Elena Orthodox Church is a parish of the Romanian Episcopate of the Orthodox Church in America. <u>http://www.saintsconstantineandelena.org</u>

The priest conducts most of the liturgy with his back turned towards the people. This shows the priest is equal to his flock before the God. However, the priest changes his position throughout the liturgy. The priest wears a light colored cloak over his black robe. On the upper part of the cloak there are many angels, crosses and on his back, just below his neck there is a Jesus figure. There are different categories among angels. Those on the priest's cloak are called *heruvimi*, which are the one closest to the sky. If a faithful brings the priest vestments from Romania, the priest recites the name of the faithful as a show of gratitude.

The liturgy starts with the priest taking candles, papers and small piece of bread wrapped in a piece of tissue (that they buy from the church). The priest takes the candles and gives them to his assistant,<sup>429</sup> while the bread and papers are put in a basket. Then the assistant of the priest brings his *cadelnita*, thurible. Rite of censing goes back to the temple worship of Jerusalem and adopted by the Christianity, which symbolizes sanctification and purification. The censing of the altar is for preparation and sanctification, while censing of the icons and the people is show of respect.<sup>430</sup> The priest after taking the thurible from his assistant first walks around the altar waving it counter clockwise and then clockwise for the second time. Then, he walks down the steps, first turns towards the icon of Jesus Christ, censes it, walks towards the icon of the Mother Mary and also censes it, and then turns towards the people who are standing. He starts walking down the aisle waving the thurible, first towards the people on the right, who have turned towards the priest and make the sign of the cross as he passes with their heads bent down. He passes from the nave to the entrance and returns back as he reaches the door of the entrance and goes back waving his thurible towards the left. Then, he climbs up the stairs and gives his thurible to his assistant, who is standing on the left.

After the censing the prayers start with *Ectenia Mare* (Great Litany), which is the opening litany of the liturgy. It is also called the Litany of Peace. A litany is a fixed sequence of calls for prayer by the deacon to the people. It is the prayer for the Church and begins with "*Cu pace Domnului să ne rugăm*" ("In peace let us pray to the Lord"), which includes the prayers for salvation, the peace in the world, the ROCs, the unity and then for

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>429</sup> In the Orthodox Church for the full celebration of the liturgy besides the priest, there should be a deacon but in many churches, it is possible to see the celebration of the liturgy without a deacon (Ware, 1997: 292), which is the case for the Church of San Marco. The priest has two assistants helping him to conduct the liturgy. One is his father-in-law and the other is a Romanian church-goer. When any one of them cannot attend the service, there is a young guy, who substitutes them.

<sup>430</sup> http://www.saintsconstantineandelena.org

Metropolitan Iosif, Diocesan Bishop Siluan, all the clerics and the community as well as all kinds of needs of the Church, the well-being of the world and the place they are in (Italy), the Romanian community and the individual Romanians. The choir accompanies the prayer by repeating "*Doamne miluieste*" (Lord, have mercy). The prayers and hymns resemble a dialogue between the priest and the people. After each litany the choir chants a hymn. The hymns contain parts of the Scripture and the doctrine (Binns, 2002: 51).

*Ectenia Mare* is followed by two *Ectania Mică* (Little Litanies). From the Great Litany to the Little Litany, the people are brought in from the mundane to the Divine. Little Litanies contain prayers for peace and mercy. When the Little Litanies end, the priest walks to the left hand corner to get the candles and papers from the people, who are queuing in front of him. One of his assistants brings him a big basket and he puts the papers and bread into the basket, while giving the candles to his other assistant to be placed on the candle trays. After receiving the candles and papers, the priest's assistant brings the thurible once again to the priest and the priest starts waving the thurible first in front of and around the altar and then the icons. When the priest walks down and goes back to the altar, he says *puternic*. It means that he asks the choir to sing more loudly. Then, the priest starts reciting one part of the Apostoles. This part is called *Citirea apotolului*. The reading of the Gospel means the declaration of the end of this world (Binns, 2002: 53).

Following the litanies, the *Intrarea Mică* (Little Entrance) starts with the priest's call upon the faithful: "*Înțelepciune, drepți*" ("Wisdom! Aright!"). This is a call for the people to stand up, since Little Entrance is the coming of the Christ's down to earth (Ibid). His assistants bring the wooden stand down the steps and place it in the middle of the two icons that are placed in front of the altar between the icons.<sup>431</sup> This part, duing which the priest reads the Gospel, is called *Citirea Sfintei Evanghelli*. The reading of the Gospel is followed by the *Ectenia Cererii Stăruitoare* (Litany of the Fervent Supplication), when the believers are asked to pray more fervently to God asking for God's mercy and pray for the Metropolitan, Diocesan bishop, all the clergy, all the Christians, Romanians and Romania, the community, salvation, health, life, research, the place they are living, and for all those who are present in the Church and who sing the hymns.<sup>432</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>431</sup> The Little Entrance is part of the Liturgy of the Catechumens, and is the part when the priest takes the Gospel from the altar and carries it by raising his arms above his head and walks around the altar, then brings the Gospel down the steps. One of the assistants stands on his left and the other on his right. The one who stands on his right holds the candles above the Gospel that the priest recites, symbolizing the light of Christ.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>432</sup> As is stated in the prayer book at this point the priest can add more prayers depending on the day ("*Aici se pot pune ectenii pentru diferite cereri*").

The following prayer is called "Ectenia pentru Cei Chemati", which can be translated literally as the prayer for the called ones.<sup>433</sup> The prayer is followed by the Great Entrance is part of the Liturgy of the Faithful and Divine Liturgy. With Great Entrance bread and wine are brought from the little chapel to the altar. With his back turned towards the people, the priest covers them with red cloth and then turns towards the people. When the priest comes down the altar with bread and wine, the prayer for "Iesirea cu Cinstitele Daruri"(Exit with Gifts) starts. In this part the priest walks with the chalice. When he walks, what is inside the chalice is still considered as bread and wine, not Jesus' body or blood yet. People slowly stand up and kneel down on the left and right hand side of the corridor, as the priest walks down reciting prayers.<sup>434</sup> Some people, who enter the Church at this moment, kneel down just before the priest reaches the entrance. Mothers have hard time into making their little kids sit down and wait silently and many times the kids break free and start walking around. The priest walks down and then back touching on the heads of the people who have kneeled down. As he passes people make the cross sign and some kiss his robe. When the priest reaches the icons in front of the altar, he turns towards the mass holding the chalice. The priest blesses the faithful with the chalice by drawing the sign of cross in the air. His assistants stand on his right and left and then the priest goes back to the altar. The choir says "Amin" and then starts singing the hymn Ca pe imparatul *tuturor* (For the emperor of everyone).<sup>435</sup>

With the end of the Great entrance, the priest goes to the corner on the left to take the candles from the people for the last time to go back to the altar. With his back turned towards the people he says: "*Uşile uşile*" "The Doors, The Doors, Wisdom! Let us be attentive!" At this point, all the catechumens and non-believers had to leave the church,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>433</sup> The Orthodox people believe that in this part everyone is called and invited but only some people respond to the call. It actually means that the prayer for the Christians and non-believers have to leave. The nave is where the heavens and the earth meet, where the faithful are sanctified (Döpmann, 2003: 123). In the olden times, the nave was reserved only to the faithful, while the catechumens and faithful that were not allowed to the Eucharist were supposed to stay in the narthex. In the contemporary world, it has changed and catechumens and non-believers are allowed to be in the nave during this prayer (Ibid: 121).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>434</sup> The prayers are for the Metropolitan Iosif, Bishop Siluan, for the priests, monks, for the place they are living and praying, for who does good deeds, for the sleeping ones (deceased), for relatives, and for all Christians.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>435</sup> The mode of conducting Great Entrance has changed recently. 40 days before the Easter the Church becomes very crowded as people fast, confess and try to take the communion. It was not possible for the priest to walk down and touch everyone's head. Therefore, instead of walking to the entrance and back he stood facing the people in front of the icons and recited the prayer. What looked like a temporary solution became a permanent practice after Easter, as the priest kept on performing this part of the prayer without walking down and back. However, as he recited the prayer people kept on kneeling down. This was the practice that I have seen in some churches in Bucharest as well. But depending on the church and the parish community, the priests were adjusting these prayers. In one church in Bucharest, the church was very crowded and small and the priest came out of the door of the iconstasis with the altar boys carrying the thurible and one of the chalices; he stood in front of the people in the church and recited the prayer.

which in the comtemporary world came to disuse (Döpmann, 2003: 164).<sup>436</sup> The Great Entrance symbolizes the coming of Jesus to earth to save the humanity, while closing of the doors is the separation of the believer from non-believer and Communion is the union with God (Binns, 2002: 53; Döpmann, 2003: 149). When the doors are closed, the altar and the whole sanctuary that remains behind the iconostasis become inaccessible to the people and reserved only to the priests celebrating the liturgy. (Döpmann, 2003: 127). Since there is no iconostasis in the Church, the faithful have to assume that the doors are closed.

Then, the prayer for *Simbolul Credintei (Crezul)* starts. People kneel down at the pew and put their elbows on the front part of the pew and bring their hands together in front of their foreheads and start reciting the prayer together. The creed is the confession of the faith by the entire parish.<sup>437</sup> As the creed prayer ends, the priest kneels down in front of the altar and silently recites a prayer. As he finishes his prayer, he stands up and takes the cross on the altar and blesses the mass by drawing a cross in the air and saying "*Pace Tuturor*".

The Eucharist<sup>438</sup> starts with the prayer *Trupul Meu*, which transforms the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ (Ware, 1997: 283). The choir starts singing another hymn mentioning different types of angels; *heruvimii* and *serafimii*.<sup>439</sup> One of the priest's assistant brings two small baskets for money collection and gives them to two guys at the back pews. As they collect the coins, the choir guy chants the hymn "Alleluia". Since the guys collect the money quickly, there are people running around trying to reach them to give them some coins. People put some small coins in the baskets, not big notes. It is very rare to see people putting 5 euro notes. During money collection, there is always some chaos in the church; some people chat and some ran to get a candle for the Communion. The parents try to rush their kids to the altar for the Communion. As the prayer for the Communion is recited by a layman and sometimes by a kid, the priest comes down the altar

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>436</sup> <u>http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/liturgy\_e.htm</u> However, today it is continued in a metaphorical sense that the participants from this point on have to leave all the bad or worldly thoughts and devote their attention and hearts to prayer.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>437</sup> With this prayer, the believers confess that they believe in one God and in Jesus Christ, who was crucified for human beings, on the third day he has risen and ascended to the Heavens and one day he will come back one day to judge between the living and the dead.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>438</sup> The Eucharistic prayer is composed of three parts. It starts with Thanksgiving when the priest narrates the Last Supper, then comes the anamnesis to remind the faithful of Jesus' death, resurrection, ascension and second coming and finally the Epiclesis (the calling down of the Holy Spirit) (Ware, 1997: 283).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>439</sup> The *serafimii* is a kind of angel. As I have been told by one faithful, there is a miracle related with this angel. In a monastery they were reciting this prayer every day. One day an angel came and showed them that they have to recite a prayer and he wrote with his finger on a stone the prayer that they are supposed to recite. It happened in Mount Athos and they say the stone is still there with the prayer written on it. In order to respect this miracle, the prayer "*Cuvine-se cu adevarat sa te fericim Nascotoare de Dumnezeu cea pururea fericita si prea nevinovata si maica Dumnezeului nostu*" has been made a part of the liturgy prayer.

with the chalice wrapped around with a red cloth and a golden spoon in it and stands in front of the people. Then, the Communion starts.

Sfanta Impartasanie (Holy Communion), which means the faithful, takes one part of the God and God takes a part of the faithful. The choir sings a hymn and people gather in front of the priest. It is most of the times only kids that are under the age of seven and babies that take the Communion. According to the Orthdoox tradition, adults take Communion only 5 or 6 times a year. Since before the Communion the body needs to be sanctified through fasting and prayers (Ware, 1997: 287, note 4) the adults take the Communion very rarely. As the priest's wife's sister once told me that the faithful should take shower and then come to the Church directly before the desire for the Italian coffee and briosche cross from one's mind. Babies and kids until seven years of age are seen like "angels" and they do not commit sins. Therefore, they are believed to be clean and they can take Communion. The kids take the Communion from the hands of the priest through a golden coloured spoon from a golden coloured chalice with their candles lit and then they take a piece of bread, and then walk back the aisle as some people give kids candies, cakes, cookies, chocolates or small packs of snacks. Then, the parents put the candles at the small candle tray in front of the statue.

As the Communion ends, the priest walks down the altar with his cross and book and starts holding the *parastas* service at the table in front of the icon of Mother Mary. *Parastas* is the memorial service for the deceased and is conducted at the end of the liturgical service. The salvation of the soul of the dead person is the responsibility of those who are alive, particularly of his/her family (Crăciun, 1995: 75). The family of the deceased is also supposed to buy all the candles and offer it to the priest, the choir and who participate in the service by circling around the *parastas* table. People, for whose loved one the service is organized for and some other people who want to join in the prayer surround the table with candles in their hands. Both of the assistants of the priest also stand by his side, one of them holding and waving the thurible. The priest also holds candles as he recites prayers, mentions the names of the departed as hymns accompany his prayers. At the end of the service the candles are extinguished and the priest goes to the stand to give his weekly sermon.

The priest's sermon is very important for the parish community, since it is the only means to announce the community news and important events. The Church does not have a a newsletter or bulletin. Only a leaflet that includes the chapter of the Gospel that the priest reads during the liturgy is distributed to the people after the liturgy. Since the church is used by the Romanian community only on Sundays, there is no notice board where the parishioners or those who visit the Church can leave their messages.<sup>440</sup> One or two times, I have seen people leaving notes on the door of the Church in Trento but that was it. The wall facing the church is also sometimes used by the community to leave some ads. Almost every Sunday it is possible to find the brouchures of the transportation company *Atlassib*, which is used very frequently by the Romanians to travel to Romania or to send and receive packages. Since there are some Romanians working in *Cinformi* that attend the Church services, it is also possible to find *Cinformi* Newsletter in the Church from time to time.

If someone cooks food to be distributed after the prayer for *parastas* or for another occasion, the priest blesses the food as the liturgy prayer ends. As soon as the prayer ends, the priest rushes to the entrance with his assistance carrying a bowl of water and a brush made up of basil. The priest recites a prayer and his assistance says *Doamne Milueste* three times. Then the priest throws water with the brush over food and rushes back to the faithful waiting in front of the altar. The Sunday service ends with the final blessing of the priest by drawing cross on the foreheads of the faithful as they kiss the cross he is holding in his hand and the icon of Jesus Christ. As the faithful come forward to venerate the cross, they take a piece of bread cut in cubes, which is called *antidoron*, from a big bowl held by the assistant of the priest and leave the church.

**VII.1.3. Other Religious Services:** First day of September is also the first day of the Orthodox ecclesiastical calendar. The church calendar comprises and conserves the "social memory" and provides a regular cycle for the celebration of religious holy days and feasts (Moberg, 1962: 351). The Orthodox calendar has a very important place in the life of the practicing Orthodox. They can follow the religious feasts and fasting periods from the calendar. The ROC follows the Gregorian calendar.<sup>441</sup> Since there are many Moldovans in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>440</sup> It was not the case in the Church in Verona or Padua. In Verona there was a notice board on the right hand side of the door of entrance, where people who are looking for a job or house or room to rent were leaving notices, while in Padua there was big notice board in the church garden, where the Romanian association *Columna* and Romanians are putting their announcements.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>441</sup> Up until 1923 Inter-Orthodox Congress in Istanbul, which brought together some of the Orthodox Churches, the only calendar used in the Orthodox world was Julian calendar. The Congress decided to use Gregorian calendar from that day on. The Churches in Greece and Istanbul started using the Gregorian calendar in 1924; however, it proved to be a controversial issue and led to divisions. The churches in Antioch, Romania, Bulgaria and Cyprus started using the new calendar, while churches in Jerusalem, Russia, Serbia, Georgia, Poland and the Mount Athos follow the old calendar. There is a 13 days difference between the two calendars. Therefore, for those who follow the new calendar Christmas is on December 25<sup>th</sup>, and for those who follow the old calendar it is on January 7<sup>th</sup>. However, regardless of following the

the parish community, who use the Julian calendar back home, they have to adjust themselves to the Gregorian calendar used by the ROC in Trento. As a Moldovan member of the Church committee told me she is fasting more in order to follow both calendars.<sup>442</sup>

The Orthodox calendars are sold at the Church. There are two types, one big calendar that can be hanged on the wall and one small pocket calendar. On the big one there are photos from liturgies or prayers in different ROCs in Europe under the Metropolitan See in Paris. In both calendars it is possible to see the addresses and contact details of all the ROCs in Italy. The calendar is also important since the Romanian Orthodox community follows the dates of fasting and what they can eat from the Orthodox calendar. Fasting requires following a vegan diet avoiding all types of animal products. There are four main periods of fasting; Christmas fast (from November, 15<sup>th</sup> to Christmas), The Great Fast or Lent (for seven weeks before Easter), The Fast of the Apostles or St. Peter and St. Paul fast (which starts eight days after the Pentecost and ends on June 28<sup>th</sup>; however, the length of the fasting period changes from one to six weeks) and St. Mary's fast or the Dormition fast (two weeks before the Assumption). The Orthodox can also fast on Wednesdays and Fridays throughout the year (Heintz, 2004: 13; Ware, 1997: 300; Döpmann, 2003: 181-2).

**Christmas:** There is a special and short prayer and a program for the children on the night of December 24<sup>th</sup> at the Church. Not many families attend the prayer and the program, which I have attended two times in 2006 and 2007. There are around 20-25 families that attend the prayer. Some families prefer to go to Romania and spend the Christmas there with their families and friends, since it "feels much better and different back home", while some families prefer to stay at their homes in Trento, rather then coming to the Church. I was told that the priest tried to organize choirs and some more activities in previous years; however, he dropped the idea after seeing that not many people attend. The prayer on 24<sup>th</sup> night lasts around half an hour and at almost 20.30 the program for the children starts. The choir starts singing a hymn, while more people keep coming in. The volunteer guy brings a big brown leather chair and puts it right in front of the two icons in front of the altar. The priest gives a very brief talk about the day. As he finishes his talk, the

new or old calendar, the entire Orthodox world celebrates the Easter on the same day in accordance with the old Julian calendar (Ware, 1997: 301-2; Döpmann, 2003: 179).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>442</sup> Interview with the Moldovan lady, who is a woman's committee member of the ROC in Trento on July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

door of the church opens and *Mos Craciun* (Santa Claus) enters the Church with his red bag on his back and kids start running around him in joy.

Santa Claus walks towards the altar and sits on the brown chair prepared for him. The priest tells the families to get closer and take pictures and film their kids with Santa Claus. The priest stands right by Santa Claus' side and he holds a list of the names of the kids. He reads the name of the kid and then kid comes to perform in front of the families in order to get their gifts from Santa Claus. The kids come one by one and sing a song or recite a poem (most of them in Romanian and some in Italian). The priest turns into a showman to encourage the kids to sing, since some feel shy or run away seeing many people watching themselves. The priest kneels down with Santa, holds the kids, he says "Bravo!" to the kids and makes people clap. After a kid is done singing s/he receives a gift, which are placed underneath the Christmas tree on the left hand corner close to the altar with red and green lights and decoration on it. They are all of the same wrapping and shape. They have big *panattone* inside. A teenager helps the priest by carrying the gift packs, while his mother, a tall slim lady, distributes Romanian pastries from a big basket to the kids.

As Santa Claus finishes distributing the gifts, he stands up and takes his red bag. The kids run after him and the priest says a few more words as the Santa leaves, from the same door he has entered. Some people follow the Santa and with him they leave the Church, while some women distribute cookies to the kids. Those who stay in the Church keep on singing Christmas carols from the *Colinde* booklet. When the carols are over, they start shaking hands and wishing each other a merry Christmas by saying *Craciun fericit*. After the prayer on the night of 24<sup>th</sup>, there are morning prayers on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> of December.

While some Romanians stay in Italy for Christmas, some of them prefer to go to Romania. One of the assistants of the priest also went home (Bacau) for Christmas with his family. He and his wife were happy to spend Christmas in Romania after 5 years, since they think even though in Italy Christmas is celebrated, it is not like the way it is celebrated back home. They tell me the Christmas is more than a holiday back home, it is a big feast. Many other church-goers, who cannot go to Romania, long for the past Christmas holidays they have spent in Romania. Moreover, being with family and friends at the place that they are born in is a very important feeling. After the Christmas prayers, there is a special prayer on January 1<sup>st</sup> for protection against the devil and demons, which the faithful deem very important and is done only once a year. January 6<sup>th</sup> is the day when Jesus Christ was baptized by John the Baptist at River Jordan. On this day, the priest blesses the water within white bins. At the end of his prayer, his assistant brings him a big bowl of holy water with a brush made of basil. He dips the brown brush into the water and throws water over and around the table by vigorously shaking his hand around the table. Then he turns to people and asks them to gather around the table and gives them a short talk about the day. After the talk, the priest takes the water bowl and the brush. He walks down the aisle reciting prayers and spreading water over people till he reaches the entrance. People move closer to get touched by water. Then, he returns back to the table in front of the altar. People queue in front of him; the priest touches some holy water with the brush on people's heads and blesses them. The people go and get some water in small or big bottles to drink and to take home, since only once a year they can get this water. Even week after the service people come to get some holy water.

**Easter:** Easter is the most important feast in the Orthodox Christianity (Ware, 1997: 298). The Easter prayer program starts with Palm Sunday and after Palm Sunday there are prayers on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. This year the Orthodox Easter was on April 27<sup>th</sup>. On the Easter Eve, the night of 26<sup>th</sup> the prayer started at 11.00. Starting from the Lent, the Church became more crowded every Sunday, since many people, who were fasting, wanted to confess and take the Communion. On the Easter eve at around 22.45, the doors of the Church are open and many people gather in the Church's garden and within the Church.<sup>443</sup> It is almost impossible to enter the Church. In front of the little storage room, there is a table. Over the table there are cartoon boxes full of thick and thin candles and many plastic glasses in different colors, red, green, blue and yellow. Outside the Church, in the small garden there is another big long table by the wall. The volunteers standing by the table and selling and trying to put candles into the plastic glasses are carrying a badge on their necks, on which it is written: *Consilier Biseric* (Church Councillor).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>443</sup> Since the Orthodox Easter day was within a holiday week this year (25<sup>th</sup> was holiday in Italy), many Romanians preferred to go to Romania and Romanians coming from Bolzano or close to Bolzano went to the ROC in Bolzano; therefore there was relatively less people.

Since the Church is very crowded, one of the parochial council members controls the traffic by standing in front of the door and directing people in and out. As the prayer inside the Church ends, the priest comes out of the Church. The Catholic and Valdese priests also attend the prayer and stand behind the priest. As the ceremony and prayer outside the Church end, people outside the Church start singing hymns in Romanian with candles in their hands. Then, the people enter the Church to listen to the priest's sermon, while the priest's wife and volunteers go into the small room. They take out boxes full of plastic glasses covered with a plastic cap filled with bread dipped in wine, and baskets full of painted eggs.

As the priest finishes his sermon and says: "*Hristos a înviat*!" (Christ has risen), people respond by saying "*Adevarat a inviat*". People in the Church start saluting each other in the same way. For 40 days after Easter people keep saluting and addressing each other like this.<sup>444</sup> Some people hug each other with compassion. The volunteers start distributing the bread dipped in wine. As the Romanian priest walks down the altar, the other two priests follow him carrying big white thick candles with artificial flowers around them. As Pr. Lupăştean walks down the aisle, he starts throwing water over the food baskets people have brought with them to the Church. Even though they are covered, it is possible to see *pasca* (Easter Bread), cheese, salt, sugar, wine, a piece of meat, and fruits within the baskets. Then the priest walks outside the Church and keeps throwing water over food. The families go home (around 04.00) with their blessed food and candles to have breakfast with the family members.

**The Sacraments:** Besides the Sunday liturgy, baptizing ceremonies <sup>445</sup> and weddings are conducted after the liturgy on Sunday afternoons and in some cases on Saturday evenings, are sacraments according to the Orthodox tradition. The sacraments are composed of rites of passage such as baptism, confirmation, first communion, matrimony, and funeral services (Moberg, 1962: 351-2).<sup>446</sup> Almost every Sunday there is a baptism

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>444</sup> Next morning after the Easter, the Church was only half full and very tranquil. After the liturgy, the parish community had lunch together. While the Romanians preferred to celebrate the Easter in the Church, the Moldovans went to attend to two Moldovan feasts to celebrate the Easter.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>445</sup> For baptismal services the families have to pay 100 euros.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>446</sup> There are seven sacraments or mysteries in the Orthodox liturgy, which has reached its final form only in the 17<sup>th</sup> century under the Latin influence: baptism, chrismation, Eucharist, repentance or confession, matrimony, ordination, and the anointing of the sick (Ware, 1997: 275). Fixing the number at seven was for convenience and facilitating catechism (Meyendorff, 1996: 65). A sacrament is a part of the liturgical service that leads to change or transformation through the invocation of the Holy Spirit. All the sacraments have a visible and spiritual element, for instance during the communion the faithful receives the bread and wine, which in fact are the Body and Blood of Christ (Ibid: 274). The three sacraments

ceremony in the Church. Most of them are conducted in Romanian, since the families are of Romanian or Moldovan origin. However, the priest conducts baptisms in Italian as well. Once a Ukrainian Orthodox couple's baby was baptized and neither the parents nor the guests spoke Romanian and the entire ceremony was conducted in Italian. Another baptism ceremony was conducted both in Italian and Romanian. There were two god parents of the baby, one Romanian Orthodox couple and one Italian Catholic couple. Since the Catholic couple did not know the Orthodox rite, the choir guy visited the Italian couple and explained them how the ceremony would be conducted and the priest has explained before the ceremony the main elements of the Orthodox baptism.

There are also wedding ceremonies conducted in the Church.<sup>447</sup> The bride and groom bring icons with them to the Church for the priest to bless. The couple keeps the icon in their bedroom to have a happy marriage. As one volunteer had told me, each region in Romania has different traditions regarding marriage and in her region (Oltenia) the marriage ceremony and celebrations last three days. It is not the case in the ROC in Trento, where the marriage ceremony is only one or two hours. While as a rite of passage Romanians talk about the importance of celebrating it the traditional way, some people prefer to get married in the ROCs in Italy, since it costs less<sup>448</sup> and there are no additional costs such as the trip to Romania and gifts.

Even though they are not sacraments, the blessing of bread, water, icons, anointing with oil, the burial service, prayers for the deceased are also considered as sacramental, since it brings the believer closer to Christ (Ware, 1997: 276). The water in the Orthodoxy symbolizes the creation, life, fall and redemption, death and resurrection and eternal life. Therefore, it is used in baptism, in sanctifying the Church, blessing the food and houses. In the church apart from blessing of the food and people with holy water, the priest visits the homes of the parish to bless their houses with holy water. After January 6<sup>th</sup>, the day when

of baptism, chrismation (or confirmation) and first Communion are closely linked and the baby that is baptized takes the chrismation and Communion the same day (Ibid: 277). The baptism ceremony starts with exorcism and distancing the evil from the baby. Then the baptism water is anointed with oil, which is a symbol of healing.<sup>446</sup> During the baptism, the baby is fully immersed into water in the light brown metallic font. Immersing the baby into the water signifies the death and taking him/her out the resurrection (Ware, 1997: 278; Clément, 2005:110). Chrismation is the anointing of the body of the baby (the forehead, eyes, nostrils, mouth, ears, the breast, the hands and the feet) with ointment. With the anointment the baby receives "the Seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Ware, 1997: 278-9). The hair of the baby is cut, which symbolizes sacrifice.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>447</sup> Marriage ceremony is composed of two parts; Office of Betrothal and the Office of Crowning. The first part is devoted to blessing and the exchange of rings and the second part is devoted to crowning. At the end of the ceremony the couple drinks from the same cup symbolizing the life they will share together (Ware, 1997: 294-5).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>448</sup> At the ROC in Trento the couple, who gets married has to pay 150 euros to the Church, while back in Romania it costs more.

John the Baptist is believed to have baptized Jesus Christ in the river in Jordan, the priest goes to the houses of Romanians to bless their houses with holy water. For the priest to visit their houses, the faithful write down their names, phone numbers and addresses to the list at the table where they sell candles and other things, which also works as an information desk. The faithful has to pay for the religious service.

Besides the blessing of the houses by the priest, the faithful, if they buy a house or a car, might ask the priest to bless their houses or cars. Getting the car blessed is important, since family members travel in it and blessing is needed to ensure a safe journey. I have attended the blessing ceremony of a car. When a couple has bought a second hand car, they have asked the priest to bless it. After the Sunday liturgy, we all went to the car park. The owners opened all the doors of the small blue car, people around have taken out the CDs and other things within the car. They have even opened the motor and the baggage section. The priest, after asking the names he has to recite, started to prayer and then mentioned the names of the family members that will travel in the car. As he finished the short prayer, he dipped the basil brush in holy water and started throwing water on, in and around the car. When he was done with prayers he threw some water on all of us in order to bless us. A group of Italians passing by looked at us with curiosity and amazement, while the priest rushed back to the Church leaving us by the car.

The priest also blesses the icons with holy water. Once a Moldovan guy gifted me a small icon card that he bought from an Orthodox Church in Ukraine. It was an icon of the Virgin Mary, Jesus Christ and Saint Nicholas. Some faithful told me that it should be blessed by the priest, even if it might have been blessed at the church in Ukraine. Therefore I have asked the priest to bless the card, while another lady standing by my side asked the priest to bless a bottle of water. The priest took the card and the bottle and put them on the table and recited a short prayer from his prayer book. When he finished the prayer he sprinkled water with his basil brush on the card, his prayer book and the bottle. Then he broke a small piece of basil brush and put it into the bottle.

**VII.1.4. The Parish Community:** The Romanian community in Trentino region is a big one and keeps growing rapidly.<sup>449</sup> There are around 5,000 Romanians in the whole

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>449</sup> The foreign population in Trento is 37.967, which is 7.4% of the population. The foreign population is in constant growth. From 2006 to 2007 it grew by 14%. 40.1% of the foreign population in the region is from the Central and Eastern Europe, which sends majority of the migrants to Trento (Ambrosini, Maurizio et al. (eds.) (*L'Immigrazione in Trentino: Rapporto Annuale 2008*, Trento: Provincia Autonoma di Trento). Romanian migration to Trentino region is a recent one

region and 1,200 in Trento. In Pr. Lupăștean's opinion, the ROC is the only institution that has high credibility and people's support and confidence within and out of Romania. This is also the case for the ROC in Trento. In terms of the relationship of the Romanian community in Trento with the Church, the priest says that it is possible to talk about three general categories; those who have never gone to church in Romania but started attending in Italy, those who were regular church-goers and they continue this practice in Italy and those (around 10%) who want to forget about their identity, faith and language and negate everything.<sup>450</sup> However, the majority maintains ties with their faith and country of origin:

[...] it is obvious that, being free, everyone chooses his own way and way of doing things, but the majority remains tied to the country, lives here, we can say very well integrated, but maintains the faith.<sup>451</sup>

The figures given by the priest confirms what the priest is saying. The number of registered members of the Church is around 2,000-3,000.<sup>452</sup> The area under the jurisdiction of the Church is quite vast, since up until very recently, the ROC in Trento was the only the ROC in the whole region and the Church has adherents from different parts of the region:

[...] I'd like to say that my parish is as big as the diocese of Monsignor Luigi [Archbishop of Trento]. So you can imagine that at the beginning it was not easy. Our parish was born out of the desire of the faithful, who came here to work. The first ones arrive after 1989, in 1995 they start settling and in 2002 and ...in 2003 with my ordination and my nomination for this parish...I give statistical information, we have around 3,800 Romanians, 800 Moldovan and then other Orthodox of Ukrainian, Greek, Serbian languages and other...Russians that participate rather rarely because they have difficulty with the language. As you know, maybe not everyone knows, we conduct our functions at the Church of San Marco...Today we have a very young community. Only an example, last year we...I baptized 98 kids. This year we are only in January and we are at the 18<sup>th</sup> [baptism]. The community is very lively. This means that the families that are here have settled here. Certainly, there are problems at religious and also at the local level because being a church only for partial usage we cannot see; it is difficult to see each other in other days for other meetings.<sup>453</sup>

and has grown rapidly in the last 4-5 years. According to 31.12.2006 figures of the Provincial Administration of Trento the Romanians was the third most numerous community after Albanians and Moroccans in the whole region. The number of Romanians was 3,996, which was 12% of the foreign population (Ibid: 27). In one year the Romanian population grew considerably (Provincia Autonoma di Trento Servizio Statistica, (2008) "Gli Stranieri Residenti in Provincia di Trento al 31 Dicembre 2006" <u>http://www.statistica.provincia.tn.it/</u>). According to 2007 figures of the report of *Cinformi* on immigration the Romanians rank the first and make up 15.8% of the foreign population. Albanians (15.2%) and Moroccans (11.2%) follow the Romanians (Ambrosini et al. 2008).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>450</sup> Interview by Valentina Sandri with Pr. Lupăştean.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>451</sup> Interview with the parochial council member.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>452</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview with Pr. Lupăștean.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>453</sup> Pr. Lupăștean's speech at Focolare meeting on January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008.

However, despite the number of registered members is very high, every Sunday around 200 people come to the Church.<sup>454</sup> Certain days or periods lead to fluctuation in the number of the church-goers. For instance periods such as late September, where many people come back from holidays and many seasonal workers come to work in agriculture increase the number. Seven weeks before Easter the fasting period starts. Particularly two weeks preceding the Easter, many people come to Church to confess and take the Communion. August, spring and Christmas period when many Romanians try to go to Romania for holidays are the periods when the number of church-goers decrease. The opening of a new ROC in Bolzano has also led to a decrease in the number of Romanians coming from Bolzano and towns close to Bolzano.

The size of the parish community is important in terms of defining the extent of resources available to the Church as well as type and level of activities the Church can offer. It is also important for getting recognition. As the ROC is seeking official recognition in Italy, the Romanian Orthodox parish churches had to indicate the number of their parish members and their budget to the Italian authorities. The ROCs asked their parish community to fill in forms to be submitted for the recognition of the Orthodox Churches in Italy<sup>455</sup> to declare that they (alone or with their families) are Christian Orthodox and members of the ROC that they attend.<sup>456</sup> The ROC in Trento also collected declarations. A volunteer told me that besides the number of members of the Church, the Church had to clearly state the amount of donations and income of the Church as well as the expenses. The Italian authorities wanted to see to what extent the Church can maintain itself by its own means in accordance with the Italian standards.<sup>457</sup>

The average attendance on a typical Sunday is the most convenient way of estimating the number of regular church-goers (Krindatch, 2008: 19). Half (around 20 families and some individuals) of the 200 people that attend the liturgy are regular church-goers (that come to the Church more than once a month and are actively involved in the parish life). Regular church-goers know and greet each other when they meet by saying

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>454</sup> The door of the church does not stay closed during the prayer. Some families come early and leave early, some come and stay for a short time or some arrive late and some follow certain parts of the prayer and go out to the church garden to take care of the kids or chat with friends.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>455</sup> "Aceasta declaratie este necesară pentru recunoașterea Bisericii Ortodoxe în Italia."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>456</sup> Those filling in the form had to give information regarding their legal status in Italy (with or without permit of stay, nationality, citizenship, willingness to stay in Italy and acquire Italian citizenship), address (those without permit of stay did not have to give information regarding their address) and contact information.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>457</sup> The volunteer was critical of this procedure arguing that people come to the Church to pray and they do not always have limited incomes to cope with the Italian standards. Therefore, the procedure in certain senses is overwhelming for the Church's administration.

*Doamne Ajute* (May God help you). During and especially after the services they chat with each other, they visit and see each other in their houses. There is another group of people that attend the Church occassionaly due to their heavy work-load or since some live 100 km or further away and they can only attend once a month,<sup>458</sup> but still in touch with regular church-goers and a third group composed of people that come to the Church very rarely or newly arrived. The people in this group do not seem to know many people, have a vague idea about how things work in the Church (they ask information about who is responsible for what, how much money has to be paid for which service, etc.) and they are not very much involved in the parish life. They attend the liturgy and leave.

The majority of the church-goers are Romanians and to a lesser extent Moldovans. The fact that the liturgy is in Romanian makes it difficult for other Orthodox groups to understand. For a couple of months there were two guys from Eritrea that have attended the services. During the liturgy they were reading the Gospel in their own languages. But their presence was something temporary.<sup>459</sup> There are also two old Italian Orthodox ladies that come to the Church from time to time. At Easter time, since it is the only Orthodox Church in the city, Albanian, Kosovar, Macedonian, Serbian, Georgian and other Orthodox people come to the Church. Besides immigrants, there are Orthodox university students who attend the Easter services. Therefore, the parish community is composed mainly of Romanians and Moldovans. Romanians consider people from Republic of Moldova as Romanians, who have been separated from Romania due to wars and Soviet "invasion" of Moldova. In general the relations between the two communites are good.

One incident in the Church, revealed that there is some tension between some members of the two groups. One Moldovan MA student, who was working for the association *Tremembè* contacted me and asked me if I can help her for the conduct of a small survey about Romanians and Moldovans. She wanted to distribute surveys and then collect them back. I talked to the priest and got his approval. She came to the Church on one Sunday and after the prayer we have started distributing the surveys. While I was chatting with some people, I have seen her talking to a Romanian lady. They seemed to be in a very heated debate. When she came back, she was quite angry. She told me that the Romanian lady started yelling at her after hearing that she is from Moldova. She told her

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>458</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview with Pr. Lupăștean.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>459</sup> They were looking for a job and they might have found it elsewhere and moved to another town or city. They have told me that even though the ROC is an Orthodox Church, there are many differences between theirs and this one in terms of the language, practices and the performance of the liturgy.

that Moldovans steal jobs from the Romanians and Moldovan women are "prostitutes". Moreover, she did not believe that the girl is a student. The Romanian lady was also convinced of the Moldovan student's lack of knowledge about religion and threatened to beat her up if she says she is a member of Jehova's Witnesses. While this case can be seen as an isolated event, it indicates a certain level of tension among some members. I have heard from some parish members that some Italian employers prefer Moldovan caregivers over Romanians and the fact that the Moldovans have a better network in helping each other to find jobs might lead to tensions. However, there is no big conflict within the parish community between the two groups.

The Romanain Orthodox parish community in Trento is a community in the making. Even though migrants feel the need for community and solidarity among members of the community seems inevitable, it requires a lot of effort, devotion and involvement (Wittner, 1998: 367). Community-building is not immune from conflicts and search for balancing different expectations and interests and the community that is formed is not "an undifferentiated mass of members connected in uniform fashion" the congregation has a "cell-like structure, with small units" (Ibid: 368). The parochial council member of the Church has some reservations to call the church-attenders a parish community. In his opinion it is basically the priest and his family, who are taking care of the Church with the help of some other Romanians like him. The priest states that since people in the parish community have very heavy work loads, he has to take care of most of the things himself. The parochial council members are trying their best to assist him. The priest of the Church in Mestre was also complaining of the same problem that he has to handle most of the problems of the Church with his wife, since it is difficult to reach the faithful as the problem requires an instant solution. Therefore, the parochial council member that I have interviewed calls the Church a "family church", since every week different people come to the mass apart from a group of regular church-goers and it is hard to know everyone who comes to the Church, since they are newcomers or are not regular. Moreover, he is of the view that there are many Orthodox, who cannot come to the Church. What he told me was confirmed by another Romanian guy, who has heard our talk and told me that he is a practicing Orthodox but he cannot attend Sunday prayers, since he is working even on Sundays to maintain his family.

There are mid-aged couples with teenage kids and older church-goers at around their 50s as well. The majority of the older group is women. The gender ratio in the parish

community is more or less even; 55% of the Romanian parish community is composed of women and 45% is of men.<sup>460</sup> Most of the Romanian members of the parish are in Trento with their families. It is also the case for almost all the ROCs in Italy that I have visited. However, within the Moldovan group the women are the majority. Apart from the young Moldovan couples, the Moldovan women have left their families in Moldova to work in domestic and care sector in Italy. Since most of them are live-in care workers, on Sunday, which is their day-off, the Church becomes their meeting place. They tend to stick together during and after the services. There is a park next to the Church, where they spend the whole afternoon to sit, eat and chat together, while Romanian families head back home. The Moldovan lady I have interviewed, who works as a care giver and has her husband and some of her family members back in Moldova, was telling me she has only female friends, most of whom are Moldovan women doing the same job. For devout Moldovan Orthodox women away from their families, the Church occupies a central place in their lives and almost all the activities apart from work are related with parish life. The lady I have talked to is part of the woman's committee of the Church and there are other Moldovan ladies actively involved in the committee's work.

The Romanian Orthodox parish community keeps growing and, even though weak, develops ties among the members. The fact that community members are scattered throughout the region's territory and have a busy work schedule does not facilitate community building. Within the parish there are Romanians coming from different part of Romania, both from rural and urban contexts and different educational backgrounds,<sup>461</sup> which does not facilitate community building. While the Church tries to strengthen ties among Romanian community members, the community keeps growing through newcomers as well as second generation.<sup>462</sup> There are 80 baptisms per year.<sup>463</sup> There are also many young people in the church. It is possible to see people from all age groups. There are many young couples with a newborn baby or a little kid. The priest states that in Italy there is a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>460</sup> Interview by Valentina Sandri with Pr, Lupăștean. The statistical data confirm what the priest is saying, since 53% of the Romanian citizens in Trentino are female and 47% are male (Provincia Autonoma di Trento Servizio Statistica, (2008) "Gli Stranieri Residenti in Provincia di Trento al 31 Dicembre 2006" <u>http://www.statistica.provincia.tn.it/</u>).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>461</sup> According to the information given by the priest, the majority of the Romanian community in Trento (around 99%) has a high school degree. Among the high school graduates around 40% has university degree and at around 20% has post-graduate degrees.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>462</sup> The Romanians in Trentino below the age of 18 make up 20% of Romanian community and those below the age of 5 is 8,6%. 75% of the Romanians in the region are between 18-49 age group (Provincia Autonoma di Trento Servizio Statistica, (2008) "Gli Stranieri Residenti in Provincia di Trento al 31 Dicembre 2006".

http://www.statistica.provincia.tn.it/).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>463</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview with Pr. Lupăştean.

change in mentality, which makes the people to come to the church more often. He says: "In Romania old people go to the church and also the kids go to the church. People did not have time. Now they slowly understand that 'we have to go the church'".<sup>464</sup>

Since the majority of the parish members are Romanian speaking, liturgical language is Romanian but for baptisms and marriage ceremonies Italian is also used. The priest says that if in the future there will be 100 Italians and 1 Romanian, they will have to adjust themselves to the needs of the community. However, he is of the opinion that the liturgy would not change, even if the liturgical language changes.

**VII.1.5. Participation, Power and Authority:** Liturgy is the "corporate action" in which everyone is asked to participate. Those who attend the service cannot just observe but they are called take active part in it.<sup>465</sup> Since participating the liturgy means reaching union with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the faithful is asked to participate with all his/her senses (Döpmann, 2003: 118). The position of the faithful during the liturgy is standing, particularly when the priest recites the Gospel and during the Communion. It is obligatory to stand during the Little and Great Entrance, censing and Eucharist (Döpmann, 2003: 122). Standing symbolizes the "original human state raised from the death of sin and freed from submission to the animal part of our nature". However, during the liturgy and prayer the faithful also kneel and prostrate,<sup>466</sup> which is an expression of repentance and worship. Sitting is allowed only during the sermon.

The liturgy in the ROC lasts around three hours and requires one to stand and/or kneel throughout the liturgy, which is physically tiring. However, the presence of the pews in the Church, affects the participation of the faithful to the liturgy. While in Romania the faithful has to stand for around three hours of service, some in Trento keep sitting most of the time and some sit down and stand up throughout the prayer. While some faithful are deeply concentrated in prayer and follow the prayer with utmost care and attention, there are some who follow some parts, go out and come back in or arrive late. This is not totally out of the Orthodox tradition. As Binns argues it is possible to see the elements of both great absorption and informality during the liturgy among the faithful (2002: 39), which is

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>464</sup> Ibid.

<sup>465</sup> http://www.saintsconstantineandelena.org

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>466</sup> As has been explained by one faithful, when they touch their hands to the ground as they make the sign of the cross or they kneel down and put their head on the ground means that we go up meaning we do good things and rise and then do bad things and fall, which means we fail.

also the case in the Church of San Marco. Furthermore, during the liturgy the kids are not obliged to remain seated (Döpmann, 2003: 119). It is not always easy to concentrate as there are kids running around and shouting, parents running after them or people entering and going out and coming back in after chatting. There are many children (most of whom have been baptized in the Church), who attend the liturgy with their parents. The kids run around, scream, shout, cry, and climb the confession cabins. The parents have to carry them out, tell them off, while some others let them play outside, while they miss some parts of the liturgy.

However, it is not only kids that can distract others who are praying. It is possible to see some people whispering to each others ears. Especially during money collection and just before the Communion, the Church gets a little chaotic as some people run to get candles or run after kids to bring them in front of the priest. Even though there are warnings at the door of entrance and confession cabins, every Sunday it is possible to hear mobiles ringing a couple of times during the prayers. Those who are in charge of the maintenance of the Church also show their disapproval by waving their heads or talking about it as the person runs out of the church to talk outside.

Since there is always someone entering or going out of the Church or kids running around at the entrance, those who are sitting in front can concentrate better. Since there is more action at the back seats and at the entrance I prefer to stand or stay in between the narthex and the nave. However, even at the back seats, it is possible to see some people cry as they fervently and silently pray, while some others pray with a compassionate smile on their faces. There are many people who try to accompany the choir that's chanting the hymns. On all the pews before the service they distribute liturgy prayer booklets and a leaflet, which has the part of the Gospel that the priest reads during the liturgy. I see many people following or going through the pages of the booklet and taking the leaflet with them to home.

According to the Orthodox tradition, the Church space is divided along the gender lines. In addition to not allowing the women to the sanctuary, in the Orthodox Church the men and women are supposed to stand on separate sides. The position of the icons at the entrance indicates where people are supposed to stand; men on the right as the icon of the Jesus Christ is on the right and women on the left as the icon of Mother Mary with Baby Jesus is on the left. There are some families that respect this rule and sit separately, particularly very devout regular church-going families. However, most of the families prefer to sit together and also those who come to the Church alone do not also always respect this rule.<sup>467</sup>

There are certain other rules regarding the place and behaviour of women in the Church. The mother that has just given birth is not allowed to enter the nave 40 days after the birth. The mother is allowed to enter the church after the priest's prayer. She has to wait at the narthex of the Church. The priest comes with his prayer book, covers her hair with the cloth, which is part of this priest robe and the mother kneels in front of the Church. The same day the newborn baby is presented to the Church and he/she is baptized.

Most of the women that attend the services cover their hair. Many enter the church with their heads already covered and some do it as they enter the narthex. While some tie the cover under their chins, some tie it behind their necks; however, the scarf does not totally cover the hair. Women cover their hairs to avoid getting the the attention of the men. Even though most of the women cover their hair, some do not. The priest's wife and her sister do not cover their hairs. I have heard only once a woman criticizing the priest's wife for not covering her hair. She was of the opinion that as the priest's wife she is supposed to cover her hairs and should not wear red jackets as she was wearing that day. In her opinion, she is supposed to be the model that other women should follow.

Women are also expected to dress up modestly. However, there are different definitions of what is proper. An old woman's committee member from the Moldova region, which is the most conservative region of Romania in her opinion, told me that women should wear long skirts and loose dresses not only within but also outside the church. She is critical of the way young women dress up; very tight or short clothes. A young Romanian woman from Transylvania instead was telling me in her region even if a woman comes to the church with a short skirt people would say "at least she comes to the church". She has studied theology herself and back in Romania she was using the head cover in Romania but since she came to Trento she does not.<sup>468</sup> The first time I met her in the church she was wearing a short skirt. Another young woman, who is one of the most active members of the parish, was telling me women are expected to dress up decently. A

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>467</sup> In Romania, in the Orthodox Churches this rule is not very strictly respected either. As one parochial council member told me during our chat after the Sunday liturgy, the changing role of women and modern life has had an impact on the relaxation of this rule. However, he was critical of this change arguing that people tend not to care for these things; however, they do not realize that big changes all start with small things.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>468</sup> Interview with a young female practicing Orthodox, who is not a regular church-goer on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2007.

skirt below the knee and a jacket would be sufficient. However, despite differences in opinion regarding the women's dressing, women do not intervene in each other's preferences. Older people and regular church goers dress up neatly but casually. Youngsters and young couples prefer sporty clothes. There are also some women, who dress up very elegantly. It is possible to see women with short skirts, with very tight trousers or shirts, while many women always come to the Church wearing long skirts.

While women's role in the conduct of the liturgy is very limited, men are actively involved. The priest and his two assistants and the choir guy (and sometimes a lady with a beautiful voice accompanying him) orchestrate the prayer in the ROC in Trento. During the services around 10-12 volunteers work for the conduct of the religious services. Almost all the volunteers are part of the Church council and committee. Some volunteers are regularly working; some do not come to the Church every Sunday since they have other responsibilities and for almost all the volunteers Sunday is the only day that they can rest. Among the volunteers there are complaints about the reluctance of many Romanian church-goers to help the Church. They complain that many people leave soon after the prayer and they do not stay to help cleaning the Church or do not want to take responsibilities for the maintenance of the Church.

A young woman from Transylvania, who is in Italy for the last six years with her husband and who is a practicing Orthodox, told me that she regrets that she cannot come to the Church regularly or devote time to support the volunteers since either she has to work on Sundays or stay at home to rest. She thinks that it is hard to organize Romanians, since people do not want to put themselves under certain responsibilities and that's why Romanian Orthodox community does not have a big choir. She and her husband know all the hymns, since they have both graduated from Theology Faculty in Cluj; however, they work whole week and they do not think that they can afford to take this responsibility and come to the Church every Sunday.<sup>469</sup> This puts more burden on the shoulders of those who try to do something for the Church and in some cases leads to tension among the volunteers.

Almost all the volunteers are members of the Church parish council and committee. There are also volunteers that help without any membership in church organs. These are men, whose families are in Romania and are either seasonal workers or have temporary job contracts and have free time to devote to the Church. The council and committee members

besides working for the better conduct of the service, they try ensure the respect and tranquility in the Church for a "decent service". Therefore, how people behave in the Church is an important concern. The fact that people come from different regions with different traditions and some people were not regular church-goers back in Romania and started to come to the Church in Trento creates the concern of teaching people their own traditions<sup>470</sup> and educate them into how to behave in the church. Once the priest has distributed rules about how to behave in the church reminding people to make the sign of the cross as they enter and leave the church, not to talk (amongst themselves or use mobile phones) during the liturgy, to fully participate the liturgy. From the same day onwards they have put warnings about keeping the mobiles off at the door of entrance and on confession cabins. When I asked one volunteer, why the priest issued the rules, she said it was necessary to warn the people, since they sometimes forget they are in the Church. Sometimes the priest also warns the people to keep their mobiles off, as a lady's mobile started ringing during his sermon. The volunteers always appreciate the warnings the priest makes about proper behaviour in the Church. They are even sometimes more critical and think that the priest is too kind and nice to people, who do not respect the rules. The old committee member is particularly critical of young people's behaviors in the Church:

- Here things are a little different or is there anything...
- Yes, the young people do not respect the older ones.
- They do not know or they do not respect?

However, the disciplinary concerns cannot be limited to behaviors in the Church; it has a moral aspect as well. The members of the church organs try to set an example for the others to follow and claim that they have some authority over the younger ones or newcomers in terms of telling them what is morally acceptable. The parochial council member states with pride that he is a person respected by people and he can tell people how to behave and what to do and the people would listen. Since away from Romania, from the family and people that know them, some Romanians think that "they are free to do everything" and "somebody" has to tell them that they cannot:

<sup>-</sup> No no no. They do not know and they do not respect. The thing is they do not feel ashamed. You have to have some shame, you have to cover your head and you can say that ... it depends on the people.<sup>471</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>470</sup> Pr. Lupăștean's speech at Focolare Meeting.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>471</sup> Interview with a Romanian lady, who is a women's committee member of the ROC on April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

If there is a Church to go, if they have something to do, if there is somebody to tell them you can do this you cannot do this, if they start looking at one direction if you say that you cannot go this way or you cannot do other things. If not, this will happen. Do you understand? Because you cannot do bad things, you cannot go to do - God knows - to get drunk or do something. In this sense you have to control.<sup>472</sup>

The old committee member was also quite critical about some young couples, who live together without getting married. She was furious about the fact that they go to the Church and confess but hide this fact. In her opinion they commit a sin and by not telling the priest while they confess, they commit another sin. Therefore, the committee has an important duty. The older members of the committee as community leaders have decided to emphasize teaching certain values and rules to younger generations:

To learn [teach] also to the young ones what are our Orthodox rules, what are our traditions. Because they do not know. Many young people have left home; they have finished school, no? They went to do the high school in another place. They have gone away. They did not have death in family, they do not have ties, they do not know. Even I did not know many of these things. After the death of my mother-in-law for the first time, I got interested. I went to the priest, I asked what I should do for the soul of my mother-in-law, what our religion asks for, what is written in Gospel, what is necessary to do for this. [...]<sup>473</sup>

[...] When we organize parties, you see very well that people stay in the church, they eat, they talk, they remember home. And then by this way I see also what they do, and then when they arrive, and when their parents die, they also know what to do. So we transmit our traditions, in some countries it is called from mouth to mouth. So this way we transmit our traditions because our religion is based on two pillars; one is the Gospel, Holy Gospel and the other is the tradition. Our religion works like this. These two; the Holy Gospel and the tradition. The tradition is respected a couple of times more [she starts laughing].<sup>474</sup>

Despite the efforts of the council and committee members to educate the younger ones about the parish rules, the dynamic form and composition of the community makes it difficult to implement them. However, since people are quick to adapt, there are not very serious problems within the parish community and as the resources of the parish community increase, they organize themselves better and maintain the Church.

**VII.1.6.The Relationship with the Wider Society:** Even though the Church of San Marco is temporarily converted to an Orthodox Church on Sundays and it has limitations

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>472</sup> Interview with the parochial council member.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>473</sup> Interview with a Romanian lady, who is a women's committee member.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>474</sup> *Ibid*. The habit of reading and discussing the Bible among the people of the Orthodox creed is somewhat less common as compared to the Protestants. Instead, the reference is to the Tradition and patristic fathers (Crăciun, 1995: 90-1).

and limited resources, which to a certain extent affect the religious practices within the Church. In Romania the Sunday mass begins quite early, in some parts at around 07.00 - 07.30 and lasts longer than it is in Trento. Especially on religious feasts people seem to miss Romania more because while in Romania the churches are open and full all day, in Trento either the Church is only open for prayer for a few hours or the feast cannot be celebrated at all.<sup>475</sup> In Romania on Wednesdays there is a special prayer for the health and people bring oil, flour and bread to the Church and put it on the table for the priest to bless. It is not possible for Pr. Lupăştean to do this, because it is generally done by a bishop, but there should be at least two or three priests to bless food and oil. Therefore, this practice cannot be performed in Trento.<sup>476</sup> However, the Romanian Orthodox community is happy and grateful to have a church to worship and thankful for the goodwill of the Catholic Church:<sup>477</sup>

Here it is not difficult you know. I have heard in other countries I do not know about the conditions, for example in Germany it is not that open. We, here, are lucky. Italy has been very open for our religion. Yes yes yes. This is the truth; we need to thank the Pope, all the bishops, all because, look, it is not easy to give the church. "Go Romanians, do your mass"...It is not easy. Look! You have another religion. You have to always thank for this.<sup>478</sup>

Some Romanians have a particular fondness for the Catholic Church. Before the opening of the ROC, some of the faithful were going to the Catholic Church. The Moldovan committee member was going to the Catholic Church with the old lady she was taking care of. She was also helping with cleaning the church on Fridays and working for the church voluntarily. In return for her services for free, the priest and the parish community helped her by sending money and gifts for the church in Moldova when she was going to Moldova for holidays.<sup>479</sup> I have heard of another Italian Catholic priest, who helped many Romanians when they have arrived in Trento and who is now doing missionary work in Romania.<sup>480</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>475</sup> Interview with Romanian and Moldovan members of the women's committee.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>476</sup> Interview with the Romanian lady, who is a member of the women's committee.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>477</sup> Interview with the parochial council member.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>478</sup> Interview with the Romanian lady, who is a women's committee member.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>479</sup> Interview with the Moldovan lady, who is a member of the women's committee.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>480</sup> The Catholic priest also knows Pr. Lupăștean. I tried to meet the Catholic priest when he was in Trento for a few days; however, because of his busy schedule we could not arrange a meeting.

When the Pope Benedict approved a document asserting the primacy of the Catholic Church,<sup>481</sup> this created certain tensions between the Catholic and Orthodox churches.<sup>482</sup> The Romanian Orthodox community was very upset about the Pope's comments. The priest talked about the issue during one sermon and told that the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate will write a letter to the Vatican about the issue. The volunteer, I was chatting with as the priest was giving his sermon, told me that the Pope's comments were not helpful for dialogue. She angrily added that there are different interpretations and tradition and they should not be underestimated. However, the problems created with this document were soon overcome.

The week of prayer for the unity of Christians in January is an important ecumenical event. Besides the attendance of Catholic and Protestant priests to the Orthodox liturgy, Pr. Lupăştean attends common prayer services at the Cathedral and Romanian community is also represented at common prayer services for the Epiphany. This gives the local community the chance to know more about the Orthodox tradition. Pr. Lupăştean is representing the community in different occasions and is the person that is referred to by the local institutions and authorities. Pr. Lupăştean is invited to attend meetings organized by *Tavolo Locale delle Appartanenze Religiose* or the Focolare movement as well as conferences, meetings and activities organized by the Romanian association or Italian institutions. However, despite the growing number of Romanian and presence of a ROC in the city as well as activities and efforts of the priest, there is lack of knowledge and interest regarding Orthodoxy as Pr. Lupăştean expresses:

[...] At the local level I feel the need for getting to know each other a lot. Many times my people, I call them mine because the pastor says my sheep, my people say that they [Italians] do not know where they come from, when I talk to someone [he asks] "So are you a Muslim?" They see these as the same thing or you are from a different world. The acquaintance, I see it, is a fact that is lacking [...]<sup>483</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>481</sup> The document asserted that the Catholic Church is "the Church". According to the document, the Orthodox Churches are churches, since they have the apostolic tradition; however, they are "defective" since they do not recognize the primacy of the Pope, while other Christian denominations (namely the Protestant Churches) cannot be considered as churches since they lack the apostolic tradition. "Documento voluto da papa Ratzinger: 'L'unica chiesa di Cristo è quella cattolica" (10 July 2007) <u>http://www.repubblica.it;</u> "Le Chiese protestanti non sono Chiese", 11 July 2007, <u>http://www.corriere.it/</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>482</sup> The priest talked about the issue during one sermon and told that the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate will write a letter to the Vatican about the issue. The volunteer I was chatting with as the priest was giving his sermon, told me that the Pope's comments were not helpful for dialogue. She told me that there are different interpretations and traditions and they should not be underestimated and the community is very upset about the Pope's comments.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>483</sup> Pr. Lupăștean's speech at the Focolare Meeting.

During Sunday prayers many Italian families and some (Italian) tourists stop by the ROC. Many enter the church thinking that it is a Catholic Church. It is possible to see perplexity on their faces and after some time they leave the Church. Once, an old Italian lady entered the Church; however, when she figured out that it is not a Catholic Church, she wanted to leave. The old guy, who was selling the foundation stone cards, was also standing by the door and stopped her and asked her to stay. It was the week of prayer for the unity of Christians and Don Antonio Sebastiani was co-celebrating the liturgy with the Romanian Orthodox priest at the ROC in Trento. To convince her to stay the old guy told her that there is also a Catholic priest in the Church. She smiled uneasily and stayed for some time but it was obvious that she wanted to leave. In a minute or so she said she is leaving. She shook our hands and said good by to us. As she was leaving the old guy tried once more to make her stay by saying: "She is not Romanian either". She just said "very nice" and after saying good by to us, she has left. Even though many people, who come in by chance, do not stay long enough to learn more about the Orthodox rites, some stay and ask questions. Even though rare, some even join in if they distribute food or cake after the prayer and ask questions, while tasting Romanian sweets. There is even an old guy, whom I have first seen at the inauguration of the Romanian association that comes to the Church and follows the liturgy with his Italian Romanian dictionary and asks for information about the Orthodoxy. Particularly baptisms attract their attention and curiosity. I have also seen Italian families attending the baptism ceremonies of their Romanian friends and/or watching the ceremony with a deep interest. The priest also states that there are Italians coming to the Church on Sunday or baptism and staying to ask him questions about the Orthodox tradition.484

Among the parish members there are some Romanian women, who are married to the Italian Catholics.<sup>485</sup> The priest says that some of them after marriage stop coming to the Church, since their husbands want to convert them into the Catholicism. Some convert, says the priest, and some convert only on paper by numbing their feelings, while some keep coming to the Church with their kids. Therefore, mixed marriages pose some challenges both for the faithful and the Church. However, there is a Romanian lady, who is married to an Italian guy. Both her husband and her son are the Catholics. She keeps coming to the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>484</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>485</sup> It is possible for the Orthodox Christians to marry non-Orthodox Christians; however, the marriage ceremony has to be conducted in the Church (Krindatch, 2008: 108).

Church; she is a committee member and one of the founding members of the Romanian association. Therefore, some families succeed in reconciling their religious differences. As stated by the priest, some live-in care workers also encounter problems, when they want to put an Orthodox icon at home for instance. However, there are also those, who did not encounter any kind of problems. The Moldovan committee member says that she did not have big problems because of her faith with the Italian families she worked with. She could put her icons in her room and she could fast. When I asked if her employers knew something about her faith she said:

- Yes a little bit. They are not that different. They also have their icons. They have their icons. Then there is Jesus, the cross hanged to the wall. My lady is not very religious as also a Catholic, we can say. And she does not go to the church much. But the first one yes. I was taking her to the church, we were taking the Communion together. Also the priest knew me.

- Which church?

- The Catholic Church, the Catholic Church. Because, our church had not arrived yet, I was living close, very little, like this house close to this is the church [she shows me the wall of the park, which is 3 meters ahead of us] I was taking something and then the priest was visiting me. Then I was going on Friday [...] I was doing cleaning on Friday. And they have helped me. When I went home for the first time, they gave me a little money for the church. Then I brought some gifts for them. Then we remained as friends.

- Since you have helped them and they have helped you and also the church in Moldova?

- Yes yes. Also the church in Moldova. They have helped, they have made a donation, I carried the money. I did myself and they also did. I am very pleased - But do you go to this church to see, I think there are, friends?

- I went, I went last year. I went to bring, to visit, to meet them. I took them something sweet, I like cooking it. And then we have met. We meet in the street once in a while when I pass, because I am not working here in Trento. But apart from that, I find somebody I knew, I mean in the street.<sup>486</sup>

There was another Romanian care worker in the Church, who was taking care of an old Italian lady. She was bringing the Italian lady to the Church on a wheel chair on Sundays. The priest is happy to see the Italian lady in the Church. Therefore, it could be argued that despite some problems, Romanians in general say that they do not encounter big problems while practicing their faith in Italy and they could reconcile their differences with good will and patience.

**VII.1.7. Concluding Remarks:** The task of this section was to review the parish life in a part-time ROC in Trento. The Church of San Marco is temporarily converted to an

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>486</sup> Interview with the Moldovan lady, who is a women's committee member.

Orthodox Church for religious services and it serves as a Catholic Church other days of the week. Therefore, the parish community and the priest have to adjust to the new setting and make certain changes in terms of organization and practices. Despite the limitations regarding the use of the Church, which has a different architecture internally and externally, the parish community is happy to have their own Church. There is nostalgia for the ROCs in Romania, which becomes more intense during the religious feasts. However, rather than an impediment, this feeling contributes to the intensification of migrant religiosity.

Even though it is functioning since 2003, it is still a church in transition and the community building is not over. Despite the problems, members of the community hope to make it better in time, with new resources and more devotion. Furthermore, the community wants to have their own church in the future. The Romanian ambassador, when he visited Trento, expressed his willingness to make a contribution for the construction of a ROC in Trento. Even though the priest said it may take a long time to realize this goal during his sermon, during our recent interview he told me that there are initiatives and it make take less time than they expect. The construction of a ROC would mean important changes for the parish life and community in terms of religious as well as socio-cultural practices of the Church. The priest believes that even if some Romanians return back to Romania or immigrate to some other places, many families and the second generation growing up in Italy will stay, which is confirmed by many Romanians I have encountered. The priest; therefore, argues that at least one parish will remain in every province in Italy and the ROC in Trento will be longlasting. It remains to be seen what shape the Romanian parish community and church will take in the future.

## VII.2. The Organization of the Romanian Orthodox Churches in Romanian-Italian Transnational Space

As Martikainen argues that migrant religious organizations go through organizational and structural adaptation processes as they try to organize themselves in a migration setting. Organizational adaptation includes the relationship of the migrant parishes with the Mother Churches in the country of origin, the decisions and practices of which directly affect the migrant parishes, as well as local authorities and national legislation (2005: 125-126). Structural adaptation instead "refers to the processes and strategies by which immigrants and their communities adapt to the new legal, social, cultural and organizational structures that differ in varying degrees from those of their societies of origin" (Ibid: 125). It is the task of this section to discuss what Martikainen calls the organizational process.

Even though migrants give up certain aspects of their identity throughout the migration process, religion proves to be resistant to change and in most cases religious identity is kept and reproduced within the receiving context. (Baumann, 2002; Ebaugh and Chafetz 2000, 401–402). Berzano argues that the religious aspect remains dormant for new immigrants to be reawakened in latter phases of the migration cycle (2008: 1). A group of migrants start reactivating religious values and spirituality that they have carried with them paying the way and infrastructure for the transplantation of the religious organizations in the receiving context. In this reactivation first comes the basic needs and practicing religion, followed by full-integration with citizenship rights and then the emphasis shifts to cultural rights and identity (Ibid).

In almost all cases, it is the Romanian community of a city or town in Italy that took the initiative for the opening of a ROC in their town, when they grew in number and they get settled. Pr. Milăsan explains why Romanians want to have their own churches:

[...] Also the Romanians here having a priest, they feel themselves more and more accepted also by the society. They feel themselves more at home. So when a person changes his country in order to work, because 99% is here to work, they feel themselves without roots. Even if we suppose that they find a job, a job and they are paid, they have a certain standard of life, but still they will always feel without roots from a point of view. Since they are in another country, having the priest, the priest can bring a little bit of roots, because they remember their lives, their childhood, when they were going to the church with their parents. The priest is like a magnet that succeeds in having all the community around himself and doing different activities [...]<sup>487</sup>

As the priest's words reveal the ROC facilitates integration into the Italian setting, while keeping them attached to Romania. Therefore, even though the practicing Orthodox can go to the Catholic Church if there is no Orthodox Church in their town, it is not the same thing:

I have just arrived here and there are many who tell me that "Finally! Finally!" There are people that start crying, maybe they remember that there is someone who did not go to Romania for 4, 5, 6 years, so he could not participate the mass. When they come here and see, they remember the rituals  $[...]^{48\bar{8}}$ 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>487</sup> Interview with Pr. Milăşan.<sup>488</sup> *Ibid*.

Religion within the migration context has the power of regrouping and reorganizing people, who go through a process of disorganization or a process of "decomposition and recomposition" (Chiaramonte, 2008: 18). The ritual, which is structured, plays an organizational role in this process of decomposition and recomposition. The migrant churches have a very important function in reorganizing unorganized and atomized migrant communities; therefore, have a function of protection from anomy (Berzano, 2008: 2). The ROC reminds the faithful of their home, traditions, Romania. It creates a familiar space that the faithful miss and long for in a foreign land. It provides a space for reproduction of traditions, while by acting as a reference point for the solution of problems and getting advice facilitates the adaptation to the new setting. In other words, resort to religion is an adaptive means:

The church is a point where the people where the ...faithful feel at home. This is the first point to underscore. Because they at work, in the street, at school do not feel as they are at home, as in Romania. But in the church he says "Father here is a place where I feel as if I am in Romania, as if at home." This is a real fact. Then in the feasts, in traditions, in the feasts, I do not know, through this they share food, all here, the customs, the habits and this is a place, a small Romania. But at the same time it is a way of integrating into the Italian society. Because? Because for instance they ask for many advices about how to take care of, about how to take care of the kids in their context. [...]<sup>489</sup>

Even though the parishes are growing in number all around Italy they are still under construction, since they lack certain resources. The ROCs need more time for better organization of parishes and for a proper set up to meet different needs of the community. This is due to the fact that the history of the Romanian community in Italy is a short one:

[....] the Romanian immigration is very new, in this sense now we are mainly the first generation here. Therefore, it is the first generation immigrants who arrive. Obviously it is the first generation that makes always a little bit of sacrifice. Because first you have to find a job, you have to find a house, so you have to make many sacrifices. Then the kids that come afterwards have to do less, since they have a house, know the language. Therefore, from the organizational point of view it is more difficult for the first generation.<sup>490</sup>

The fact that the ROCs are established with Romanian migrants' contributions and with limited resources, organization of the parish churches in Italy cannot emulate the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>489</sup> Interview with Pr. Roşu.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>490</sup> Interview with Pr. Milăşan.

parish churches in Romania to its full. However, there are certain principles that are respected and observed in a non-Orthodox seting. Within a "normal" or Orthodox context, the organization of the parish churches is done in accordance with the canon law. The canon law of the Orthodox Church is formulated through the Ecumenical Councils up until the Council of Nicea in 787 and through the Byzantine legislative system. The canonical law defines the rules and mechanisms of the functioning and the organization of the Orthodox Churches. Economy and *akrivia* are two elements that inspire the canonical law and balance each other:

[...] economy is looking at the person, his life, his regrets, his problems, the circumstances that define our legislation and perhaps not always to follow the wording of the law. And then there akrivia, which is respecting the wording of the law  $[...]^{491}$ 

The concept of economy (*oikonomia*) is not only a canonical practice but a principle that has shaped the religious outlook of the Orthodox clergy and is a principle that regulates the relations with the world (Morini, 2002: 93). The principle of economy within the Italian context provides the parish priests and community with a certain level of autonomy and flexibility:

Every diocese is autonomous. Not even the Patriarch can tell the bishop what to do in this diocese. The church is autocephalous, autonomous and every unit of the ROC has juridical personality. This is stated in Article 186 of the by-laws of the ROC, 186. 1-8-6, 186. This is the basis for discussion not the opinion of those who do not know. This parish has a sort of autonomy. The Diocese's centre cannot regulate the affairs of my parish, not even the Dean. I can be controlled by them but not told what to do. Naturally if everything goes smooth, no problem I am the boss. Because the parish has juridical personality, the deanery has, the monasteries have, the diocesan's centers have, the archdioceses', the metropolitans' and the Patriarchate each possess juridical personality and that makes the church at the same time very flexible, very flexible.<sup>492</sup>

The canon law gives the parish priest discretionary power to take decisions to respond to the needs of his own parish:

Everything is done quickly, when it is needed together. It is through the channels of the church, through the parish priest because he is responsible for his own people for whatever is done. The Romanian Patriarchate does not interfere, can help but does not interfere in the work of the individuals, of what the parish priest does. Because the Patriarch is the President of the Holy Synod, he is not the boss of the parish. He is not the boss of the head of the dioceses. In the Roman Catholic

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>491</sup> Interview with Pr. Codrea.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>492</sup> Interview with Rev. Prof. Stan.

Church yes the Pope is the one. But not here, it is not a pyramidal structure but the sphere... No orders from the Patriarchate go to parishes.<sup>493</sup>

While within its homeland, the organization of the parish churches develop naturally, within the migration context, the canon law is observed to the extent that it is possible depending on the resources and circumstances:

Well in a normal context, which we talk about is a church, I do not know, a parish church in Romania, Greece or Russia. Well, all the rules are well defined. Instead within the context of immigration we are trying to do whatever we can.<sup>494</sup>

Therefore, the flexible organizational law of the church gives the church an advantage in terms of the organization of new local parishes in a new context. The ROCs under the jurisdiction of the Romanian diocese in Italy have a high degree of autonomy and discretion, which stems from the internal organization of the Orthodox Churches in accordance with the canon law. Rev. Prof. Alexandru I. Stan defines this organization as "honeycomb" way of organization depending on the size and the contributions of the migrant community and argues that high degree of autonomy renders the church organization very flexible and efficient and facilitates adaptation to the new context:

The Orthodox Church works like a honeycomb...and every hole is independent from the other but if the bees want to go out and bring honey, they go together or individual but bring it there, bring it to the honeycomb. The same is true for the ROC. The queen of the honeybee does not impose anything on the bees, but they do, they work very hard.<sup>495</sup>

Pr. Rîmboi's statement while confirming what Pr. Stan says, also underscores the fact that being out of Romania adds into the autonomy of the parishes:

But anyway in the way we organize ourselves we are very much autonomous. Because the Romanian reality out of... in diaspora is different here, also the problematic is very different from the way we organize the pastoral life, the prayers. For this we have certain autonomy because we are in a different framework, in countries such as here in Italy in a Catholic country, in a free country...<sup>496</sup>

While large scale Romanian migration to Europe started in 1989, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries many Romanians immigrated to the US and they organized their own parishes there. The organization of these parish churches in the US has led to the creation

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>493</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>494</sup> Interview with Pr. Codrea.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>495</sup> Interview with Rev. Prof. Stan.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>496</sup> Interview with Pr. Rîmboi.

of an internal organization model for the ROCs in diaspora, which is followed in the Italian context.<sup>497</sup> There are two main organs of the parishes in Italy; the parochial council and the committee (of the women). The parochial council takes care of the administrative issues, while the committee deals more with practical as well as socio-cultural aspects of the parish life. However, this is not a very rigid division of labor, since the principle is to involve the people that have willingness and time to do something for the Church. One of the oldest members of the parochial council in the ROC in Trento, who has been actively involved in the initiative for the opening of the Church, defines a council member as "a person who wants to help, gives his free time as a volunteer to do something."<sup>498</sup> He argues that:

Yes, there are many many initiatives to take. There is a lot to do, there is cleaning, everyone does according to his capacity. You have to see what is necessary. Because when I have started I was the first to come and the last to leave. ...To do whatever I can.  $[...]^{499}$ 

Pr. Matei says that since all the parish members have long working hours and it is difficult even for members of the parochial council to devote time for the maintenance of the church. Therefore, the priest and his family and a few very devoted members try to take care of the church's cleaning, preparation for the services and other matters related to the church administration, while others try to contribute as much as they can, depending on the time and resources at their disposal. He also states that many members do not want to have the responsibility of a duty alone but prefer to share it. For instance the cashier, who is responsible for selling candles, icons and prayer books during the liturgy, rather than doing it alone agreed with a friend to do it in turns in order to follow some part of the liturgy. Moreover, since some people are working even on Sundays or have some other responsibilities they cannot arrive at the church before the liturgy starts. Therefore, sharing responsibilities emerges as a solution for the absence or late arrival of another member, which was also the case in the ROC in Trento.

In the classical structure of a parish council there is a councillor for church finances; one for social sphere and one that is in charge of administrative issues. It is a simulation of how a bishopric is organized.<sup>500</sup> The number of the members of the parochial council depends on the size of the parish and the number of people who wants to be actively

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>497</sup> Interview with Pr. Verzea.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>498</sup> Interview with the parochial council member.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>499</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>500</sup> Interview with Pr. Roşu.

involved. The assembly of the priests at the Metropolitan Church in Paris in February 2008 has taken the decision to fix the number of members of the parochial council at 12. However, some communities are bigger and fixing the number at 12 might raise problems such as alienating the members, who deem the status of being a member very important as is the case in Padua:

This is a problem. Because I have thought that the community is very big so that I can choose as many members I want. To give some responsibility and also recognition to people who help the Church, the community. A responsibility, a place in the council but for them it is also ... a recognition. Because being a member of the council is an important thing. With the new statute that we have approved last month in Paris, I have seen that 12 people have been admitted. I, for not lengthening it – the meeting in Paris – too much, did not raise this issue. But we will talk more attentively at the local level. When we meet the Diocesan Bishop... To be able to have more people, I have around 20 people in the council and another 20 in the committee. These are the two pillars.<sup>501</sup>

The parochial council member in Trento also stated that being member of the council is important because the Church is something stable that will always exist. Being one of the oldest members who have been involved in the opening of the Church, he is quite confident that old members cannot be sent out of the parochial council and they have a fixed place there.<sup>502</sup>

The priests try to get the volunteers that they work in close collaboration into the parochial council. As Pr. Verzea told me that the members are elected among the people who volunteered to help the parish. However, he suggested names of some people who are close to him and help him with the organization of the church activities. The priests also try to strike and preserve a balance within the community by incorporating representatives of different groups into the council, which can take different forms. While Pr. Babula in Ivrea tries to have representatives from different areas and localities close to Ivrea where his parishioners have settled in Italy, the priest in Venice-Mestre try to have representatives of Romanians coming from Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and different regions of Romania, since his parish is composed of Romanians from these countries and regions.

The committee of the ROC is mainly composed of women. According to Pr. Verzea this division of labour between men and women in the church, men being the members of the parochial council and women being the member of the committee is not an obligatory one. However, in many of the churches I had the chance to visit it was the case. In Pr.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>501</sup> Interview with Pr. Verzea.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>502</sup> Interview with the parochial council member.

Verzea's opinion this is because the committee deals with more practical aspects of the parish's life, while Pr. Babula argues that women have this "honour" to be women and they are very good at dealing with monetary issues.

As one of the active and older members of the committee of the ROC in Trento states, the committee is involved in the charity work, cleaning the church, cooking food and organizing or representing the Church at cultural activities such as People's Festival or at the *Epifania dei Popoli* (Epiphany of the People) at the Cathedral of Trento:

The committee can organize all the charity work, can organize a library, or many things related with charity, cleaning or like this to prepare [food]. Because you know we have special days for the deceased, because we have four special days a year for the deceased. And in addition to this also this Palm Sunday, when our Lord entered in Jerusalem and this is and this is we remember many deceased.<sup>503</sup>

Besides cooking and the charity work, when there is the need for visits to the ill people, preparation of the food, and distribution of money for the birth of a baby or for certain crises situations that families go through, the women's committee take the responsibility to make the necessary arrangements. At the ROC in Mestre the committee takes care of duties, which are related with social work and assistance as well as cleaning of the church. The women also take care of most of the shopping and cooking and prepare the food packs to be distributed after the liturgy. They help women that have no place to stay or a job. The women's committee in Trento has the duty to make arrangements for the representation of the Church in cultural festivals and initiatives.

Apart from two principal organs, some ROCs have associations for young people as is the case in one of the churches in Turin and in Venice-Mestre; however, it all depends on the resources available to the churches. Since the ROCs use the Catholic Churches, some are asked to pay a rent, while some has to pay for the maintenance bills of the church. The maintenance of the ROCs and church activities are all arranged with the contributions of the Romanian Orthodox communities.<sup>504</sup>

Despite all the obstacles and lack of or limited resources, the Patriarchate's reactive stance at the initial stages of migration was reversed with very proactive stance of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>503</sup> Interview with a Romanian lady, who is a women's committee member.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>504</sup> Some communities pay the salary of their priest as well. However, most of the priests are overburdened not only with the requirements of the Romanian communities in their cities, but also with the need to work to maintain themselves and their families in Italy, since none of the priests I have talked to receives any salary from the state and the contribution they get from the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate is meager and symbolic, which amounts to something around 200 euros. According to the account of Pr. Matei there are even priests who work at night to sustain their families and the church.

ROCs in Italy as they entered into the Italian religious landscape. Today, it is possible to talk about a well functioning network of the ROCs in Italy. There is continuous communication and information flow among the ROCs. The Vicariate, now the Diocese of the ROCs in Italy, communicates the latest developments and decisions regarding the parishes through e-mail. There is also a monthly journal in Romanian published by the Metropolitan Church in Paris that is sent to the parishes for the dissemination of information and keeping the parishes updated. There are also regional meetings among the churches in Italy. The priests in Northern Italy gather occasionally in Milan. For the problems of the parish churches the meetings with the Diocesan Bishop and every year there are assemblies, which gather priests in Paris for the discussion of the problems and future prospects.<sup>505</sup>

Besides the meetings organized through the Diocese and Metropolitan Church local parishes establish and maintain contact through official as well as personal ties. For North-East Italy, it is possible to talk about a closely knit regional network working through personal ties and friendship among priests facilitated by geographical proximity. Priests may attend prayers for certain occasions as was the case in May 2008 for the priest of Trento, his family and some of the church-goers to attend a religious prayer and dinner organized at the ROC in Bolzano. The friendship and personal relationship among the parish priests, informal relations such as playing football together, and meeting in the evenings, emailing or calling each other can also contribute to the well-functioning of the ROCs. The priests can call each other to ask for advice, to inform each other or to exchange experience regarding the parish life or they arrange the dispatch of church journals or books.<sup>506</sup>

In this section we have discussed the organizational adaptation of the ROC to the Italian setting. It could be argued that despite the problems, the ROCs have succeeded in establishing a widespread and well-connected network and constructing a Romanian-Italian Orthodox space and incurred some changes due to limited resources and lack of recognition from the Italian authorities. However, the transformation during the adaptation process cannot be restrained to organizational changes. Transplantation into the new context brings with it the structural adaptive practices and changes in the role of the Church or the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>505</sup> Interview with Pr. Valdman.<sup>506</sup> Interview with Pr. Verzea.

Church's practices gain a new meaning and value within the transnational migration context, which is discussed in the next section.

## VII.3. Changing Mission of the Romanian Orthodox Churches in Italy

As has been mentioned in the previous section migrant religious organizations go through structural adaptation processes, which refers to the adaptation of migrant communities and organizations to legal, social, cultural and organizational structures of the new setting (Martikainen, 2005: 125). Since adaptation process for a religious institution is an innovative one, rather than being mere copies of the religious institution in the homeland they are "new social formations" (Ibid: 133). One of the main challenges that religious organizations face is to be more responsive to the needs of the communities that are beyond the realm of the religious. Different from the role they play in the traditional homeland, migrant religious organizations act both as religious and community centers (Ebaugh and Chafetz: 1999, 599). The transformative processes that the ROCs in Italy go through are no exception to this formulation.

VII.3.1. The Romanian Orthodox Churches as Community Centers: The ROCs are the main institutions that Romanian migrants turn to within the Italian context not only to worship but also to get help, meet or reach out to other Romanians and re-produce their identity. The Orthodox Church is a social space and community centre where Romanian migrants can meet, speak in their native language, exchange information regarding employment or other basic needs, share feelings, make new friends, have a sense of community and not lose touch with Romania and their Romanian identity.

Krinidatch argues that for the Orthodox Christians, the church is the place of worship and the idea of the church as sort of a "social club" is foreign to them. Even though as a religious institution, the ROCs' main mission and activities are within the religious sphere, the migration experience and transnational context turns them into a community centre confronting the church to take on social and cultural responsibilities. The priests, while reminding the main vocation of the Church, talk about the need for the churches to work as community centers:

The ritual is the real vocation of the Church, no? But also from the point of view of the relationship of the people. Since when the immigration is born in the world, the churches have been the point of gathering for everyone.<sup>507</sup>

The phenomenon of the immigration comprises also this. When the people move, they bring with them their habits and religions. And the Church, which is an ins..institution that wants to respond to whatever needs they have from the spiritual point of view and if possible from the material point of view for its believers. Because the Church ... we can see the Church like a body. The head, the head is Jesus. And the body with blood with all the organs is believers, the Christians. The Church is an institution, which is guided by Christ. If your one hand hurts, the other also hurts. If your head hurts, your body suffers. This is how the Church sees it. And for this, the believers has gone out of their community in Romania, they came here and we cannot leave them without assistance, without religious, without any other type of assistance, social, all...<sup>508</sup>

The ROCs in Italy are the main reference points for the Romanian migrants in Italy and the ROC in Trento is no exception to this. It is an organization that many Romanians turn to regardless of the fact that they are practicing Orthodox or not. Therefore, in addition to the religious functions, the Church is expected to fulfill social and cultural functions. One of the parochial council members of the ROC, who arrived in Trento 10 years ago when there were only a few Romanians in the city, argues that at the beginning the Church was a meeting point. Almost everyone was going to the Church to ask for help for their problems and needs. However, at that time the community had different types of problems:

When I came here, Romania was not a member country, now it is a member. Now it has changed, also driving license, my wife and I had to do again everything from the start. And everything, selling the house, I had to pay 6,000,000 lire to do everything, to have residence permit, to have family reunification, to bring my wife, to find the doors always open. So, all the things were made. Now it is not easy because Romania is in European Community.<sup>509</sup>

Within 10 years time many things have changed. Visa requirement for Romanians has been abolished by the EU in 2002 and in January 2007 Romania became the member of the EU, while Romanians became the EU citizens. Moreover, there are institutions such as *Cinformi* in Trento that provide migrants with information, guidance and support. There are cultural mediators that help migrants at *Questura* and local institutions if they do not speak Italian. Migrants also have more resources at their disposal. Therefore, comparatively things have improved:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>507</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>508</sup> Interview with Pr. Babula.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>509</sup> Interview with the parochial council member.

Once there were not all these things. For those who arrived there was not any mobile. For job calls if one had a mobile in a house of nine people, everyone was calling with this mobile. Now everyone has a mobile. <sup>510</sup>

In time the community grew in size and the members of the community became regular and settled. They have relatively better financial conditions and there are no obstacles in the way of their mobility. Therefore, he is of the view that now since the community is settled, the Church has become a place for remembering the loved and deceased ones, for prayer, not for "other things". The same view was expressed by the priest in Mestre who argued that those looking for jobs and things other than God came only at the initial stages of the foundation of the Church but later on people come for prayer. What he says is partially true, since the community in question is still a very mobile one and there is circulation of members within and out of Italy. There is also continuing migration from Romania, which makes the Church an important point of reference for newcomers. Moreover, the Church continues to be the main place of gathering and socializing, where people can exchange information, share problems and find solutions. This is confirmed with the statement of the committee member:

Many come only to ask for work, how to find a house, to ask for recommendations. Or they come always later. You see that they always come, you know. Look, there are many who always want to come, but cannot because they either work or live far away.<sup>511</sup>

Like this we met each other, we have found jobs, we have found houses, we have exchanged you know. "The laws, have you heard of this law, that one". And this helps a lot. We... for us...the Church is very important because the first thing you know is our religion...we meet each other, we find each other, friends. Look I was sick. Do you know how much they have helped me? They have helped me, they took me to the hospital; they have helped me with money. Do you know they have helped me, they have brought food. I went to the hospital; they have taken me to a house with the car for free. They came to see me at the hospital. They have also bought me meat, also milk, also fruit, also vegetable...many of these things. Because we met each other in the Church. Because otherwise where?<sup>512</sup>

The church is a reference point not only for the Romanian Orthodox migrants but also for those who want to contact the Romanian community. An Italian enterprise, which helps the Romanians to find jobs in Italy, contacted the ROC in Trento to reach out to the Romanians already in Italy looking for a job as electricians and medical assistants, and in

<sup>510</sup> *Ibid.* 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>511</sup> Interview with a Romanian lady, who is a women's committee member.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>512</sup> *Ibid*.

the construction sector and other sectors. One of the owners of the enterprise was introduced to the parish by the priest during his sermon. After the sermon with the help of the priest's wife the owner has started distributing application forms to be filled by the parish community members at the Church. The owner told the Romanians that his brother is in Romania to recruit workers. The firm gets a commission from the workers after placing them at an appropriate post in accordance with their skills. Many Romanians were interested and consulted the guy. Therefore, the Church got actively involved in helping Romanians to find a job.

As Pr. Lupăștean states besides the urge to get information, problems also make people turn to the Church:

[...] there are those that unfortunately a trouble must come to them to turn to the church. Because unfortunately bad things make us turn to God. And here bad things are plenty. So something that goes bad makes them see, they have to see what goes wrong. And slowly they see the situation that does not work, since it creates many problems and we try to give them a hand and help them.<sup>513</sup>

When asked what type of problems the Romanians have in Trento the priest states that "all types of problems from normal life to housing, from work to family". Different type of social problems that emerge throughout the migration process requires the ROC to find solutions:

[...] We try only to cooperate with the others for how to find the right way for, we can say, finding solutions. So either we call friends or we call people that ...that for finding solutions. And this in a sense gives us satisfaction. In theory we don't have anything social written: "Here we give social assistance" but but indirectly we do it. Because you find yourself in certain situations, you have to do it...<sup>514</sup>

The Romanian Orthodox priests and the ROCs have to respond to different types of problems that arise throughout the migration process. Negative publicity about Romanians in mass media with its serious impact on the image of the Romanians is an important challenge for the ROCs, since the ROCs have to put more effort to undo the negative effects. When a 47 year-old Italian lady in Tor di Quinto district of Rome was beaten up, harressed and killed by a 24-year-old Roma man from Romania<sup>515</sup> negative representation of Romanians in mass media has tarnished the image of the Romanian community in Italy.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>513</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview with Pr. Lupăştean.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>514</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>515</sup> "Roma: Violentata e Gettata in un Fosso. Donna in Fin di Vita, Arrestato un Rom", *La Stampa Online*, 31 October 2007.

Some Romanians became the target of xenophobic attacks in different parts of Italy. After the incident some Romanians in Trento faced certain problems. One of the ladies that I have interviewed told me that she saw a job announcement on a shop's window asking only Moldovans and Ukrainians to apply for the job.<sup>516</sup> Some Romanians have told the *Cinformi* that the employers refused to employ them because they are Romanians. At the Church some people told me that the Romanians without papers in the province have been arrested and sent back to Romania. A Romanian church-goer, who had a gas station (he now closed down the gas station and founded a Romanian-Italian firm based in Romania and he travels back and forth but lives in Trento), had been threatened many times and told to go back to Romania by some Italians.<sup>517</sup>

As the local representative of the Romanian community in Trento, Pr. Lupăștean had to respond to negative publicity and discrimination against the Romanians in Trento and in Italy. In a newspaper interview, he reminded the Italians that in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Italians from Trentino immigrated to Transylvania and they were well-integrated, even though there were some among them who were causing problems or fighting with others. While arguing that the situation of Romanians in Italy today is similar and the majority of Romanians are well-integrated, he added: "the history is always the same, it repeats itself, only places change".<sup>518</sup>

When a 37 year-old Romanian has attacked, stabbed and raped an African woman at the La Storta train station at north of Rome, the Romanians were on the headlines again.<sup>519</sup> Very recently, anti-Romanian feelings were on the rise once again due to a rape incident committed by Romanian nationals in Italy. Four Romanians that are charged with brutal gang rape, carried out on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2009 in Guidonia (a town close to Rome), and two Romanians for giving them shelter were arrested on January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009.<sup>520</sup> Soon after the incident, some immigrants were attacked<sup>521</sup> and comments associating Romanian nationals

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>516</sup> Interview with a Romanian lady, who is a women's committee member.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>517</sup> Dan Cutean responded by saying that if Romanians have to go back, Italian businessmen in Romania have to leave as well. Luca Marognoli, "La Denuncia di un Benzinaio Romeno: 'Insultato e Minacciato dai Trentini", *Trentino*, 10 November 2007, 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>518</sup> Luca Marognoli, "Romeni nel Mirino: 'Tornate a Casa'", *Trentino*, 10 November 2007, 15.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>519</sup> "Roma, Violentata Studentessa: Arrestato Romeno di 37 anni", *La Repubblica Online*, 19 April 2008.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>520</sup> "Stupro a Guidonia: 6 Arresti: Incastrati dalle Intercettazioni Telefoniche", 27 January 2009, http://www.corriereromano.it/news/4904/Stupro-a-Guidonia-arrestati-romeni.html

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>521</sup> The event shook the residents of Guidonia, A group among the residents has protested in front of the police station and there was an attempt to lynch the Romanians that committed the crime, as they were being taken out of the police station. "Stupro a Guidonia, Arrestata Banda di Romeni. La Rabbia della Gente: "Maiali!". 27 January 2009, <u>http://www.rainews24.it/Notizia.asp?NewsId=103066</u>. After the arrest of Romanians, a Romanian shop was attacked by a handmade bomb and some Romanians and Albanians were beaten up. Anca Mihai and Cornel Toma, "Români din Guidonia Se Tem pentru Viața Lor", 29 January 2009, <u>http://www.adevarul.ro/articole/romanii-din-guidonia-se-tem-</u>

with criminality became widespread. 522 The Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed concern about the attacks on the Romanians nationals and "aggressive" tone of Italian state officials, the police and the media regarding the Romanian citizens in Italy.<sup>523</sup> After the incident the Romanian Orthodox priest of the ROC of San Pietro alla Carità in Tivoli, Pr. Ion Florea, who defines himself as the "spokesperson"<sup>524</sup> of the Romanian community told the press that there are 3,000 Romanians living in Guidonia and the majority of Romanians living in Tivoli are well-integrated. However, he stated that the situation is tense and Romanians are frightened; therefore, the Romanian community is also the victim of the recent crime. He also added that the Romanians involved in the crime are not church-goers and the community does not know them; instead, they attend a Romanian discotheque in the area. The ROC in Tivoli also made a public declaration to deplore the criminal act and express its solidarity with the victims of the attack.<sup>525</sup> The Church; therefore, responded by condemning the attack and underlining the fact that the Romanian church-going community is well-integrated, while the trouble-makers are very few and are not members of the parish community. Similarly Emilia Stoica, the President of the Romanian League in Italy through a communication stated that Romanians community is an honest and hard-working community, emphasized the contributions made by the Romanian community to Italian economy and society and asked the Italian people to not to condemn all the Romanian community for the crimes committed by some "bad apples".<sup>526</sup> Despite the efforts of the Romanian and Italian officials, the ROC and Romanian associations and some Italian citizens or associations, growing anti-Romanian feeling is an important problem that has the potential to define future plans of the Romanian community.

<sup>&</sup>lt;u>pentru-viata-lor.html.</u> A few days later an Indian immigrant was attacked and burned in Rome by three Italians. Carlo Bonini, "Immigrato Picchiato e Bruciato: Confessano 3 Ragazzi, Uno Ha 16 Anni", *La Repubblica Online*, 1 February 2009. Other group rape crimes committed by Romanians just after the incident in Guidonia attracted more media attention on the Romanian community in Italy. "New Rape Case Stuns Italy, Three Romanians Detained", *Herald Bucharest Online*, 31 January.2009; "Nuova violenza di gruppo: 5 arresti", Corriere della Sera, 31 January 2009.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>522</sup> According to the figures given by the Italian Ministry of Interior 58% of the rape crimes in Italy are committed by the Italians, while 9% of it is committed by the Romanian nationals in Italy. In Rome the figures are considerably different. In Rome 35% of the rape crime is committed by Italians, while 31% of it is committed by the Romanian nationals. Anca Mihai and Cornel Toma, "Români din Guidonia Se Tem pentru Viața Lor", 29 January 2009, <u>http://www.adevarul.ro/articole/romanii-din-guidonia-se-tem-pentru-viata-lor.html.</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>523</sup> "MAE Takes Steps to Prevent Xenophobic Attitudes to Romanians"

http://crib.mae.ro/index.php?lang=en&id=31&s=78626

http://www.sitopreferito.it/notizie/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>525</sup> Miruna Cajvaneanu, "Razbunanea Italienilor: Atentat cu Bomba Asupra unui Magazin Romanesc de Linga Roma", 29 January 2009, <u>http://www.hotnews.ro.</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>526</sup> http://www.lri/it; Emilia Stoica, "Una Comunità Onesta Che Lavora", *il Cittadino*, 29 January 2009, 26.

As Pr. Matei has told me many Romanians of his parish dropped the idea of applying for the Italian citizenship due to the negative publicity against Romanians.<sup>527</sup>

It was a rape crime committed by a Romanian national and the tension it caused that made the Romanian ambassador cancel his trip to Trento on April 22<sup>nd</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>, 2008 for the opening of an honorary consulate in Trento. The meeting was postponed to July, 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> 2008 by *Arta-a*.<sup>528</sup> At the meeting with the ambassador, one of the urgent issues for the Romanians was a consulate in Trento that can issue official documents. Romanians were complaining about the bureaucracy for registering their kids to Italian schools or bringing their families to Trento. The new consulate; however, cannot issue documents for Romanians for the time being. Therefore, Romanians still have to go to the Romanian Consulate in Milan, which is overloaded with work, to obtain documents, passports and to do other paperwork.<sup>529</sup> Despite its limited functions, the honorary consulate is trying to disseminate information to the Romanian community by leaving info sheets and brochures at the Church's desk on work permits and legal procedures in Italy.

Besides bureaucratical problems, the ambassador's visit revealed some other problems of the Romanian community in Trento. During the meeting with the ambassador, with the help of Pr. Lupăștean one lady could tell the ambassador that the Italian social security officials took her kids from her and her jobless husband and placed them in a state institute, since they failed to provide healthy environment for bringing up their children.<sup>530</sup> Another problem that Romanians face is housing and during the ambassador's visit this issue was brought to the attention of the local media. Iliana Tomoiaga, who is the owner of the shop that sells Romanian food and wines and who is also the vice-president of the Romanian Association *Arta-a* in Trento, could not rent a flat, because the owner of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>527</sup> Interview with Pr. Matei.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>528</sup> The ambassador came to Trento to open the 4<sup>th</sup> Honorary Consulate of Romania in Italy in addition to three others in in Genoa, Florence and Asolo. The temporary office of the Consulate will be at *Informatica Bancaria*, since the Honorary Consul Maurizio Passerotti is the president of *Informatica*. The main mandate of the consulate will be to improve the image of Romania and commercial relations, since there are 5,100 Romanians, 180 Romanian entrepreneurs and 25,000 Romanian-Italian enterprises in Trentino. Peretti, Daniele. "Arriva in Città il Consolato di Romania", *Trentino*, 10 Luglio 2008, 14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>529</sup> Since for my first visit I had to get a visa to go to Romania, I have been to the Romanian Consulate in Milan two times. It was impossible for me to reach the consulate via phone or e-mail. The phone was always busy. When I went there with my documents there were many people waiting in a long queue.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>530</sup> She complained about the social workers and Italian neighbors. The ambassador was not happy to hear about the issue. He expressed his frustration by saying that he is tired of hearing about this issue. He stated that he has to deal with cases like this every day and just before coming to Trento he had a meeting with Italian Minister Carfagna about the situation of Romanian kids who have been taken from the families. This issue led to a long debate in the hall. While some consulate officials criticized the Italian social workers, the secretary (Italian lawyer) of the Romanian Association and representatives of provincial administration were of the view that the system in Trentino works quite well and there is no need to debate the issue in this gathering. Finally the ambassador asked the lady to talk to him after the meeting.

house refused to sign the contract after realizing that she is a Romanian national. When the Romanian ambassador was asked, he expressed his disillusionment by saying that if a well-known and established person has difficulty in finding a house, one can imagine what kind of difficulties the rest of 5,100 Romanians who live in the region encounter.<sup>531</sup> The newspaper article states that there are many like her case and Romanians face some other type of discriminations daily. One of the main problems for those who have entered Italy clandestinely before Romania's accession into the EU is the bureaucratical problems in family reunification procedures. Even though the Romanians go through difficulties, they prefer to keep silent and turn to their own community, particularly to the ROC.<sup>532</sup>

Care drain is an important and underestimated consequence of emigration in Romania. Care drain has a severe impact on family relations and relations with relatives and friends back home (Sandri, 2008: 111). There are many within the parish community that live in silent pain and suffering every day for the loved ones that are far away and turn to the Church for consolation. The suffering is expressed in daily conversations and prayers. It is particularly women that express this feeling of loss, since traditionally women are the care givers of the family for the children as well as the elderly and their departure to work abroad has had a deeper impact on those left behind; therefore, the women feel guilty. One of the interviewees during my fieldwork told me in tears that when she left for Italy she had to delegate the care work she was performing both for her parents and her parents-in-law to her sister and some other family members.<sup>533</sup> Her parents passed away but she still sends home money for medicine and daily subsistence of her parents-in-law. Another interviewee, who has left her husband and her younger daughter in Moldova, was expressing her concern and worries about them. She was particularly concerned about her husband, who has to stay alone at an old age.<sup>534</sup> There are also some men that are very depressed and worry for the loved ones back home. My conversations and interviews with some seasonal workers also reveal the fact that even if the family member is involved in temporary

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>531</sup> In an interview he gave to the local newspaper, the Romanian ambassador was of the view that with regards to the economical relations the cooperation between Italy and Romania is at an ideal level. However, with regards to social problems Romania expects cooperation and understanding from the Italian side and treatment of the Romanian citizens, who are also EU citizens as equals, as the other EU citizens. For fighting criminality, Romania has offered collaboration of Romanian and Italian security forces and states that it is ready for negotiations. For the issue of Romanian Rom, the Romanian ambassador stated that he is against the association of Romanians with Rom. Moreover, there are 1,500,000 Rom in Romania and within the Central and Eastern Europe 12,000,000 in total. Therefore, in his opinion there is the need for a solution at the EU level and he is against taking finger prints of Rom kids for identification. Daniele Peretti, "Arriva in Città il Consolato di Romania", *Trentino*, 10 July 2008, 14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>532</sup> Daniele Peretti, "Appartamento Negato Perché è Rumena", *Trentino*, 10 July 2008, 14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>533</sup> Interview with a Romanian lady, who is a women's committee member.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>534</sup> Interview with a Moldovan lady, who is a women's committee member.

migration and returns back to the country of origin every three months the children feel the lack of the father figure, while fathers regret missing important instances in their families' lives.<sup>535</sup>

Divided families are a cause of concern for priests both in Romania and Italy and the Church puts emphasis on family and keeping families intact.<sup>536</sup> As Pr. Uta has stated abandoned kids, school drop-outs, conflicts between grandparents and grandchildren and different forms of psychological problems that children go through are important challenges for the Orthodox Church to respond and find solutions. However, the problem is overwhelming for the Church to handle it alone. Suffering related with care drain is very much felt today and will have important repercussions in the future. According to Pr. Lupăştean money sent by the parents does not substitute for the love, care and affection that parents can give to the child by being with them. The child grows up without knowing the value of the money and he/she follows the "negative example" the parents set.<sup>537</sup>

The priest advises those with the divided families to either return back to Romania or bring their families to Trento. During his sermons he talks about the importance of family and family relations. On March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008 the priest while he was giving his sermon invited a Moldovan lady, who is one of the members of Church's women's committee and the representative of Moldovan caregivers and who used to be a kindergarten teacher in Moldova, to recite a poem on the occasion of Woman's Day. The lady recited a poem written by a kid about the suffering she goes through due to the separation from her parents that have immigrated:

## Flowers with the tears of the child<sup>538</sup>

It is 8<sup>th</sup> of March mummy I want you to know that I love you But here in Moldova I cannot find you.

I want you to attach a flower on your chest,

<sup>536</sup> Interview with Pr. Rosu; Interview with Lupăștean.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>535</sup> Interview with two seasonal Romanian workers, who are church-goers, on March, 17<sup>th</sup>, 2008..

 $<sup>^{537}</sup>$  2<sup>nd</sup> interview with Pr. Lupăștean.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>538</sup> Flori cu lacrimi de copil

E 8 Martie mamica, Vreau sa stii ca te iubesc Dar aicea in Moldova Eu nu pot sa te gasesc.

Vreau sa-ti prind in piept o floare. Ce se chiama martișor, Ca avand-o-n lumea mare, Sa nu plangi de al meu dor. Te aștept in primavara Sa-ti aduc mai multe flori, Ca sa nu mai pleci din tara, Unde nu ajung scrisori.

E 8 martie taticu, Am si pe tine flori, Te astept macar de Pasti Daca acum nu poti sa zbori.

Lacrimi vars pe flori in noapte, Perna cando strang la piept-N-am nici tata n-am nici mama Nu mai știu cat sa aștept.

Which is called Martişor, So that when you go away to the Big World, You do not cry for my longing

I wait for you in spring To bring you many more flowers Do not to go away from the country any more, To where letters do not reach.

> It is 8<sup>th</sup> of March daddy Also for you I have flowers, I just wait for you at Easter Even if you cannot fly.

I shed tears on flowers at night I press the pillow to my bosom I neither have a father nor a mother I do not know how long I have to wait.

It is not only Pr. Lupăştean that is concerned. Pr. Roşu expresses his concerns about the divided families with children in Romania and parents in Italy, as the family reunification is difficult. He argues that the Romanian family is losing its identity. In 2006 almost 60,000 kids in Romania had one of his/her parents abroad, while 27,000,000 had the parents abroad. Based on these figures Pr. Roşu argues that most important problem of the Romanian community in Italy does not stem from the lack of resources but is about the preservation of the Romanian family and identity. However, he still expresses his optimism that patriotic feelings and Romanian identity will not fade away (Ciattaglia, 2008: 4). Pr. Roşu argues that Romanians in Italy have all types of social problems and the ROCs are trying to come up with possible solution:

All types of social problems, all types of social problems of family. Here we...we have a a front office of not only information but also taking care of the people that have problems with alcoholism that functions for last two years. It is not only generally the husbands have this problem but it is the family meetings that have problems with alcoholism. We are in contact with an association; it is called "Anni Zero", which is specialized in the fight against alcoholism. And then now we are are opening an...an association for fight against abortion. Now our parish church together with the Movement for Life, so we, now are preparing the volunteers. We have around 50 volunteers that will participate. We have a front office for helping life.<sup>539</sup>

Like Pr. Roşu, Pr. Codrea draws our attention to the abortion issue, which is another important concern for the ROCs in Italy. Besides organizational issues, some of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>539</sup> Interview with Pr. Roşu.

regional meetings organized at Verona were devoted to the issues that deeply affected the Romanian Orthodox community in Italy such as abortion. They have invited an Orthodox priest working for an association called Pro-Life in Romania in order to get more information about the ways to deal with abortion,<sup>540</sup> since there are many young Romanians in Italy. Pr. Codrea also stated that this issue has been discussed and is always an important theme at meetings at the Metropolitan See and other meetings among priests.

As could be inferred from the account regarding social problems of Romanian migrants in Italy; migration and adaptation process of Romanian migrants and construction of Romanian Orthodox space and organizations within Italy raises new requirements and forces the ROCs to be more active within the social sphere in order to reach out to the Romanian Orthodox migrants in Italy. Both Pr. Valdman and Pr. Codrea emphasize the need for the ROCs to take more responsibility for social assistance in Italy by their own means.<sup>541</sup> Pr. Codrea compares the different stances of the Catholic and Orthodox Churches and argues that the ROC has to do more in the social sphere:

Since we do not have an ecclesiastical teaching like the Catholic Church, which sends directives to the others. This is in one sense good and in one sense bad. It is good because it gives liberty to the local community to incarnate their actions in accordance with what exists in the place without being constrained with the directive of the ecclesiastical teaching. On the other hand it is a disadvantage because there is no general framework that the local church would know how to act by itself. So when I was still young I was dreaming that my church would come out of this iron girdle, which is the state and I was dreaming a church of mine, which would take active part in social dialogue, which would be part of the elite, all the intellectuals that form the consciousness of the people, also through mass media.<sup>542</sup>

The experiences of the ROCs in Italy as community centers and their activities in the social sphere may lead to changes within the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate's stance

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>540</sup> In Romania contraceptive methods were almost inexistent during the Ceausescu rule, which made the voluntary abortion main mean to end the pregnancy. However, the abortion was also limited in Romania. Up until 1957 it was forbidden. Between 1957-1966 it was legal; however, due to the fall in the population it was forbidden again. In 1985 abortion was allowed with certain restrictions. In 1989 the previous legislation on abortion has been cancelled. According to WHO/EUROPE figures due to the change in legislation the number of abortions increased sharply from 193.084 in 1989 to 992.265 in 1990. In the following years the number started to fall. By 1998 the number of abortions fell as low as 271.496. Increase in the availability of contraceptives was one of the main reasons behind the fall in the rate. According to the 2004 research and report of National Institute of Health in Italy, which evaluates the results of two studies (in the first, 605 women from Romania, Ukraine, Peru, Ecuador, Morocco, Nigeria and China that had induced abortion were interviewed with a questionnaire, in the second 43 women were interviewed in depth), the number of Romanian women is highest among the migrant women that resort to abortion as revealed by the statistics from the day-hospital (established in accordance with the law 194/1978). The report states that low level of knowledge about reproductive health, delay in applying health centres for getting health assistance and information due to lack of time, experience regarding the functioning of the health system in Italy or language skills. For more details see: Angela Spinelli et al. (2006) "L'interruzione volontaria di gravidanza tra le donne straniere in Italia", Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Rapporti ISTISAN 06/17, http://www.iss.it/publ/rapp/cont.php?id=1977&lang=1&tipo=5

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>541</sup> Interview with Pr. Valdman; Interview with Pr. Codrea.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>542</sup> Interview with Pr. Codrea.

towards the social issues both within and out of Romania. The priests are demanding change. Pr. Codrea is critical of the resistance within the Church against more involvement in the social sphere and he is of the view that the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate has to formulate a social doctrine in order to provide the parish priests, particularly those in diaspora, with some guidance:

[...] in the ROC there is not any type of social doctrine of the church saying in this and this field you can do this, which is very useful for the local communities. Because one, poor priest, cannot, the local community cannot know everything. And someone who has faith can make mistakes. He within the general framework does not know how to act. Some in the Church say that this social doctrine thing sounds too Western. If we hold on to...if we hold on to...well if we look at only the titles and not the content of this document, then we are not doing much then.<sup>543</sup>

As could be inferred from this section the ROCs in Italy have to cater for different types of needs (religious, spiritual, material, social and psychological) and actively get involved to resolve problems (bureucratical, economical, social) of Romanian migrants, which tests the ROCs ability to adapt to the receiving context. The change that the ROCs incur is not limited to the Italian context. The transformations that the ROCs go through due to structural adaptation process have implications for the Mother Church and its social standing and doctrine.

**VII.3.2. Two Way Process: Integration and the Reproduction of Ethno-Religious Identity:** Resort to religion is an adaptive process. It aims at smooth absorption and integration of the migrant community to the new setting, while preserving the distinct ethno-religious identity of the migrant community and keeping migrants attached to the sending context. Transnational migration does not weaken the links with the home country but by means of creating a particular attachment to the home country strengthens it. The ROCs play a very important role in this sense since as Pr Rîmboi argues: "Being away makes them more attached...Here lack of it is felt more..."<sup>544</sup> Therefore, adaptation is a two-way process, which brings with it integration as well as maintanence of ethno-religious identity and transnational ties with the sending setting.

The ROCs emphasize the importance of integration of Romanian community into the Italian society. As compared to other migrant communities Romanians have some

<sup>543</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>544</sup> Interview with Pr. Rîmboi.

commonalities with Italians, which might facilitate and precipitate integration. Almost all the Romanian Orthodox priests are of the view that Romanians have a common Latin origin with Italians and this provides the Romanians with an advantage in their integration:

The Romanian people are formed between...the Romans have arrived and with Dacians they have formed this nexus of Dacian-Romanian culture. The Romans were speaking Latin; the language which is formed is a Latin language. 62 words, 62% of the words are of Latin origin.<sup>545</sup>

- Even now Romania is an island in the Slav sea. How can I explain to you how Romania remained a people of Latin origin, with a Latin language. This is a miracle. And for this the Romanians when they come here in Italy, they feel good, they feel good.

- They also learn the language very easily.

- The language...We are also Latins...<sup>546</sup>

Common Latin origin of the people and the language, while deemed to be something positive; however, is an important challenge. The linguistic proximity and historical ties with Italy create ambivalence in terms of being very similar but different at the same time. Pr. Uţa describes linguistic proximity as "dangerous". Since it is easier for Romanians to learn Italian in a short period of time, the Romanians, especially younger generations, drop out from school to go to Italy and get a low status jobs with relatively higher salaries in Italy.<sup>547</sup> Pr. Valdman is of the view that the linguistic and cultural proximity can serve to facilitate integration; however, can also favor assimilation:

On the other hand, probably Latin feeling that Romanians have helps to learn the language more easily and understand the mentality more easily of of other populations. It is obvious that probably if it goes like that, it will be a merit or it can be a defect. Because a common thing can help you to understand each other better, but also can favor an an absorption of the minority population.<sup>548</sup>

The similarities require the Church to be more prudent and proactive:

[...] There are changes because there are challenges, because there are problems. So we make the church to assume responsibilities, as I said, for the language, for history, for this and that, because you have to keep people close to the church. And there is the danger of assimilation, since our people being similar with the language to Italian language, and then there are people that are very well integrated, they do not form ghettos, they do not form ghettos. [...]<sup>549</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>545</sup> Interview with Pr. Babula.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>546</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>547</sup> Interview with Pr. Uţa.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>548</sup> Interview with Pr. Valdman.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>549</sup> Interview with Pr. Matei.

The similarities are not limited to common Latin origin and language but also include the faith. Both Romanians and Italians are Christians and as Pr. Babula states there are many similarities between the Catholicism and the Orthodoxy. Similarity and the threat of melting within the Italian society create the need for the ROCs to work to preserve the traits it makes it distinct:

We fight to maintain the Romanian spirit, the Romanian culture. And for this there is a new school to learn Romanian language because the kids who go to Italian schools forget Romanian. A little bit of history, a little bit of geography and a little bit of religion. ...Of the Orthodox religion. Because in school they participate also in Catholic religion. Of course there are no great differences between the Orthodox tradition and Catholic tradition. The tradition and the salutations are the same, the Bible is the same. The saints are almost the same. The liturgy is almost the same. The holy days are almost the same. But we have to maintain the culture, the Orthodox religion...<sup>550</sup>

Therefore, the ROCs have the difficult task of balancing two opposing tendencies: encouraging and supporting Romanian citizens to be well-integrated into the fabric of the Italian society, while ensuring that Romanian Orthodox faith, tradition, language, culture and identity are maintained through local, translocal and transnational agency of the ROCs. However, keeping the Romanians attached to the Orthodox tradition in the Italian setting, which is very different from the one in Romania is not a very easy task. Both the ROCs and the Romanians come into contact with a different kind of reality, a different level of diversity in social, religious and cultural terms:

Because when there was the dictatorship there was no comparison. Now in freedom, in democracy, they come into contact with a certain level of diversity, in religious, cultural terms and in mentality. It is clear that everyone has the freedom to choose his own way. And we are present here to to ... to make them remain attached to their own traditions, to their Orthodox traditions. Because they also, we can say, can have the chance to come to the Church, to pray, to participate the mass...to the Orthodox liturgy in the city. This chance has been created...it is tried to make the Romanian Orthodox believers to remain as they are, as they were born in the tradition they have grown up there, so to remain to find themselves again as Christians, as Romanians.<sup>551</sup>

As could be inferred from the above given statement, the challenge ahead for the Church is not only that Romanian people came out of a communist system and soon after immigrated to a democratic setting where they have more choice. Besides increasing

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>550</sup> Interview with Pr. Babula.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>551</sup> Interview with Pr. Verzea.

diversity, the Romanian Orthodox migrants come from a setting where the Orthodoxy was the majority faith and it was the tradition with which they grew up. Martikainen argues that if migrants are adherents of a religious institution that is revered by the majority in their home countries, being in a minority position in the receiving context might lead one to devote more time and interest into one's own religion, since within the new context it is questioned, challenged or contested (2005: 125).

As the testimonies of many Romanian Orthodox priests and the ROC-goers I have encountered confirm that many Romanians had the chance to learn more about their faith in Italy. According to Pr. Codrea there are two types the Romanian Orthodox in Italy. Some of them when they arrive in Italy away from the ties and relationships that constrain them and they have less inclination to come to the church and eventually they lose Romania or Orthodoxy as the reference point for their lives. There is another group of people after coming to Italy due to personal problems or loneliness they discover God. There are people amongst them that have never entered the church or opened the cover of the Bible in their lives, who become regular church-goers and devout Orthodox in time. Pr. Matei argues that more people become church-goers after they arrive in Italy, while many were not regular church-goers back home. The reason for this is:

Back home you can find a church in every step. Maybe not every step, but in all cities there are many churches, you can go there, you can enter. Here they know that there is one church and they come on Sundays.<sup>552</sup>

[...] some come for the first time for this, a little bit of curiosity, to see how it is...in the church in the West, what do they do? how do they do it? Others come for the first time because it is a meeting point for the people. We should not say, "No, they only come for the mass". No, there are those who come to meet the others, to inquire about something and so on. Because there is no other place of..of..of gathering.553

Even though curiosity is an important factor, as Pr. Matei argues, those who come out of curiosity or for a particular need do not keep on coming after some time. Regular church-goers are those who come for the church and to pray. The others, who come for reasons other than praying, either transform or "convert" into regular church-goers or stop coming.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>552</sup> Interview with Pr. Matei. <sup>553</sup> *Ibid*.

Pr. Lupăștean at Focolare meeting stated that he is trying to teach the Orthodox faith and tradition first to his own people and then to introduce it to Italians.<sup>554</sup> The priest has to reintroduce the Orthodox faith to his own people because even though in Romania restrictions on the Orthodox belief and practice were relatively less as compared to other countries under communist rule and the level of restriction in different periods under communist rule in Romania fluctuated,<sup>555</sup> the communist propaganda and restrictions on religious belief and practice had a negative impact on religious training of people. Therefore, in some cases the priests have to indulge in missionary activity within its own community. The pastoral work becomes more challenging, complicated and demanding when some faithful lack the knowledge as Pr. Verzea expresses. However it is also a source of satisfaction when the efforts bear fruit:

Therefore if people do not come from a religious family, I am talking about those that are here that have received the faith here, in family they cannot transmit a lot because they themselves do not know it. I realize that, at the beginning I was getting very angry, I was seeing certain things...But with good will I have started to understand that they could not have known certain things. So the reality starts to lear...teach teach us. Then there are these cases, the people have discovered here what the church means, what does the relationship with God mean. And this is a thing that gives us great satisfaction, because also we are a little, how can I say, uprooted from our context, no? I mean as a priest. But when you bring these out, when the fruits of your activity come out, it gives you great satisfaction. That you are useful and in a way you have accomplished your ... mission. Even if you cannot do what you are supposed to do, but it gives you power to do, to do something that you can succeed in.<sup>556</sup>

While the need to teach the Orthodox faith to Romanians has a missionary goal, the need to introduce it to Italians does not aim at bringing new adherents into the flock. The ROC is interested in keeping its own community intact and vivid and tries to lessen the loss of members due to mixed marriages and conversion. The urge to introduce the Orthodox faith and culture to Italians stems from the hope to underline the commonalities between two faiths and cultures and facilitate smooth integration of Romanians into the Italian society, while preventing prejudices and discrimination Romanians may face due to their ethno-religious identity and language that makes them distinct. Therefore, the goal is to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>554</sup> Pr.Lupăştean.speech at the Focolare Meeting.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>555</sup> While from 1948 up until 1964 Romania was below the average in terms of political liberties as compared to other communist regimes, after 64 it was high above the average. However, this period did not last long. Up until 1975 in Romania political liberties were at the same level with other communist regimes and with the 80s liberties were radically restricted making Romania one of the most repressive communist regimes. Interview with Prof. Niculescu.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>556</sup> Interview with Pr. Verzea.

maintain religious and ethnic identity and to consolidate it, while integrating into the Italian society and making a positive contribution to it.

Ebaugh and Chafetz, based on case studies of 13 immigrant religious institutions, claim that migrant religious organizations play a key role in the reproduction of traditions and ethnic culture in the receiving context (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 1999: 585). Gurvitch argues that the ethnic churches maintain the mythic-symbolic memory of the group in a different context than the original through the reproduction of "social frames of cognition", which gives a sense to the individual migrants existence. The liturgy and religious ceremonies gain a different meaning, becoming an expression of national, regional culture, identity and language mingled up with religious tradition and values. The sacred cannot be taken into consideration as something separate from the practices (cited in Berzano, 2008: 3). Rather it is a referent in mobilizing people and resources into formulation of transnational ties and space. Ethnic, cultural and linguistic identity is part of the religious identity and tradition, particularly for the Orthodox Churches. As we have mentioned before the ROC presents itself "as the privileged *keeper* and *guardian* of national values" (Conovici, 2006: 1) in Romania:

The church has maintained the Romanian culture. I can say that without the church, if we did not believe or remain as Orthodox, we would lose also our identity. By remaining Orthodox in the Orthodox Church we could preserve our identity. Even if in history the Slavs, Hungarians, Turks, Germans, Goths, Visigoths, all passed. The Romanian people remained the people of Latin origin. Because the Orthodoxy is a...we can say, a culture that maintains the character of the man, the character of the Orthodox people.<sup>557</sup>

Within the transnational migration context and in a predominantly Catholic country like Italy, the role of the ROC as the protector of the Romanian Orthodox national identity and language is accentuated. Keeping the Orthodox faith in Italy becomes an expression of the national identity and a way of articulating transnational spiritual ties. Pr. Lupăștean thinks that maintaining ties with the country and maintaining faith is the same thing; "the majority maintains ties to the country, live here integrating themselves, we can say, very well, but maintains the faith".<sup>558</sup>

The national identity is an important element of the Romanian Orthodox liturgy. During the liturgy, besides the prayers for the Metropolitan Iosif, priests, deacons, monks

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>557</sup> Interview with Pr. Babula.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>558</sup> Interview by Valentina Sandri with Pr. Lupatean.

and other members of the ROC, the priests pray for the Romanian state, soldiers, people and land. I have not seen it during my visit, but Cingolani states that there is a big Romanian flag at the entrance of the ROC in Turin.<sup>559</sup> The food distributed after the liturgy is also considered the Romanian national food. Sometimes families bring their kids dressed up in the Romanian national dress to the Church. Since the liturgy is in Romanian, the Church does not only reproduce Romanian religious identity but also the national one. Many Romanians come to the Church to hear the liturgy in Romanian as well as to communicate and socialize in Romanian. Romanian is one of the main factors that create the sense of community and familiarity within the Church space. The prayers recited in the mother tongue have more power and affect on the participants.

Language issue proves to be one of the main concerns of the first-generation, which is defined as one of the main components of migrants' identity. Socialization of the second-generation into the religious traditions as well as language and culture of the parents becomes one of the main tasks of the migrant churches (Martikainen, 2005: 127). There is an important dilemma particularly for the first-generation parents as they want their kids to be well-integrated into the new society; therefore, they want their children to have good educational skills and speak the language of the receiving society very well (Ibid: 104). However, they also want to transfer their ethnic and cultural heritage to their children and the next generations through their own language and they turn to their religious institutions for the teaching of their mother tongue (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2000: 102). Therefore, religious organizations take on the task of teaching and transmitting religious, ethnic and cultural identity through language to the second generation.

Even though they have limited resources most of the ROCs are trying to organize Sunday schools for the second generation. At Sunday schools in addition to catechism the ROCs try to teach the Romanian culture and history to the young generations. Some parishes have Sunday Schools and the priests with the help of volunteers try to teach catechism blended with Romanian language, history and geography as in Verona, Turin, Bologna, Milan, Ivrea, Padua and Mestre. At Mestre they also teach Italian and English, since the families requested it. In Padua priest's wife, who is a teacher, is responsible for the organization of the Sunday school. In Verona priest and his wife were teaching courses; however, when they had their own children priest's wife did not have time to teach and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>559</sup> I would like to thank Pietro Cingolani for this information during our meeting at his office in Turin on April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008. I had the chance to see the Romanian flag at the meeting hall of the ROC in Istanbul.

they had to suspend the courses until July 2007. Some priests complain that since many people are working even on Sundays and they have very little free time, they have difficulty in finding volunteers. The priest in Bologna complains about the limitations that make systematic teaching difficult and the need to come up with temporary solutions to continue teaching. Teaching is done most systematically in Turin. Since 2001 in the ROC of Santa Croce in Turin there is a parochial school for three groups of Romanian children and teenagers from 5 years-old to 18, the older ones help the education of the younger ones. Those who attend take courses on catechism, Romanian language, history and geography, handicrafts and traditional dances. The courses are free of charge except the dance courses (Rontu, 2007: 10).

In Trento for the time being there is no Sunday school for the kids organized by the Church. However, at the Easter prayer the priest has announced the plan to organize a Sunday school starting from September 2008 onwards. He announced that they will be registering the name of the children in order to see how many kids will attend the Sunday school and to group them in accordance with their ages and number. However, when I talked to the priest in late August, he was not sure about how they will proceed, how many kids will attend and who will be assisting him in teaching. The teaching material is already available since the priest has ordered them; however, there is no room or hall they can use for teaching. The Romanian association is newly established and they cannot give support to the Church in the organization of the Sunday school or any other type of activity yet. The school will give children catechism education blended with Romanian history and geography. If the Church cannot manage to find a teaching hall for the kids, the priest is planning to distribute kids some reading material that they can read at home and then discuss together when they meet occasionally.

Another very important national element that is reproduced within the religious setting is the food. Goldsmith talks about the "centrality of food as a religious expression" (1989 cited in Ebaugh and Chafetz, 1999: 590). In congregations composed of one nationality consumption of national food is an exercise that helps reproducing and strengthening the ties between religion and national traditions (Ibid: 591), which is the case in the church of San Marco in Trento. The food that is cooked and distributed in the Church is Romanian food. Bread is the indispensable element of Romanian Orthodox liturgy. The rest of the bread that is not used for the Eucharist is distributed to the faithful at the end of the liturgy. It has to be prepared by old widows. *Sarmale*, vine leaf rolls stuffed with

minced meat, rice, onion and some spices, is one of the main traditional Romanian dishes that is distributed in the Church. During Lent, before the Christmas or Easter Romanian Orthodox faithful do not consume any meat or dairy products. The food that they bring to the Church is also cooked without meat or milk. They even cook one of the national Romanian national dishes, *sarmale*, either without meat or with fish during Easter. *Colivă* is a sweet they distribute particularly after the *parastas* service. It is a very simple but tasty sweet dish. Its main ingredient is barley. They boil it with sugar or honey, raisins or other dry fruits. Barley has a symbolical importance. It symbolizes coming from the earth and returning back to earth, that's why it should look like earth. As a sweet introduced by a saint, it is a sacred food that they cook and bring to the church to be distribute after the liturgy. To facilitate the distribution they put it in plastic glasses and distribute it with plastic forks. It is prepared by the relatives or friends of the deceased and offered to all participants in the service and to all present in the church. I have also seen people bringing fruits such as apples or oranges, bread and wine for the *parastas* service.

The food has a religious function and the Romanian Orthodox community uses the food as a means to thank God and to offer prayers for the deceased. By offering food to people in the name of the deceased person Romanian Orthodox believe that the dead person will have something to eat.<sup>560</sup> Through offering food they show how grateful they are for the things God has given them:

Preparing food to be distributed at the Church, to be shared with friends at home and for the celebration of baptizing is an important socio-religious activity and therefore is

<sup>-</sup> Look, for us it is a sacred thing. We can say we do everything to thank God, so to thank God we prepare snacks and we call friends and foreigners to find, to eat and for thanking God. Because He gave me a job, yes? And He, God gave me a job next week. I, when I get my salary, with my first salary, how much I can afford, 100, yes. I go to do shopping, buy sweets, do something to eat, bring to the church. - You pay for everything?

<sup>-</sup> Yes, yes. I carry to the Church, carry to the Church. You have seen at the end the priest goes to the left and does this [*parastas*] for the deceased. To thank. We thank God and Mother Mary, our saints for help. Because no we say like this, if God gives you something and we are not happy, we do not thank, we are, it is called anathema. We are cursed. It is necessary to thank. If I have the possibility, for the kids I spend only 10 euros or 5 euros, or I can buy a small candle or make a prayer.<sup>561</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>560</sup> Nine days, three months, six months, nine months, a year after the death remembering the deceased person by offering prayers and food to people in the Church is an important practice in the Orthodox tradition.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>561</sup> Interview with a Romanian lady, who is a women's committee member.

is organized by the Church. Sharing and serving food in the Church helps community building:

You know when we meet you see, when we prepare these lunches in the Church. Because in other days you go, people see, people go there and immediately they go home. But when you stay for this, we thought many times, we have thought about organizing small lunches in the Church that are... because by this way you stay in the Church. We speak amongst each other, no? We get to know each other, no? Because I have many friends that I did not know before, no? We met with all my friends; I met them in the Church.<sup>562</sup>

Women are the key actors in preparing and serving the "ethnic" food (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 1999: 590). Through reproduction of food and national customs, traditional role of the women within the religious organization and the family is also reproduced. Besides performing domestic religious roles such as teaching the religion and raising kids, women act as the main protagonists in reproduction of ethnic and cultural identity through cooking and nurturing at home and at the religious organization (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 1999: 590). While on the one hand migrant religious organizations reproduce unequal gender roles, on the other hand they empower women (Ibid: 587). Through cooking, women both reproduce their traditional roles and create an area of activity exclusively under their control (León, 1998: 170). At the ROC in Trento as Pr. Lupăstean of the ROC in Trento states the committee does "women's things". 563 Cooking is one of the "women's things". The committee that arranges cooking is in fact woman's committee. The other organ, the parochial committee is composed of 12 men. There are no women at the parochial council, which takes care of the Church's administration and maintenance, while the committee is composed of women. Since there is no kitchen within the ROC in Trento, women cook at home and bring the food to the church. Ebaugh and Chafetz argue that cooking at home is preferred, since it does not hinder household duties of women (1999: 593), while cooking together with the other women of the parish strengthens the sisterhood spirit (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2000: 90). The committee members in Trento do the shopping together,<sup>564</sup> come together at the house of one committee member (the lady that I interviewed) and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>562</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>563</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview with Pr. Lupăştean.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>564</sup> "Here we are many. You know, because you have seen that many come...so we all put 50 euro, 30 euro, 20 euro. Each family how much it wants. We make a list and we go for shopping together, we prepare everything together and at the end we make calculations with the bills. "I have paid this and this. 100 euro, we give it to our priest for the mass. 20 euro is left. Very little. Let's put 10 euro" [she laughs]. So we do like this." Interview with a Romanian lady, who is a woman's committee member.

collaborate in cooking, which contributes to group solidarity and strengthens the friendship ties. Even though it is mainly women who cook, during the Lent period or when they need to cook in large amounts, men also contribute to cooking. They also help women in bringing the food to the Church and in distribution of food.

Women while reproducing traditions for the migrant community and for their family take on new responsibilities within the migrant churches (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 1999: 586). Besides transmitting national and cultural identity to their kids, women play an important role in their religious education and many migrant congregations make use of these traits of women (Ibid: 595). In the Church, family values and parenthood are emphasized by the priest during his sermons. Virgin Mary is a mother and her devotion is the model for the Romanian Orthodox women to follow. Since there is no Sunday school or similar activity in the Church in Trento yet, it is not possible to talk about women's involvement in teaching in the Church, while in other ROCs priests' wives have taken active role in teaching. Some of them are teachers of the Romanian language and they voluntarily teach to the Romanian children. Female volunteers also assist the priests and their wives in teaching. While there is no teaching activity at the church in Trento yet, Romanian women are actively involved in the organization of cultural activities as well as the representation of the Church at these activities.

In order to allow migrants to continue their ties with the local or national culture, language and traditions, religious organizations provide room for secular type of activities (Bauman 2002 cited in Martikainen, 2005: 127) such as participation in cultural activities with national costumes, music and dances. In Trento, the wife of the priest and one committee member are responsible for coordinating the cultural activities and representing the Church. It is almost always the same female committee member, who is in Trento for the last seven years that attend the meetings dressed up in Romanian national dress, read the message of the priest and distribute Romanian bread as a gift to the participants.

The ROC also participates in *Festa dei Popoli* (People's Festival) organized by *Fondazione Migrantes* every year in May in collaboration with the Archdiocese of Trento.<sup>565</sup> The priest's wife and another lady from the Church committee represent the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>565</sup> For the organization of the festival *Fondazione Migrantes* gets the support of the municipality and provincial administration and organizes the event with the representatives of different religious denominations. They start meeting months before the event at *Fondazione* to make the necessary arrangements. Since it is a festival organized by the Catholic Church in collaboration with other religious organizations, migrant associations cannot be part of the event. However, it is not a religious festival. Different migrant groups represent their country with folk dances and songs. Each migrant community has a stand, where people can taste ethnic food, see books or handicrafts and get firsthand information

Church and attend the meetings for the organization of the event. Before the event a group among the church-goers is also formed to start rehearsing the Romanian folk dances. The dance group is made up of five six couples. Since some people that were in the dance group returned back to Romania, for this year's performance there were only two couples remaining. Therefore, this year they needed to find new people to perform dances. One family who went back to Romania decided to come with their costumes to participate the event; however, they still needed more couples. Since the Romanian association was also planning to organize a folk dance group, the vice president of the association contacted the priest's wife and suggested collaboration for the event. The dance group used the vice-presidents shop, *Transilvania* that sells Romanian products, for rehearsals and participated in the festival in May 2008.

Apart from dances, the Church committee cooks food to serve at the Romanian stand and women serve the food before and after the dance show. In the menu there is always *sarmale* and the Romanian bread. Besides national dresses, Romanian handicrafts, embroidery and flag are placed on the stand. The priest and volunteers after the Sunday liturgy join the event. Romanians bring their kids to the square, some wearing the national or regional dresses. They give support and dance with their co-nationals as they go on stage and many Romanians film the event.

The event gives the Romanians the chance not only to introduce their traditions, music and dances but also to make the claim that they are people of long lasting traditions, rich cultural background, good music and good food. The frustration felt due to humiliating statements about Romanians in mass media or prejudices or discrimination they face in their daily life turn into pride and joy this day. One volunteer was complaining once saying even though they speak different languages, they have high school and university degrees, the Italian employers treat them as if they are illiterate. She went on expressing the frustration she feels when people ask her how could she learn Italian and speak so well and she stated that the fact that they are immigrants does not mean that they do not understand anything. She was one of the dancers at the festival and after the dance performance she

from the representatives of the communities at the stands. It is a two-day event organized at Fiera Square at the centre of the city. First day is a half day event starting in the afternoon with activities for the kids and in the evening there are dances and music from different parts of the world. The second day starts with the parade of the migrant groups with their national dresses on and flags. After lunch folkloric dances and songs are presented till the evening. There are also meetings and conferences organized by *Fondazione* within the framework of the festival. The theme of 2008 was citizenship, while last years theme was young immigrants. Interview with Don Giuseppe, *Fondazione Migrantes* on February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

joyfully and proudly asked me if I have seen how much people liked their performance. Similarly, the parochial committee member, who was frustrated with and critical of the way the Italians think about Romania and Romanians, was saying during the interview: "Many think that they have something to teach to those foreigners who come here, maybe you sleep in a tent. This is not true".<sup>566</sup> He was the guy who was proudly waving the Romanian flag on stage next to Romanians that were performing their dances.<sup>567</sup> Therefore, the festival is an important opportunity for the Romanian community to prove the richness and beauty of their culture and what makes it worthwhile for them to keep and reproduce in Italy and the ROC is the main actor of the organization of the Romanian contribution to the event.

The Romanian Orthodox community and the ROC take the representation of the Romanian culture and heritage very seriously. Any delays or interruptions in their performance can be quite upsetting for them, which was the case in *"Europa-Cene dell'Altro Mondo* 2007" (Europe- Dinners from the Other World 2007), organized by the Association Tremembè.<sup>568</sup> The Romanian community was the only community represented by the Church and the priest. The other communities were represented by their associations in Trento.<sup>569</sup> Since the Romanian association is newly established (January 2008) and it needs the collaboration of the Church and the priest in organizing its activities it is the Church that represents the Romanian community in Trento.

At the night of May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2007, Romanian dancers were supposed to come to the stage to perform their dances. However, the Poles came on stage first. As Polish dancers finished their performance, Romanians were invited to the stage. The Romanian priest was standing by the stage with his camera. Before Romanians have started their performance,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>566</sup> Interview with the parochial council member.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>567</sup> I was about to go on stage to hold the flag but he came at the last moment and asked if he can take the flag and go on stage.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>568</sup> <u>http://www.tremembe.it/</u> This festival of cooperation and culture is part of the initiative "Europe - This Other World" and 2007 was the 8<sup>th</sup> episode of the Dinners project. It was a four-day festival of food, music and dances from Eastern Europe at Martignano Park in Trento. Romania and Poland were represented on the first day of the festival, on May 22<sup>nd</sup> 2007. May 23<sup>rd</sup> was reserved for the Albanians and Albanian community from Macedonia and 24<sup>th</sup> was the day for Russian, Ukrainian and Moldovan dances and food.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>569</sup> As has been mentioned before, the Ukrainians have a Greek-Catholic Church in Trento where the Orthodox and Greek-Catholic Ukrainians attend. However, since their priest is very busy and he visits other Ukrainian communities in nearby towns, it is up to the Ukrainian associations to organize cultural activities. The Moldovans attend the ligurgy in the ROC in Trento and since the ROC organizes cultural activities to represent the Romanian community (which does not mean that Moldovans are excluded or are not allowed to participate) it is Moldovan associations that represent the Moldovan community. For the case of the Albanians, ethnic identity rather than the religious seems to be the main element. Even though there is a big Muslim Albanian community and they have their own church outside of Trento, they prefer to organize their activities through their associations in order to teach their music and dances to their children. The Poles do not have their own Catholic Church and they also opt for associations to reproduce and represent their cultural traditions.

the organizers made an announcement about two parked cars blocking the way. After the third song during the Romanians' performance, a lady from the organization committee interrupted the performance to make the same announcement about the cars, apoligizing for the urgent announcement. However, this was very upsetting for the priest and he protested saying they cannot interrupt the performance in this way. While the Romanians continued dancing, even though they seemed very upet, the priest continued arguing with the lady and a young guy next to the stage.

Just after they finished their performance, the Romanians started packing their stall that they have prepared for the festival. They were quite upset with the organization committee that made them wait for a very long time for the performance, that made the same announcement two times, that cut 20 minutes of their performance, while they let the Poles to stay on stage for one hour. One of the dancers, who is also actively working in the Church almost every Sunday, told the organization committee of the festival that they were quite dissappointed with the treatment even though they have put all their good will. She has cancelled an interview to be aired on radio about the experiences of Romanians in Trento. The organization committee could not convince the Romanians to stay and they have decided to leave earlier than planned.

The priest puts great emphasis on not only the preservation of the Romanian identity and language but also expression of it strongly and with pride. In his opinion it is an identity preserved by their ancestors against the fiercest of enemies, to which Romanian migrants have to show their respect and appreciation regardless of the setting:

[...] We should not be ashamed of who we are. We should not be ashamed of that...of our country. We should not be ashamed of nothing, of our language. We have to say loudly who we are, where do we come from. Our history is a history of more than, if I am not wrong, that started three thousand years ago and later evolved. A very tormented history between ...two kings...Let's not forget whose name has been mentioned before, Vlad Tepes, if he did not stop the Turks today, we would be speaking Turkish. This is history, not an invention [...]<sup>570</sup>

This section tried to analyze how the ROC and the Romanian migrants participate in and be part of the Italian setting and society through community building, reproducing the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>570</sup> Pr. Lupăștean's speech at the inauguration meeting of the Romanian association Arta-a on March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2008. Before the priest gave his speech the members of the committee of Arta-a briefly introduced themselves and talked about the activities they are planning. One member stated that they are planning to organize a conference in order to introduce a very important personality in the Romanian history, Vlad Tepest. For many Romanians historical facts are distorted and a hero is turned into Dracula. Therefore, they deem it important to introduce him from the Romanian perspective.

Romanian Orthodox identity and take an active part in the construction of the Romanian-Italian transnational space. In the next section the emphasis is on the Romanian Orthodox priests, who are the key actors in the adaptation process the ROCs are going through in Italy.

VIII.3.3. Romanian Orthodox Priests as Community Leaders: The ROCs go through structural adaptation process and changes in Italy. Main witnesses and protagonists of this process are the Romanian Orthodox priests. It is not only the religious organization that are transformed but also the duties and area of activity of the priests. The priesthood consists of different type of duties and activities. The main vocation of the priest is his religious mission. Besides his religious and integrative roles (defining groups and organizations with which he is going to collaborate) the priest has practitioner roles such as the "preacher, pastor, teacher, priest, administrator and organizer" (Hoge, 2000: 373). The priest is also a group leader and a counselor (Moberg, 1962: 488-90). Within the migration setting the challenges that arise accentuate certain roles of the priest. The Romanian Orthodox priests in Italy become community leaders and they actively indulge in community building. It becomes compulsory for them to take on more responsibilities in social and cultural fields beyond their main vocation. As Pr. Milăşan argues the priest does not only celebrate the mass on Sunday and then say "see you next week". The priest has many other responsibilities and duties in different aspects of the lives of the faithful, which can be spiritual or cultural.

Up until recently it was the Metropolitan Church that decided about the ordainment of priests to parishes in Italy, which is now decided by the Diocesan Bishop of the ROC in Italy. In many cases the priests that are chosen for priesthood in Italy are already in Italy for study purposes or work as deacons in a ROC, since they are familiar with the setting, society and the language as well as the requirements of the Romanian Orthodox communities in Italy. However, as the testimony of Pr. Babula shows, the transnational ties of the Romanians in Ivrea with the local context in Suceava can lead to the construction of a Romanian Orthodox parish in Ivrea. Pr. Babula has come to Italy for the first time in 1999:

<sup>[...]</sup> I stayed for a month; then in 2001. I did not have the intention to come, to form a parish here. But because many people from our zone came here, I also came

for them. First time to visit. Then came the idea to put in place this parish. And the priests from Turin have helped me to learn how things work here.  $[\dots]^{571}$ 

The priests that work in Italy face many challenges. The challenge could be very overwhelming at the beginning. Even having work experience and knowing the setting may not suffice. Pr. Codrea expresses how he coped with the challenges of the new context that were beyond his experiences that he obtained back in Romania and the knowledge during his studies:

When I came here as a priest with a certain experience, because I was also a priest in Romania, I had my experiences studying, a part of my studies were here in Italy. But here I have found myself a little caught unprepared because there is a way of doing pastoral work is very much different from what I have learnt to do in Romania. Therefore, there are always suggestions of the priests who were here since a long time. We have our vicar, who is now in Milan, who is Father Traian Valdman, and here I consulted him. Here all the Romanian Orthodox live a little under the shadow of this person. A person, who is a historical presence here. [...] Therefore, I was always in contact with him. There were times that I have called five six times in a day.

Pr. Valdman, who is the person to consult for all the young priests arguest that one of the main challenges ahead of the priests is the changing status of the ROC in Italy. The ROC, which is the church revered by the majority of the population, becomes a minority or migrant church in the Italian territory and within the Catholic context:

[...] For this it is obvious that we need coordinators but also we need ... capable people, cultured and open minded. I am not happy that recently in our Romanian church in Italy there came priest of second third quality. I am not happy. Because this can be very good among 20,000 or I don't know 10,000 priests that are in Romania. But here where we are only 60. If to me comes six of those, they are already 10%. The level falls. And and if in Romania, in a country with Orthodox majority, Orthodoxy is lived in a normal, natural way. Here you live Orthodoxy that is always obliged to to justify itself, to give a reason, to explain itself. I am like this, because... I do this for this reason. I behave in this way. It is done like this because it is the tradition. The modern world does not accept this any more, you have to explain the reason why. 572

As Pr. Valdman states the priests, who are sent to Italy, should be ready to meet the challenge of working and reaching out to believers in a more "modern" context as

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>571</sup> Interview with Pr. Babula.<sup>572</sup> Interview with Pr. Valdman.

compared to the "traditional" one in Romania.<sup>573</sup> Pr. Milăşan argues that working abroad requires the Romanian Orthodox priests to adopt a different pastoral strategy:

The fact that I am in Italy, in our case obviously the pastoral missionary strategy is a little bit different. Because more or less when you are in Romania, you do something. When you are abroad, we can say to make people come closer to the church you have to, you have to change something. Something always changes.<sup>574</sup>

According to Pr. Lupăstean the pastoral strategy needs to be different since the settlement, dimensions and composition of the community makes the pastoral work more difficult and challenging as compared to priestly work in Romania:

In the first place because it is not a normal parish. Because it is an abnormal parish, in the sense that the boundaries of the parish are very large. The people are everywhere. This is the first thing. Because back home you know your place. Second, the people are not only from a society, you have from everywhere, even from Moldova and other countries, a little from everywhere. Then it is not a church you can perform the services in the way they should be performed, you have to adopt yourself, you do as you can, we try to adopt ourselves also in this sense...<sup>575</sup>

The priests should be able to adjust themselves not only to the new setting but also to the way of thinking and acting of the Romanian communities in Italy, especially of the youngsters as Pr. Matei's statement elucidates:

[...] Yes there are other duties but the way of thinking, the way of acting is a little different, even if the Mother [Church] is the same, the organization is a little like back home as we said. But being in contact here, having many many new things that you do not have that people see that our youth, kids live in an Italian Catholic world, they start thinking with their categories, living and acting like them. Then you have to adjust yourself, understand also this way of living, this way of acting. With the Church you have to be at the same level, at the same phase because if not, if you do things, let's say the things you were doing back home, they are not not very normal. There are things you should not do here and to and [if] you do them, you are called anachronistic, you are backwards, you have stayed like this. I do not know. So the Church has to do but always unless it is a sin. This is the norm that you have to follow. They can, if they want to organize a day a meeting to sing, that they sing, that they dance, that they do something, something together  $[\dots]^{576}$ 

The pastoral work becomes more challenging given the limited resources of the Church. Financially the Orthodox Churches are weaker as compared to the Catholic and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>573</sup> Ibid.

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>574</sup> Interview with Pr. Milăşan.
 <sup>575</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview with Pr. Lupăştean.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>576</sup> Interview with Pr. Matei.

Protestant parishes.<sup>577</sup> Since the ROCs in Italy have limited resources and depend mostly on contributions of the community, a "greater sense of financial responsibility to the church" (Levitt, 2001b: 172) is needed from the faithful. Most of the priests have to work during week-days to get by and maintain their families <sup>578</sup> and some depend on the contributions of the parish community. The need to work puts extra weight on the shoulders of the priests, who try to perform their priesthood duties and cater for different type of needs and problems, even if priestly duties affect their family life and blur the boundaries between the priestly duties and family life. The family of the priest in Trento is actively involved and helps the priest in conduct of religious services, relations with the parish, cleaning and maintenance of the Church and the representation of the Romanian parish community. Moreover, the family of the priest is expected to act as the model family for the parish. In Venice, Padua and Mestre the wives of priests work in the church as teachers. As in the case of the parish in Mestre, the wife of the priest supports the priest and the parish with her earnings.<sup>579</sup>

Even though the Romanian Orthodox priests are trying to maintain parish churches with limited resources and time, in order to address social problems of Romanians in Italy they are trying to get more involved in the social sphere. They go to the prisons and hospitals, and provide information about jobs and accommodation. Since they are in touch with the local authorities, they try to contribute to the solution of problems. Pr. Roşu tells how they try to help the sick Romanian kids and their families:

[...] here in Turin there is a transplantation centre specialized in transplantation of organ donations for children. So people arrive, not only Romanians but from everywhere. But we take care of our Romanian kids. We always try to be in contact, apart from going there in the hospital for confession, for baptism, the communions during the religious feasts, like Christmas, Easter, together with them we make a small program here in the parish Church, where we give them some gifts to comfort them and their families a little. For instance, I am in direct contact with a Romanian doctor who is active, very skilled in this hospital Regina Margherita. When I need

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>577</sup> The most urgent needs of the Orthodox parish communities in the US are monetary resources. Due to limited resources and personnel some of the parish churches also fail to provide Sunday schools or other educational services. (Krindatch, 2008: 18).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>578</sup> It is not only the Romanian Orthodox priests that have a low income. The experiences of the Orthodox priests in the US show that maintaining their families with limited income is the most important challenge. Since most of the priests' salaries are very low, they have to work for full-time secular jobs. The other important challenges are heavy work load, uncertainty regarding the future of their church in the US, limited support from the parishioners, difficulty in balancing the parish life and the family life, balancing power and authority within the church and lack of or limited administrative support (Krindatch, 2006: 25).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>579</sup> The wives of the priests are the main source of help for other Orthodox priests in other contexts. For the great majority of the Orthodox priests in the US the most important source of support and help is their wives (Krindatch, 2006: 50). Other sources are the priest' family, parish council and parishioners and the Bishop (Ibid: 4.).

something, something special that their therapy does not cover from the material point of view, the parish church takes it on and buys these things.<sup>580</sup>

Moreover, for three years the Church of Santa Croce in Turin had a front office that gave assistance to the Romanians with stay permit issues. The office provided information about the documents they need to take to the *Questura*. The Romanians were going to the *Questura* with a file having all the documents with the help of the office. With this service the Church has contributed to reducing the queues.

Pr. Roşu argues that the way to respond to the needs and problems of the people the Church needs to be innovative, "read the territory well, to be always in contact with the spiritual but also daily needs of the people". In order to get to know the families in his parish, particularly young couples the priest uses his priestly duties such as visiting faithfuls' houses to bless their houses:

[...] so I always use as a primordial pastoral instrument to stop [to talk] with them, to get to know their origins, where they live, where they are from, their aspirations, what is their jobs, their commitments, their problems with the family that usually stay in Romania. [...]<sup>581</sup>

He is also optimistic that it is not only many young people come to the church, but also the priests are quite young. According to Pr. Roşu this helps attracting young people into the church, since it is easier for younger priests to establish dialogue with young people and understand their problems such as cohabitation without marriage, abortion, economic problems, problems with their families and, being young parents. The Church is trying to convince them to get married in church and realize the unity of family.<sup>582</sup>

The involvement of the priests in the lives of the parish communities and resolution of social problems turns them into active community workers and key actors in community building. This is an important challenge and in certain cases an overwhelming task for the priests. Nevertheless, they go through similar problems with the members of their parish community and as they come closer to people within the migration context, they manage to come up with appropriate answers to problems:

[...] We try un...unfortunately or fortunately...you are always close to people. Because we are amongst them, we begin to understand. We become, we can say,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>580</sup> Interview with Pr. Roşu.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>581</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>582</sup> *Ibid*.

friends like this because we have the same problems. I have to solve the problem related with documents. I have to solve the problem with the house, so on... $^{583}$ 

Having the knowledge of problems that migrants go through within the Italian context makes the priests the main reference point to ask for advice or help. During my conversations as well as the interviews with people in the ROC in Trento people have mentioned the help they got from the priest. One couple that I have interviewed was planning to go back to Romania due to financial difficulties, since the husband did not get paid by the Italian employer for his work and they were in debt. Due to disillusionment and loss of savings they have decided to go back and left their flat. However, later on they have decided to stay, as the husband got credit from the bank and found a new job. They started looking for a house, which proved to be difficult with two little kids. The house owners were not willing to rent the place to a couple with children and the rents were quite high for them to afford. One Sunday when we were chatting about the issue the husband told me that even though they could not find a place yet, the priest has given him important information that would facilitate his search.<sup>584</sup> The priest told him that for immigrants a family of four members needs a flat of at least around 70 m<sup>2</sup>. However, since Romanians are EU citizens, this rule does not apply to Romanians. Therefore, he can find a smaller flat, which is less costly. The family soon managed to find a flat. Another lady I have interviewed has told me that when she needed a document when she bought a new car – the *Questura* asked for the original and there were problems regarding the stay permit – she asked for the priest's help. The priest went with her to the Questura and talked to the officials and the problem was resolved.<sup>585</sup> There are also people who ask his help when they need to buy a house. Depending on the problem the priest tries to help the parish community or makes them contact the right institution. For all the problems the priest gets involved he enters into communication with the local institutes and acts as the head of the community.

Besides bureaucratical problems the priest can help for the solution of other kind of problems. One lady told me that when she was going through a difficult period in her life called the priest to talk and ask for advice. They met at a coffee shop and he listened to her and gave advices, which was relieving and helpful for the lady. The priest can even help

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>583</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview with Pr. Lupăștean..

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>584</sup> He has become a parochial council member last year and if he has time he comes to clean the Church on Saturday evenings and sometimes he stays after the Sunday liturgy.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>585</sup> Interview with Moldovan lady, who is a woman's committee member.

people for setting up their computer or buying low-cost plane ticket online with his credit card if they do not know how to do it. Confessions are also used by the faithful to get spiritual advice and counselling from the priest. The confessional authority can help the priest to influence the behaviors of his parishioners (Zaretsky, 1996: 3). Through confession faithful share their most intimate secrets regarding their family life, which they do not want to carry to the court and ask the priest to arbitrate or moderate (Ibid: 7). Some faithful told me they go to confession sometimes just to share their experiences and seek guidance.

As the migration context puts more burden over the shoulders of the priest and turns him into a problem-solver, the assistance he gets from the parish community is limited. Heavy work load or the need to work for a second job, faster rhythm of life, other problems and difficulties force the Romanian migrants to compromise the time that they would like to devote in religious or community activities. For many, Sunday is the only day-off and spending half of the day in the Church requires devotion. Only a minority, who are mainly working in the Church organs or among the volunteers, is very actively involved in the maintanence of the ROC and works in direct collaboration with the priest. Even though some lack experience and knowledge, the priest consults the council members and gets their opinions for the solution of problems that arise in the parish life:

Little little...Because they are also at the initial stages. Someone knows more, someone knows less. Someone can understand things or knew it back home. They help, they help. They show interest. But it is not that they can solve the problems. I ask them, there is this problem, there are 5 solutions, you what do you think is the best [solution] that I can take. They make suggestions once in a while, it is better to do like this...it is better to go this way, it is better to do this. It is obvious that I am the one who decides but I like it, I hear another voice. Not only my voice, but voice of the people. When I hear people's voice, I say then, the voice makes you more more certain about yourself, of yourself. Because you say, I have thought like this, if you have asked to 5-6 people, they think the same way, it is ok like this.<sup>586</sup>

The priest becomes as the main decision maker and problem solver and actively indulges in community building. Community building requires a lot of effort, patience and a conciliatory role from the priests. The parish community in Trento appreciates the efforts of the priest, since Romanians and Moldovans come from different parts of Romania and have differences in religious practices and traditions. His hard work in accommodating differences within the parish and in allowing everyone to practice their traditions to a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>586</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview with Pr. Lupăștean.

certain extent in the Church is appreciated by the parish community. Respect for his hard work and devotion makes the parish community more devoted to the Church:

- Priest Ioan, is a man if he wakes me up at 12.00 at midnight, I will go immediately because he is an intelligent man, he is a family guy, there are few priests like him. I am repeating, I mean, I am telling you the first time. He is a priest that works a lot. He is someone who always has something to do. He is on Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, always busy. He is a man, not like other priests that have free time. He is always busy. He has a family, he has a daughter. In Romania the priests are married. With few words, he is smart. He knows how to use a computer, he knows many things and he is a person who has graduated, he has two, I guess, graduate degrees. He is a smart person, who...who deserves all the respect from the Catholics, from Allah, also from everyone, since he is a priest that works. If you do not know, in the Orthodox Church you do not earn money. He does not have a salary. For instance in May last year he made me see, I do not remember, he received 180 euros for a month. 180 euros a month with all the responsibilities and all the things is very little.

- Is he working...
- He is working.
- during the week...

- Because unfortunately we cannot, it is a shame for all the Romanians that we cannot have a priest who can only focus on our problems, because to be a priest you have to pray, you have to help and do many other things but unfortunately we cannot make him have this money.<sup>587</sup>

One of the main means of communication of the priest with the parish community is the sermon. Every Sunday following the liturgy the priest gives a sermon for about 20-25 minutes. The sermon consists of two parts. In the first part he talks about the part or chapter of the Gospel he has read during the liturgy. In this part of the sermon he tries to explain what he has read and clarify or emphasize certain points. Following the explanation of the Gospel, he relates it to the world, time or society we are living in order to give advices and guidance to the parish community. It is possible to see that the people are more interested in the explanation of the Gospel or stories regarding the practicing of the belief. The administrative issues that the priest mentions during the sermon get less attention or people get distracted as the first part on the Gospel ends.

The second part of the sermon is devoted to parish life, certain developments or problems regarding the Romanian community in Trento, in another city or in Italy, which is usually followed by certain announcements regarding religious holy days or saints' days, fasting periods and what can and cannot be eaten, job announcements or collection of money, who needs to go back to Romania or in need of monetary help, festivals in which

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>587</sup> Interview with the parochial council member.

the church is involved, opening of the Romanian association or activities of the Moldovan association, arrival of the Romanian ambassador to the city and opening of the honorary consulate. In other words all the news and announcements regarding the Romanian (and sometimes Moldovan) community in Trento or in Italy in general.

The sermons in general urge the faithful to keep on praying and learn more about their faith in order not to lose their faith. Since the faithful live in a setting where the Orthodoxy is a minority faith, the priest tells the parish community to put more emphasis on praying and reading the Bible. This would allow them to face challenges and questions regarding their faith from the outside world. There is an implicit concern regarding the neo-Protestants and Jehova's witnesses that the faithful are asked to be firm on their belief in order not to be "deceived". During his sermons the priest also warns the faithful regarding wrong religious practices. As the faitful write the names of the people on pieces of paper and ask the priest to pray for them, the priest noticed from some notes that a child in the parish has become seven-years-old, but the same day he came to the Church to take communion. He did not give the name of the child but asked the family of the child to come and talk to him about the religious education of the child and reminded the parish that only children below the age of seven can take communion.

The priest also uses the sermon to respond to questions posed by the faithful that he receives via e-mail or telephone. The Romanians and Moldovans coming from different regions or cities have different traditions and there are sometimes confusion regarding the performance of certain prayers or services. Once the priest has mentioned an e-mail he received from a person asking him what s/he should bring for communion and the priest told him to bring red wine. However, since in some regions in Romania, where red wine is not that good, people use the white wine, the priest told the faithful that white wine is also acceptable if the red wine is not good enough.

The priest receives many questions and it is sometimes overwhelming for him to answer. During the sermons the priest occassionaly convey the message to people that the Church needs the help and efforts of the faithful and keeps reminding them those who does something for the Church, does it for benevolence and for nothing else. He occassionaly says that he and his assistants are doing their best to answer the calls and questions, but if one parishioner helps another parishioner, s/he helps the Church and requests people to inform each other about important religious days or prayers by sending messages. Those who cannot regularly attend the Church's services, keep getting information from close friends who are regular church-goers.

The contribution of the faithful is not asked only for the local church, but also for the development of the ROC in Italy. The enthronement of the Diocesan Bishop for Italy, and therefore, the initiative for the construction of the Diocesan Church is an important development for the future of all the ROCs and communities. From time to time the priest kept reminding people about the importance of their contributions for the construction of the Church by buying foundation stones. In one of his sermons he told the people that this is a historic moment not only for Romanians in Italy, but also for the history of the ROC and Romania. To be convincing the priest resorted to the Romanian Orthodox tradition, saying the names of those who buy stones will be mentioned in prayers of the people for years, who pray in that church. He reminded the faithful of *Stefan Cel Mare*, who has constructed many churches and monasteries in Romania, and told the parish that even today during liturgies in these monasteries and churches people still pray for him.

The sermon also serves to communicate the messages of the Metropolitan in Paris or of the Diocesan Bishop regarding certain important feasts such as Easter or Christmas or the extraordinary meeting of the Romanian Orthodox priests at the Metropolitan Church in Paris or the construction of a new church in Rome that would be used as the See of the Diocesan Bishop. Since before or at Easter, many Romanians come to the Church, the priest uses this opportunity to convey the news to Romanians who come to the church only at Easter. The priest first reads the message of the Metropolitan Iosif, which is about the importance of Easter, going to the church, family life and religious training of children and maintaining faith away from Romania. The Metropolitan's messages keep reminding the parishes growing jurisdiction and agency of the ROC in diaspora by referring to the establishment of Episcopates in Italy and in Spain/Portugal and growing Romanian Orthodox communities and churches not only in Italy, Spain or Portugal but also Netherlands, Belgium, Australia, New Zealand and other parts of the world, which is a development without precedent and a sign of growth and strength of the ROC.

Besides the messages of the Metropolitan or Diocesan Bishop, the priest uses the sermon to communicate recent developments related with the Romanian communities and churches in Italy. The priest also reads the letters of the Metropolitan or Bishop and comments on the issue regarding certain very important problems that affect the Romanian community in Italy such as the criminal acts committed by some Romanians. After the

killing of the Italian citizen Giovanna Reggiani in Rome by a Romanian national, the Metropolitan Iosif and the Diocesan Bishop Siluan sent a letter to ROCs in Italy, which was read during the sermon. The letter states that the ROC of Italy "deplores this reckless act" of a Romanian national and the Church cannot overlook this tragic event and expresses the suffering of the Romanian community with the victim's family. They consider this act not only against the law but also against the principles of the Gospel. They also believe that this event, which has negatively affected the image of the Romanian community in Italy, can not only be redressed (corrected) but also Romanian community could be one of the model minorities of Italy and Europe and a source of pride, not of concern for the Italian citizens and for local authorities. They offer the solidarity of the Romanian Orthodox community against these kinds of acts, which they see as the way to avoid problems: "We believe that our solidarity against all this mischief [...] can help avoid a tragedy that we witness today helplessly." Regarding the impact of the event on the Romanian community:

We pray to God to help us get clear of this moment of difficulty to our advantage and give us courage to live and to declare the Gospel of Jesus that gave the real values of Romanian people that we are part of with all.<sup>588</sup>

Against this mischief it is necessary that we fight all together. Only in this way we can change the public opinion and help to make a difference between those who work and live in a dignified manner together with their families in Italy and those who came with deceitful thoughts and objectives and who do not represent us in any sense.<sup>589</sup>

Events of this sort are also addressed by the priest himself in his sermons. The message he gives is that the majority of the Romanians are hard working and good people and they abide by the law and norms; however, there are very few Romanians (1%) that commit crimes and even though rest of the Romanians do not do anything wrong, all suffer because of their mistakes.

The sermon gains new and important functions within the Italian setting. First of all transmitting the message of the Gospel becomes more important in a setting where the Orthodoxy cannot be taken for granted. Secondly, the sermon becomes a means for the priest to share and discuss the community affairs, news, useful information and problems

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>588</sup> "Rugăm pe Dumnezeu să ne ajute să depășim cu folos aceste momente de încercare și să vă dăruiască tuturor curaj în a trăi și a mărturisi Evanghelia lui Hristos, cea care a dat adevăratele valori neamului romānesc din care facem parte cu toții."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>589</sup> "Împotriva răului trebuie să luptăm cu toții. Numai în acest fel vom putea schimba opinia publică și ajuta să se facă diferența între cei care trăiesc și muncesc demn în Italia împreună cu familiale lor și cei care au venit cu gānduri și scopuri viclene și care nun e reprezintă în nici un fel."

with the parish community. The references to local life in the Italian context and to Romania allows the faithful to be aware of the problems and prospects for the future and urges them to be more involved in community affairs.

**VII.3.4. Migrant Religiosity:** Religious institutions besides social and material resources provide emotional-spiritual resources, which have a very important function in the lives of migrants in the receiving context (Cancellieri, 2008). Particularly the psychological support provided by faith and migrant church becomes vital and maybe more important than the other two resources within a new setting. The habitual order and abilities fitting the context one is born into and used to dissolves as one migrates. The challenge of adjusting to a new setting places more burden on the shoulders of the migrant straining his/her mental and psychological abilities making one to long for traditional order that one is used to (Zaretsky, 1996: 96). Testimonies of Romanian church-goers confirm the need for psychological support, which becomes more intense due to being away from home, and loved ones, aggravated with the hardships and adaptation process to a new setting:

And so...Even these are sufferings, but they are sufferings, we can say, casual, which do not do anything but test us. Because here entering a migration process, you are always tested. You have to always give tests, the test of being good at work, good in character; good at home as a mother, father or son in a society such as this. A continuous exam. Apart from the exams of life that everyone has, here there are more exams.<sup>590</sup>

Other ethnographic work (Cancellieri, 2008) and statements of priests confirm this finding that the presence of the churches can become vital in certain cases given it is a different context that the Romanians are exposed to in Italy:

They come here to meet the brothers and they meet God. I have had some very interesting affirmations. Some say that without the church I would not have resisted....Which means without the church they would have returned. Because anyway at least at the first moments the impact of the Western society is not easy. It is not easy because they are not prepared, as language, as mentality, as way of doing things because the Western society ... has another rhythm. The West is much faster than our East.<sup>591</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>590</sup> Interview by Valentina Sandri with Pr. Lupăștean.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>591</sup> Interview with Pr. Valdman.

Believing in God and going to the church, provide a shelter and act as a source of healing for those, who encounter different types of problems and suffer loneliness, anxiety, loss:

[...] being a believer is something that gives you hope. Because maybe we were born a little a little poor, that we feel the lack of many things. And with hope, with hope there is no need. There is God who helps me, no? There is something...It is always a very nice thing to be a believer. So I have always thought like this.<sup>592</sup>

Some among the faithful were practicing Orthodox even under the communist rule, while some have turned to God and learned more about their religion within the migration setting. The Moldovan lady, who is a member of the church committee, was already a practicing Orthodox when she was in Moldova despite the fear from the communist regime. She came to Italy to pay for the debts of the family and, working as a caregiver for the last six years, she went through difficult times. She could overcome all the problems she suffered due to economic hardships, immigration experience, leaving her husband and younger daughter behind in Moldova, learning a new language, working and living in a house that is totally foreign to her, stress, anxiety, loneliness and fear with her faith. She remembers rejecting a job offer in Rovereto since the house was at a deserted place and she did not feel comfortable with the idea of staying there. Later on she heard that the couple that wanted to employ her had passed away. Retrospectively, she believes that it was Jesus, who protected her from accepting a job offer that would come to an abrupt end. She keeps sending money to her local church in Moldova and she is in touch with the priests there. She even writes the names of the priests that have passed away in Moldova for Pr. Lupăstean to pray for them and she never forgets them. However, she admits that religion has become an indispensable element of her life in Trento. She thinks that having an Orthodox Church in Trento is very important, since "without the church one cannot live." While she is in touch with her local church in Moldova, she tries to contribute to the ROC in Trento. She is part of the parish committee and even though she is living and working out of Trento, she comes to Trento on Fridays to help with cooking for the church. Whatever she does for the church, she does voluntarily and "with pleasure". However, she is very critical of the Orthodox migrants, who do not come to the church at all or regularly. In tears she tells me:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>592</sup> Interview with the parochial committee member.

[...] I think that the people who did not believe there do not also believe here. But I am really really sorry. I am sorry because we are poor countries. But think also about Jesus, Mother Marry, what do you find? I think that without them we cannot live here. Anywhere. Not only here in Italy, in anywhere. Without Jesus, without Mother Mary. They help you, they give patience to a person. I cannot be without a Church. I am happy that I am free on Sundays. I work like a horse during the week but on Sundays I am happy. I am free and I come to the church. It also gives me pleasure. I do it voluntarily...<sup>593</sup>

She is one of the close friends of the other committee member that I have interviewed. When she saw her going to the park at the time of liturgy, rather than coming to the Church she warned her. Her warnings helped them to become good friends:

"I am sorry", I said, "Look...Come to the church. By going to the park, you can find all the colors. But at the time of the mass, it is a sin to stay in the park. You have to listen to the mass, make prayers. All the healthy and ill ones are waiting for someone to pray." And she liked it a lot. Then it always always went further. Then I substituted her, she substituted me. She has substituted me, I needed it, she has helped me a lot. I like them, they are good people.<sup>594</sup>

Some very devout Romanians like her keep expressing their gratefulness to God. Even a complaint regarding daily troubles or despair is considered as a big sin. They believe in the fact that they are in Italy is God's decision. They believe that their life is in God's hands and they willingly put their lives in God's hands. In other words, they cherish their fate such as the seasonal worker who spends three four months in Italy and goes back to Craiova for a couple of months to come back to Trento again and who is in Italy for the last five years has suffered a serious disease just before coming to Italy. He believes that by donating some of his money for the trip to a very sick child he recovered from the disease and that event was a turning point in his life. He was already a church-goer but his relation with his faith became more intense and he maintained this intensity also in Italy. He sees life from a religious perspective and he makes sense of his migration experience with reference to his faith, since he believes that his migration experience is God's work:

- You went to Rome first. And then how did you arrive in Trento?

- I believe it is the God's hand...

- [...] God helped me, because I found Caritas to [have a] place to sleep...

- Are you happy with the accommodation and money you earn here?

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>593</sup> Interview with a Moldovan lady, who is woman's committee member.
 <sup>594</sup> *Ibid.*

- No no sincerely I'd say these are also have been organized by the hand of God ...

- But have you also helped other Romanians to come to Italy?

- Yes but I have not helped. If God gives you the possibility to help. And you want to help, if He does not give you...Because I'd like to help many people but if you have the possibility to bring here [someone] for work, to work. If not, you do not bring only to cause suffering. Yes I have brought thanks to God...

- So a day because in Rome there were a few places I was waiting for work. One day I said I remember that day was a holy day for us Romanians. But I said, "I waited for two weeks, this day I am not going any more to look for a job because it is a sin. And I go to the church." I went to the church and have found two people. Two people in the whole church. Few, very few. Two women. It was a holy day. The priest wanted to celebrate because it was a holy day. With two people it seemed to me. I also did it but...I said enough. Today I am not going to work and went to the church, I prayed a little like others when you lose hope. Then the second ...second day I found a job for for two weeks. Before leaving Romania the friends were saying but "You will find a job that quickly. What are you thinking? You have great ideas." Instead, I have found a job. I have paid the loan, I remained with very little money but I said thanks to God, he has put everything in order.<sup>595</sup>

When he is in Trento he always stays to clean the church and takes care of the candle trays. He says that when he is in the Church he does not miss Romania. He tries to keep praying. He prays "whenever the Spirit of God visits" him. Once I have seen him recording the priest's sermon. When I asked him why he is recording, he told me that he has a friend who watches television a lot. Even though he is a good guy, he should not waste his time like this. He thought the priest would talk about the harmful effects of watching television;<sup>596</sup> therefore, he decided to register the sermon to guide his friend to the right path.

I have heard from many that they would not be able to face the hardships without the Church. It is not something I have heard only in Trento. When a young Romanian lady was showing me the way to the ROC in Milan was telling me that thanks to the presence of the Church she can stand on her feet and keep on fighting with the problems. The Church compensates for the loss of status. Many Romanians are doing jobs that they were not doing in Romania or they do not want to. Some complain that despite the fact that they are the EU citizens, some employers want to pay them less for the job. The Church provides space for prayers and relations that help them gain self-respect. When I was asking one of the volunteer young woman why she comes to the church regularly while back in Romania she did not go, she was telling me that here she is alone without her family and prayers and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>595</sup> Interview with a male seasonal worker on March, 17<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>596</sup> However, instead the priest talked about the ills of talking behind people's back.

devotion gives her power. Moreover she knows more about her faith now. The church provides the lonely ones with a sense of family and reminds many of Romania. A young Romanian woman in the ROC in Bologna was telling me when she is in the church she is at home. The parochial council member in the Church in Istanbul was also telling me the church and the parish community is their "little Romania".

Once I was chatting with a guy from Suceava, who after a long search could not find a job in Trento and moved to Bolzano. He kept visiting the Church with certain intervals. When I asked him how he feels about the new place and new job, he responded that he does not feel perfect because the only thing that is perfect is the God, but he is trying to see positive side of things, and therefore, he is happy that there is a Church in Bolzano. I am here because God helped me to come here he says and adds "Yes my family is away but I am not alone here. Do you understand what I mean?"

Overcoming difficulties within the migration context by turning to God is neither something specific to Romanians nor something new. Based on his study of the 19<sup>th</sup> century immigrant letters for two years Dolan argues that talking about God was a common theme in immigrant letters (Dolan, 1988: 69). God was described as watching over them in their new lives in a new continent, helping, protecting and guiding them, and always present and close to them (Ibid: 69-70). Sufferings and hardships were seen as the "God's will" to test their belief. Besides those that carry their faith with them, there are also some Romanian church-goers, who have discovered the true meaning of their faith in the Church in Italy:

- Yes I was going, but I had always in mind these things here. I was not going to search for God, it is necessary to look for Him. I mean, I was praying to God, but within me for things that are ...

- Material.

- For material things, for this, not for a spiritual thing. Because it was this what I desired. For this I was going to the church.  $^{\rm 597}$ 

Just before a marriage ceremony of a young Moldovan couple was about to start I was chatting with one Romanian guy in his early 30s, who is in Italy for the last two years and who has become a regular church-goer in Italy. He told me that he has learnt most of the things about his faith in Italy. He came to Italy alone and during his visits to Bologna and Rome he went to ROCs there. Even though there was a ROC in Trento he did not go. He talked to one priest in Rome a couple of times and the priest recommended him to go and talk to the Romanian Orthodox priest in Trento. I remember him, when I started

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>597</sup> Interview with a regular church-goer and a parochial council member in Trento on in Trento on April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

attending the liturgies and waiting till other people leave to ask some questions to Pr. Lupăstean, he was also waiting and asking questions about from the Bible or about religion. Now due to his commitment he is one of the volunteers in the church and even assisted the priest during Sunday liturgies. I was asking him if he is planning to go to Romania. I have not gone there for the last two years he said and if I go back to Romania now I would feel as if going to a new country. When I asked him if he is not in touch with any friends, he told me that he would not call them friends any more, since the only real and true friend is Jesus.<sup>598</sup> He told me that he regrets the fact that he did not know much about religion and even if he was going to the church from time to time he did not understand what it really meant. His family did not know much about religion either. His brother, who has converted into Protestantism, was asking him to read the Bible but he would not listen. Then showing me the little boy, who is wearing a black suit for the wedding ceremony and running around, climbing pews and laughing like crazy, he says: "It would be better for me if I had started learning about religion at his age." I guess the young couple who was about to get married inspired him and he told me that he is willing to find someone who knows more about religion than himself, so that she can teach their kids.

The faithful tries to maintain spiritual ties with the priest, who performs certain rites of passage such as baptism or marriage for them, which creates an important spiritual bond between the faithful and the priest. Moberg argues that it is the rites of passage function of the church that renders the church very significant for its adherents (1962: 350). The rites of passage accompany church-members as they pass to a new stage in their lives. The rites of passage "help to cushion shock, carry people over crises and symbolize passage from one stage of life to the next" (Ibid: 350). Within a migration setting, the rites of passage strengthen the religiosity of the migrant. One interviewee told me that she respects the priest because he has baptized her grandchild. Another volunteer who is the treasurer of the Church at the parochial council for the last one year has also told me that the priest has baptized his son and that is why he is working as a volunteer in the Church.

Within the new setting, the confessions gain a new meaning and they turn into a means of providing psychological support and guidance not only for spiritual issues but also economic hardships or practical issues. Moreover, the presence of the church can be the reason for settling in a place, since the presence of the Church and the parish

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>598</sup> When I have interviewed him on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008 he repeated the same sentence.

community provide the Romanian families with the sense of security and stability. I have met families who have moved to Trento, because there was no ROC in their town and they preferred to move to a place where they can go to church and their kids can grow up close to the church and the Orthodox faith. The presence of the church and access to the local priest can alleviate other problems such as the unemployment or problems with the accommodation. As excerpts from the interview with couple who are devout Orthodox church-goers in Trento show:

Husband: Yes, there, at Mestre we were much better off then we are here. I mean I could not find a job, I was not able to settle but we were much better off there, because the church was open every day there, not like here.

Husband: There are (prayer services) every day, every evening, the priest is always in the church. We were always going there. I did not have a job but I was going there.

Wife: We were meeting there, two of us. I was going to the city to do, to take care of something, he was coming back from work or job search, we were meeting there, in the church.<sup>599</sup>

Besides the religious practices within the Church, there are some signs of popular religiosity within the parish community. Regular church-goers bring and share cards of some saints such as *Sf. Ioan Iacob Romanul*. The Orthodox believe that on Orthodox Easter holy light descends from the sky to Jesus' tomb and the priest's take the holy light to the faithful. They believe this light does not burn even if one holds it to his face for a few minutes and they share the stories about some miracles. Moreover, the religiosity of Romanians cannot be restrained to the Church space. The icon cards they put around in their cars, houses, carry in their purses, pockets or wallpaper on their mobiles or icons they put in their bedrooms, kitchens; prayer booklets they carry with them to recite when they get a chance, morning and evening prayers some try to do regularly, documentaries or sermons recorded from Romanian tv or downloaded from the ROC websites<sup>600</sup>, exchange of religious movie videos and books about their faith they religion out of the Church, icon bracelets on their arms or the Orthodox crosses on their necks, Angel toys that recite prayers for the kids are different ways, means and places of practicing religiosity out of the Church.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>599</sup> Interview with a church-goer couple in Trento on April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>600</sup> <u>http://www.sfaturiortodoxe.ro/</u> *Sfaturi Ortodoxe* means Orthodox advices.

## VII.4. The Romanian-Italian Transnational Orthodox Space

The ROCs, Romanian Orthodox priests and parish communities in Italy construct a Romanian-Italian Orthodox space colored with elements from the Italian Catholic tradition. Ebaugh and Chafetz argues that the migrant communities try to replicate the religious institutions they have back home. They try to build similar worshipping places, which externally and internally resemble hometown religious buildings in order to strengthen the feeling of being at home (2000: 81). There are certain important elements inside that add into the feeling of being at home such as announcements written in the native language, religious books sold inside the church and sometimes other internal elements that is part of the prayer imported from home country (Ibid). Even though the architecture and internal structure of the churches are designed in accordance with the Catholic tradition – such as the existence of pews, which is not the case in the Orthodox Churches in Romania - the liturgy and the parish life converts and transforms the churches into a Romanian Orthodox one. The iconostasis, icons, incense, prayers and hymns in Romanian, prayers for the Romanian Orthodox saints, prayer books, white pieces of clothes with Romanian designs that are put around or under the icons transform the churches into a Romanian Orthodox one. Besides the women covering their hairs with different colors of scarves, Romanian kids running around in the church garden or at the entrance, mothers telling kids to behave in the church in Romanian, some people chatting in small groups in the church garden or whispering something in Romanian to each others' ears in the church, sharing Romanian food as well as jokes and problems during and after the prayer makes that space a Romanian Orthodox one, even if it is only for three hours.

The Romanian-Italian transnational religious space cannot be limited to the ROCs only. The houses or cars of Romanians decorated with small icons, crosses, candles and prayer books, small icon cards carried in purses or prayer books in the bags, the Orthodox hymns, CDs, video cassettes, internet downloads of films, documentaries and sermons of the Romanian Orthodox priests that are played at homes and exchanged among friends, the prayers in the lips, hearts and minds of believers when alone, working, walking, traveling is another understudied aspect of the Romanian Orthodox faith in the Italian context.

In the case of part-time churches, the religious space is under constant construction and redefinition. Rather than a conversion of the Church into an Orthodox one, the Church becomes the scene of the construction of the Romanian-Italian religious transnational space as has been expressed by Pr. Babula:

[...] The Catholic bishop of Ivrea has understood the needs of the Romanian community of Ivrea and agreed to give the use of Church of...to the Romanian community together with the Catholic Italians of Ivrea. While the community keeps using the church, in the mean time the community in Ivrea has received an old church to restructure for having their own church.<sup>601</sup>

We have reached a certain point here that we cannot say this church is an Orthodox church or a Catholic church. It is our church. We feel good, we are happy here.<sup>602</sup>

Through the ROCs, Romanian saints and spirituality are transferred to the new setting to become part of the parish life in Italy as could be seen with the names of some ROCs in Italy:

The parish of Ivrea has its patron Saint, Sfântul Leontie. Because the major part of the people come from the Northern part of Romania...Suceava. We have chosen a saint that has lived in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, no the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century in the Northern part. He has lived in the tradition, in the minds...And the people have trust in this saint. And this saint is the protector of our parish.<sup>603</sup>

The partial use of the Church with two communities leads to interaction, which leads the Romanian priest to believe that the God has worked on the souls of the Catholic community in Ivrea, which made them very open and inclined towards ecumenism. Pr. Babula gives the example of the Easter day prayers, which has been celebrated the same day in April 2007 by both the Catholics and the Orthodox in the world.

The functions of the Easter, we have done almost together. Because the same Holy Friday, the same Holy Thursday, the same day of the Easter almost together. We have done our services and they have done theirs. But the life, the life with respect to these holy days has been almost together. And the confessions, there were Catholic believers, there were Orthodox believers, they were all confessing. It is a very interesting thing.<sup>604</sup>

This interaction and common prayers can lead to important initiatives from the local Italian Catholic community:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>601</sup> Interview with Pr. Babula.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>602</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>603</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>604</sup> Ibid.

[...] I have heard something and it gave me a lot of courage. You know last year in September, there was this walk in Sibiu; Sibiu was the capital of Europe. A group of believers from here, from Ivrea, because the bishop has represented the Catholic Church in Sibiu. A group of believers here, in Ivrea have said that we are very happy because the Romanian community is developing in the Church of San Salvatore. For me these ideas are very important.<sup>605</sup>

Emphasizing certain days and/or introducing new saints to the calendar can also work to create a common ground for the Catholics and Orthodox to come closer and walk together, while bringing new elements into the lives of the Romanian Orthodox in Italy:

More than thousand years we were together, even if the history has divided us for different reasons, we have many things in common beyond the sacraments, priests in common points ... we are still far away because we do not know each other. I personally have started, we can say, in my parish, we can say, catechism, we can say like this a personal plan to make my tradition known first of all to my believers in parallel to this to insert always in the right moments the Catholic tradition. It is not only Catholic for instance there is San Vigilio for instance also in the tradition of the saints of the undivided church, which were not there, today we find that also in our calendar as a holy day because he is the saint of all and we have to respect him at that day, at that moment. I was saying that I have started to insert elements from the Latin Catholic tradition to give the chance to make known where we come from, how we come, God knows. We have started; we hope to find each other on the same path also from the other side. Because it happens many times during Sundays, during the celebration also with the aim of visiting the tourists also from Trento people come to the Church, they stop, they ask, they start to underst...they come again to ask how we do, how we do baptizing, everything...This means that we have a lot more to walk together. Let's hope that not another 1,000 years.<sup>606</sup>

Some Romanians told me they were also taking communion at the Catholic Church. Therefore, they get acquainted with the Catholic faith while maintaining their own religious identity. The presence of the ROCs in Italy increases the curiosity of some Italian Catholics to a different Christian Church. They visit the ROCs during liturgies. According to Pr. Milăşan's account some Italian professors who teach courses about religions were visiting the ROC in Verona with their students and as the deacon of the he was answering their questions for an hour or so. They were also invited to attend and see how certain ceremonies such as baptism are conducted. Besides reaching out to the Romanians, the Romanian Orthodox priests are trying to create more awareness about the Orthodoxy and contribute to the dialogue by inviting the Catholic priests to their Churches for Christmas, Easter or for the celebration of other religious holidays and week of prayer for the unity of Christians, participating different conventions or initiatives and writing for different Italian

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>605</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>606</sup> Pr. Lupăștean's speech at the Focolare Meeting.

journals (Piovano, 2001: 91). The Church in Milan had a three-monthly publication in Italian "*Biserica Romaneasca*" from 1975 up until 1993 (Nicolae, 2003: 17).

Even though sometimes problems arise between two communities, both sides are learning to overcome their differences. Pr. Matei thinks that certain problems that some Romanians had with the Italians regarding their faith stem from the lack of knowledge regarding the Orthodoxy:

At first they were scared of us, because they believed that we are Muslims. Because they do not know that the Orthodox Church is a Christian church. "They are Muslims" "Are you Muslims?" No. We are not Muslims. Our women fast. "Are you Muslims? You are in Ramadan." "You do this" No we are not Muslims. But even if we are, if we were Muslims, we do not eat men and also they do not eat men. They live their faith and we understand quite well that what they do and they have understood what we do. The important thing is there is respect.<sup>607</sup>

Some Romanians encounter certain problems in terms of practicing their religion during the Lent period or whenever they are fasting, especially the live-in care or domestic workers. Since it is rather women who perform the practice of fasting and since many of them work as live-in care workers, the Italian Catholic families get to know the Orthodox fasting from them. There were problems in earlier periods because the Italians "did not have the experience with foreigners at their homes."<sup>608</sup> Another problem is having the day-off on Sundays or at least having the permission to go the Church. However, since the liturgy in the ROCs is around 3 to 4 hours, while Catholic mass is around 40 minutes, it might lead to problems between the employer and the worker. But not all the Romanians encounter these problems.<sup>609</sup>

However, there are also many cases that the Italian Catholic families started fasting 40 days before the Easter with the Romanian Orthodox care worker working in their houses. A practice which they have quitted long ago is revived in interaction with an Orthodox caregiver at home.<sup>610</sup> This indicates that the only place of interaction for the communities is not only the church and in time both sides learn and contribute to each other's faith and practices. As Pr. Matei states:

[...] The people instead, the people who live here then go home, for sure they bring something here. We cannot say that they are impoverished, but they are enriched in something. They have received many nice things from Italian people that they carry

<sup>607</sup> Interview with Pr. Matei.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>608</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>609</sup> Interview with Pr. Rosu; 1<sup>st</sup> Interview with Pr. Lupăștean.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>610</sup> Interview with Pr. Rosu; Interview with Pr. Matei.

home for sure, that there is an influence. Because there is this exchange of populations, for sure there are influences and you they get to know each other better.  $[...]^{611}$ 

The Romanian-Italian Orthodox space is under constant redefinition. One interesting feature of the ROC parish communities in Italy is their changing composition. Free mobility has lifted the selectivity criteria for Romanian migration. Therefore, it is possible to find Romanians coming from different parts and regions of Romania within the Romanian communities in Italy. Up until 2002, the high number of irregular Romanian migrants in Italy was causing serious problems for the Churches (Piovano, 2001a: 78). While it is not the case any more, enhanced mobility of Romanians within and out of Italy as the EU citizens, renders the parish community in constant change. Growing mobility makes it difficult for the priests to know the exact number of parishioners. During fieldwork in Trento, I had the chance to encounter and interview seasonal workers.<sup>612</sup> who work in agriculture for 3 to 4 months in Trento and go back to Romania to stay 3 months in order to come back again. They are members of both the parish in Trento and in Romania. The ties of the community with Romania is strong. The majority of the Romanians have satellite dishes and they can watch the Romanian channels at home. When I was interviewing the parochial council member, who has recently opened an Italian-Romanian firm in Cluj and who travels back and forth for business, the tv was on and the Romanian President was giving an interview on Realiate (news) channel. Since there are no visa requirements they can travel to Romania. There are cheap airlines and buses. Due to weight limitation on airlines, many prefer to either travel by bus or by their car. They are in touch with their loved ones through phone calls, visits (from and to Romania) the packs they send and receive with Romanian transport company *Alassib*. As their relatives visit them, they come to Church with them. Sometimes for a marriage or baptism ceremony their relatives from Romania come to participate the ceremony or to be godparents. People also support the Church by bringing priestly vestments to the priest or icons from Romania. It is not only Romania that they are in touch with. Many has relatives in other parts of Italy and some in Europe. This allows for exchanges among the members of the Romanian diaspora.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>611</sup> Interview with Pr. Matei.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>612</sup> Seasonal work in summer and winter has become a constant component of immigration in Trentino. 3 out of 4 of the seasonal workers work in the agricultural sector and 1 in services, particularly in hospitality sector. The Romanians are the most numerous among the seasonal workers followed by Poles, Slovaks, Czechs and Albanians. "Una Risposta ai Fabbisogni dell'Economia Trentina: Gli Ingressi dei Lavoratori Stagionali Stranieri" Cinformi News, 2005, Anno II, No. 6.

Sometimes Romanians living in other countries can also visit the Church as once a Romanian lady, working in Switzerland came to the Church before Easter and asked for the address of the Church in Bolzano to go there for the Easter prayers.

In addition to the mobility between Italy and Romania, Romanians are very mobile within Italy. Many Romanians work with short term contract or without contract can lead to instability in work life as well as in social life of Romanians in Italy. When a church-goer finds a new job in a different city, he/she becomes part of a different Romanian Orthodox parish in Italy. Sometimes the church-goer becomes the member of more than one church and can lead to the articulation of translocal ties among different ROCs in Italy. As was the case with one Romanian church-goer, who has been an active participant in the ROC in Trento, had to move to Milan, since he has found a job there but was trying to attend the liturgy in Trento every two weeks saying that he has grown up with the church in Trento and he will keep in touch. Since a new ROC is opened in Bolzano in December 2007, some Romanians who used to come to Trento from Bolzano and its provinces to attend Sunday liturgy are now members of the new parish in Bolzano. However, there are parishioners that keep visiting the church in Trento, therefore tying the two parish communities and churches together. Another church-goer, who has found a job in Bolzano, keeps coming back for confession arguing that spiritual ties do not break if a church-goer moves to another city. Therefore, the spiritual ties that one believer forms with the local priest goes on and extends beyond the local church and links different parishes and priests within the Italian religious landscape. Moreover, there is constant interaction and close ties among the ROCs in Italy and their priests in Italy, especially those that are at a closer distance have closer relations. When the parishioners visit other cities, they also try to visit their churches.

Another spiritual tie is through the prayer. During the liturgy, Romanians write some names on a piece of paper and give it to their priest for him to pray for them. The prayers could be for the health and well-being of those who are alive as well as for those who have passed away. When the local priest utters the name of a person s/he does not need to be physically in the church; however, s/he is considered to be in the church and the prayers reach that person. In Trento I have seen many Romanians writing the names of Romanian priests (that are in Romania or in Italy in another town) other than the local priest. Pr. Avram Matei confirms this with his own experience: My name is... they cannot find my name in many places in Italy. But they tell me that I know you, the priests tell me that they know me because I have a very rare name. Avram, there is no Avram. Very rare. "I know you, I have received many papers with your name".<sup>613</sup>

Some of the Romanians continue this practice when they go back home for holidays in the churches in their locality in Romania. Therefore, a spiritual tie that extends beyond the international boundaries connects different parishes, priests and communities together.

In the Romanian Orthodox tradition and society, the godfather or parents are considered to be the part of the family and play a very important role in creating relationship of reciprocity through moral and monetary support (Cingolani, 2008: 18). In one of the baptizing ceremonies I have attended at the ROC in Trento, I had the chance to meet the godparents of the baby girl, who came from Romania for the ceremony, brought gifts and clothes from Romania and then went back to Romania. Therefore, religious practices do not only strengthen the friendship ties between two families but also articulate a spiritual tie that connects two families living in two different contexts together.

Many Romanians in Italy lose their loved ones back in Romania. As the priest of the ROC in Trento states almost every Sunday there is someone in the Church, who has lost a relative back home but due to work or other reasons they cannot always go back to Romania. This becomes a heavy psychological burden for the Romanian Orthodox, since the relationship with the dead ones is deemed very important and maintaining contact with the dead ones through certain "localized practices" is part of the community life (Cingolani, 2008: 19). At the first week of the Easter, *Pomana*, all the families of the community bring a sweet made of grain, bread and drinks to the cemetery and after the blessing of the priest the food is left on the tomb. This is a practice very much tied to the land. The place the dead one is buried creates a tie and a bridge with the family of the dead person and the world of the living (Ibid). When the family or community members are away from the locality, the religious practice that is very much localized takes a different shape, while articulating another form of spiritual tie with Romania:

I went to my priest to confess. "Father, listen I am in Italy more than a year and once a year in Romania. What can I do to pray for me, for my family, even for the dead ones?" There are many. For example, to have tranquility even after the death. And he has told me this. If you know someone who has died in Italy, go to this tomb and pray as you pray. There are many old people who have died here. They

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>613</sup> Interview with Pr. Matei.

are buried in the cemetery in Trento. Whenever I feel the need, I go there. And I tell you the truth that when I have problems I go there, it always helps me. You can say that it is faith.<sup>614</sup>

Besides spiritual ties, ties with the local priests in Romania are maintained even the Romanian migrants have been living in Italy for a long time or planning to settle in Italy. The testimonies of the church-goers in Romania are indicative of the fact that they keep their social and spiritual ties with the priests in Romania. When they go back to their localities they visit churches for attending the liturgy and for confession and even after they go back to Italy they keep in touch with the local parish priest.<sup>615</sup> Since the faithful maintain their spiritual ties with local parishes in Romania, it helps the ROCs in Italy to get in touch with local churches in Romania. Some Romanian church-goers, who cannot go to the church regularly in Italy, try to compensate for it when they go back to their locality in Romania for holidays. This is facilitated if the church-goer and the Romanian Orthodox priest come from the same locality, which is the case of one Romanian lady. The priest in Trento and Botoşani in Romania know each other and the church-goer herself becomes the link between two parish churches.

Monetary support sent to local parishes in Romania from the ROCs in Italy is another way of articulating transnational ties. Monetary support can be in the form of sending money for the construction or reconstruction of a church in a locality in Romania or other needs of the Church as well as a crisis situation for a local parishioner in Romania such as the death of a loved one. The monetary contribution and prayers reach a local church in Romania and through the same link reaches the letters and messages of gratitude to the priests of the ROCs in Italy. Given the limited resources of the Romanian communities and parishes the helping hand extended to parishes and local communities in Romania are limited and have a more symbolic value than material:

[...] We also have contacts with some churches, then we help them for the construction or for other things. Every month there is something. The faithful try to to...I cannot do everything...because there are too many requests, the money is no money, we do a little for each but [...] For instance last week we have sent to Moldova for a church that they have constructed up until the roof. They have also made the roof with wood but they do not have money to cover it. They are scared that it will rain, so for this they came. I do not...rarely, money collection in the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>614</sup> Interview with a Romanian lady, who goes occassionaly to the ROC in Trento on May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>615</sup> Interview with a Romanian lady, who is a member of the women's committee. Interview with a Romanian lady, who goes occassionaly to the ROC.

Church, I do not do it for these things. I do it for instance when someone dies that they have to send home. So if there is someone seriously sick in hospital, there is the need to do something for things like these. [...] we collect money in the Church for...for funerals, for exceptional things, we can say.<sup>616</sup>

[...] through people that arrive, we have active contacts with their parish churches of origin. Many of them also send their faithful that are here. But in this we have succeeded in reaching an agreement that then the faithful are our faithful or their faithful here. This is not a problem. Also because of the direct relationship with the parish churches have seen that we can maintain the contact, this is productive for the faithful. They, when they go there, they have an active contact in the country when they come here we have active contact with them in country. And it is like this to take spiritual care of of these people. Then there were some problems. For instance floods, we have collected money, then as an example there are social problems in the family, for material problems, to construct a church. For instance now we have made a contribution, not much, because they come from all around Romania, not only Suceava, a little from a part, a little...We never were absent from ... requests for contribution that they have asked for. As much as it is possible, because it is not possible to help everything everywhere. Then for some families...something social for instance in their parishes there. This is what we have given them. They also helped us. For instance now we make all the pews inside the church and there is a priest from Romania that works on this, he helps us. He came voluntarily to help us for this. So you can see that the contributions are bilateral. They are in eternal sense, not in unique sense.<sup>617</sup>

The priest in Trento is also encouraging them to donate money for local churches in Romania. When they want to help his Church, he tells the faithfull to send the money to churches in Romania to help repair or construct churches.<sup>618</sup> The Moldovan committee member told me that when she goes to Moldova she visits her church but she also sends money and help to the Church, whenever she can. Before the interviewed she went to send a pack to Moldova and she told me that she put also some money for the Church. She also sends money, clothes or anything they need to the monasteries, since they help many people in need. She tries to help the Church in Trento, while regretting she does not have much money to donate. There is also another reason for helping: "Then they pray for you. I say you cannot leave them just like this. The Church is the main thing".<sup>619</sup>

The Church sends some help to Romanian Churches but it is not a regular thing. When there is the need and as much as the Church and community can afford to:

[...] For instance a monastery was making icons. I have bought 50 icons; I sell them here then slowly. I help like this. Or when Father Tanasechea has arrived, who has 200 kids, we have collected money and we have sent. Now I have helped a parish,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>616</sup> Interview with Pr. Matei.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>617</sup> Interview with Pr. Rosu.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>618</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> Interview with Pr. Lupăștean.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>619</sup> Interview with a Moldovan lady, who is a member of the women's committee.

which has made the central heating in the church, a small parish, it was little, 50 euro. So with 50 euro they already had a part of heating in the parish church. These are small things, but small things are from big things. Occasionally we help for the floods. Yes we have collected [money]. When there are moments, we try to be closer and help them.<sup>620</sup>

Recently there were floods in Northern Romania and the priest, who is from the North and who was in Romania just after the flood has shared his impressions with the people during his sermon and told people if they want to help they are collecting money to be sent to Romania.

The priests in Italy and Romania do not establish ties only flow of monetary aid. In some cases, upon invitation from the Romanian priests in Italy, the priests in Romania visit the church, attend celebration of liturgies and strengthen the ties between two parishes and localities.<sup>621</sup> Sometimes priests from Romania get in touch with the ROCs in Italy because their family members are working there:

[...] sometimes the faithful come, they also bring two priests that come from Moldova. Maybe it is that the priests have brought their faithful, and then there are the wives of priests from Romania, Moldova that work here. They come here, they bring the husband here and he comes to the church. [...]<sup>622</sup>

Pr. Lupăștean of Trento states that besides relations among different parishes in Romania and Italy through organizational lines, there are ties established through the faithful, which are sometimes more stronger and important than the organizational ties:

Yes, they develop rather family ties. Because either someone from the church has a relative or someone that is a priest there. And this way we get to know each other and then we create the ties. I have establishes ties with 3-4 that I did not even know of. They had a sister or a brother here, they came for holidays and we...Here comes a monk, in fact 2 monks and they are 5, and there are 3 priests. They came...One came for baptism, in fact for two baptisms. Then we met and we maintained this [tie]. One came for his 2 sisters; one came to search for help.<sup>623</sup>

When the priest go to Romania in summer holidays for two weeks a priest from Romania comes to conduct the liturgy:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>620</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview with Pr. Lupăștean.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>621</sup> It is not always the case. In his ethnographic work Cingolani has interviewed an Orthodox priest from Marginea, who has been invited and hosted by Romanian Orthodox community from his locality in Chieri, Italy in 2000. He has stayed for three weeks and during his stay he went to the Saint Parascheva ROC in Turin. However, he argues that Pr. Vasilescu of the ROC in Turin did not invite him to celebrate the liturgy together, since he did not want him to get a share from the people's offerings. During his stay in Turin, there was no collaboration between him and Pr. Vasilescu (Cingolani, 2008: 24).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>622</sup> Interview with Pr. Matei.

 $<sup>^{623}</sup>$  2<sup>nd</sup> Interview with Pr. Lupăștean.

[...] I have met him for the reason that his sister works here and he came to the house of his sister, we met 3 years ago. We met, I have seen that he is a good person. I asked him if he can come to sub for me, when he comes to his sister's place he also comes here and that's it [he starts laughing].<sup>624</sup>

Besides contacts and visits among local parishes in Italy and Romania, interactions flow through other organizational lines. Pr. Roşu argues that the previous Patriarch was very much interested in the developments in diaspora and whenever he went to Bucharest, he went to talk to the Patriarch about the relationship with the bishop and problems of his own parish. He is very hopeful about the new Patriarch as well, since he is young and he has new energy and great experiences in diaspora. He has always been involved in ecumenical dialogue and he knows the problems of the diaspora. Therefore, he thinks that the Mother Church and the Romanian state have a growing interest for the diaspora communities and parish churches. Apart from their visits to the Patriarchate, the priests when they go to Romania talk about their experiences in Italy at conferences and meetings and respond people's question regarding the Romanian diaspora.<sup>625</sup> Some Romanian parish priests send the books they have written or published with the faithful to be distributed in the parishes in Italy.<sup>626</sup> The choirs from Romania can visit the churches in Italy for Christmas. On certain occasions there are visits from the Patriarchate to the local ROCs in Italy.<sup>627</sup>

The ROCs in Italy are important actors in community building and structuring migrant transnationalism in the transnational space, the implications of which cannot be restrained only to Romania or Italy. As Pr. Valdman states this continuous interaction that starts through transnational migrants and migration can lead to transformations within the church strengthening it through the transnational experience:

Well, there is a continuous interaction, which means Romania influences the diaspora with the new... influences with the new waves of Romanians. The diaspora influences...The visits of those from diaspora, who at least for one month go home, influence. So the diaspora influences Romania. Therefore there is a reciprocal influence. ... I believe that here ... we have a lot to gain because anyway Romania is the trunk...Motherland, the Mother Church is the trunk. We are the branches that went beyond the frontiers. If you cut the branch from the root, it will dry no? ... but at the same time when this branch grows well, it influences the root. It influences the living root. If this one lives well... And I believe that ... the general Eastern values, general not only the Orthodox but all the religions, the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>624</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>625</sup> Interview with Pr. Milăşan.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>626</sup> Interview with Pr. Rosu.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>627</sup> Interview with Pr. Valdman.

Eastern values acquire ... in their efficacy in their affirmation when they succeed in utilizing a Western type methodology. More discipline, more order, ... I would say, more respect for the other without thinking only your own small interests, we can say ... provincial, of the province, but one acquires a broader vision and so they understand each other. Also the differences do not become a motive for conflict but a motive for enrichment. Because, if I see someone who prays, lives, behaves in a certain way, if his methodology is a positive one and that I utilize in my situation.<sup>628</sup>

In Italy ROCs become community centers, which provide space for the resolution of problems, reproduction of Romanian Orthodox identity and generation of resources indispensable for the integration of the Romanian migrants into the wider society. Reorganization within the new setting for the Churches and Romanian migrants lead to the redefinition of the priest's role as well as the way migrants relate to the Church and conceive their faith. While these transformations are developed as a response to the local requirements and problems, transnational connections – already established or newly articulated – with localities in Romania sustain, affect and transmit the ROCs experiences to different settings within the Romanian-Italian religious transnational space.

## **VIII. Concluding Remarks and Future Prospects**

Since it is migration that brought the ROCs to the Italian territory, the future of the ROCs in Italy is interlinked with the future of the Romanian migration and migrant community in Italy. The ROCs that have been brought into the Italian landscape with the initiatives of Romanian Orthodox migrants succeeded in establishing parish churches in different parts of Italy and formed a well-functioning network of parish churches. With the support of the Catholic Church opening new parish churches was facilitated. However, throughout the emergence and evolution of the ROCs, they went through organizational and structural adaptation, took on new responsibilities beyond their main religious vocation and faced the challenge of becoming actively involved in the social realm. The churches turned into community centers, while the ROCs and their priests indulged in community building activities. The priests besides their religious duties and mission became community leaders and representatives of the interests of the Romanian communities in their towns and cities. Both the ROCs and the priests play an important role in the integration of migrants and reproduction of the Romanian Orthodox tradition, values and identity. The ROCs also help the articulation of transnational ties among parishes and communities in Romania and Italy. The construction of the Romanian-Italian Orthodox space would not be possible without the devotion and contributions of the ROC-goers, who rediscover their own faith and tradition and establish links with their identity and country using the transnational connections of the ROCs as well as creating their own through religion.

While Romanian-Italian transnational religious space is widening and deepening, the future shape it would take and to what extent transnational ties and space that is created through migration would last are debated. The characteristics of the Romanian migration, ongoing migration (arrival and return), the socio-economic developments in Italy and Romania, factors that constrain or extend migrant transnationalism within both contexts, attachments of Romanians to Italy developed through experiences, marriages and children, while maintaining ties and relations with Romania, agency of transnational institutional actors, particularly of the ROCs, and second-generation's self-perception and their preferences regarding living transnational lives would determine the durability of the Romanian-Italian transnational space and ties. During my fieldwork I have met newcomers from Romania and could observe that circular migration has become an important segment of the Romanian migration to Italy. I have also met individuals and families considering the option of returning back or going to another European country such as Spain, UK or Ireland. Some of the priests I have talked to had some parishioners returning back to Romania. However, the number of Romanians that prefer to settle in Italy exceeds the returnees and currently Romanians make up the most numerous migrant community in Italy. While it is difficult to estimate the future shape and extent of the Romanian-Italian transnational space, it is possible to mention some factors that might affect the Romanian community in Italy in the future.

The ROCs in Italy are taking root and they are willing to stay. One of the important indicators of this will is is the plan of the ROCs and their parish communities to construct, buy or transform buildings into Romanian style Orthodox churches. For the time being the Romanian Orthodox communities are using Catholic Churches fully or partially in Italy. Pr. Matei told me that they are planning to start collecting money for the construction of an Orthodox church with a kindergarten for families, who cannot send their kids to kindergarten. Some other parishes also have this long term plan such as the ROC in Bolzano, which was opened in December 2007. The Romanian community in Bolzano is using the church of Caritas. Even though it is very close to the train station and very easy to reach, it is a small church. In the future as the community grows, the priest is hoping to have enough resources to buy a building and transform it into an Orthodox Church.<sup>629</sup> The state officials in Turin and Trento have promised to financially support the initiatives for the construction of the Orthodox Churches in the near future. The most important ROC in Italy, the See of the Diocesan Bishop is also opened in 2008. In Rome the Romanian state has bought a big building to be transformed into an Orthodox Church and the Bishop transferred his See, which he used when he was a Vicar, from Mulazzo to Rome. The construction of the See in Rome has a symbolic meaning and is the most visible indication of the willingness of the ROC to stay in Italy. The construction of or transformation of buildings into the Orthodox Churches seems to be the next phase of the construction of the Orthodox space, which gives Romanian people a sense of stability and assurance, and as Pr. Matei suggests it is an indication of the fact that the ROCs and communities are there to stay:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>629</sup> Interview with Pr. Milăşan.

It will stay. Yes yes yes. We do not even think that the church will not be here. If we want to construct a church it means that there are people. We have made a survey to see how many people would remain, how many are certain that they will stay. It is quite a long time or they stay always for their children. And even if they go back, their children do not go back, this is another thing. Because if someone is born here and lives as an Italian citizen for all his life, within 20 years he goes back to Romania, I do not see this happening. Because he will be foreigner two times. [...]<sup>630</sup>

Pr. Codrea shares Pr. Matei's view that Romanian immigrants are destined to stay in Italy. In a small research the Church's association has done for a bank in Verona, they have found out that there are many Romanians, who have bought houses in Verona, who have work contracts for 20, and even some for 40, years. If they stay in Italy for such a long time and their kids grow up in Italy, returning back does not really seem to be an option. Because he argues, responsible parents would not like to take their children out of the social environment and school system that they are immersed in. He thinks that return might be an option only after retirement.<sup>631</sup> Therefore, the ROCs and communities are bound together and if one stays, the other also will.

Another factor that ties the Romanian Orthodox community to Italy is the growth of the second-generation in Italy. Almost every Sunday, it is possible to witness the celebration of baptizing ceremonies at the ROC in Trento. The figures regarding the baptized children at the ROCs in different parishes are indicative of the fact that young generation is increasing.<sup>632</sup> Keeping the second generation attached to the church raises some concerns on the part of the parishes.<sup>633</sup> Second generation of Romanians growing up in Italy is very much attached to Italy, Italian language and identity. This creates concern for the ROCs and Romanian Orthodox priests, since as the Coptic Pope says "a church without youth is a church without a future" (Botros, 2006:181). How the Romanian Orthodox identity will be transmitted to the new generations of Romanians growing up in a different historical and cultural context is an important question, which has been emphasized by the Diocesan Bishop Ps. Siluan during his visit to the ROC of San Marco in Trento on April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>630</sup> Interview with Pr. Matei.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>631</sup> Interview with Pr. Codrea.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>632</sup> In Verona every Saturday around 10 babies are being baptized. Annually 80 baptisms are conducted in Trento. Pr. Roşu has baptized 518 babies in 2006, 565 in 2007 and 148 between January and March 2008.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>633</sup> There is always the issue of even though low, conversion into the Catholicism through marriages or baptizing and bringing up kids as Catholics.

The language, which is one of the main markers and transmitters of culture and identity, is one of the key issues. Ebaugh and Chafetz suggest that language use is the main element that defines change within the migrant congregations (2000: 100). The language issue creates divisions since while some members opt for understanding the prayers, some emphasize the religious feeling they get from the prayer if it is kept and recited in the original form (Ibid: 113). Second-generations do not only opt for the language of the receiving country in religious services because it is easy for them to understand but also they do not like the ethno-cultural flavor of their congregations. Therefore, the Church's and parents' emphasis on reproducing the culture of the home country bears the risk of alienating the second-generation.

The liturgical language issue is already on the agenda of the ROCs in Italy. Pr. Roşu argues that in the future the ROC should consider the possibility to conduct liturgy in Italian:

I do not know [if] the language will be Romanian. I do not know. For this reason there is the need to restart to do liturgy in Italian, the liturgical texts, also in Italian. Because we do not know if the language will be Romanian tomorrow. Certainly we have to give testimony to and try to preserve everything that means tradition, language and also certainly the religion.<sup>634</sup>

Referring to the experience of the (Romanian) Orthodox Churches in the US, Pr. Verzea argues that future changes regarding the language would very much depend on the situation of the second generation:

I have a six year-old son. He speaks Italian much more willingly than Romanian. Because he is born in here and half of his day he spends with his Italian friends at elementary school, at school. Therefore, beyond [our] willingness, the language will be lost. Certainly not with our kids but with our grandchildren, certainly. Therefore, in two generations...We have to be realistic... $^{635}$ 

The future in his opinion:

[...] depends on how we organize ourselves. Because if we succeed in transmitting our faith in the way it is supposed to be to the generations, the church will live. The Church will not live only for us, not because it is our merit. Because it is the Church of Christ first of all. But we can say the vitality of the Church would very much depend on how we educate our kids. If they... Not only the church. We do whatever we can in the church. We depend very much on the willingness of the parents; the real and proper education is given in the family. Therefore, if the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>634</sup> Interview with Pr. Roşu.<sup>635</sup> Interview with Pr. Verzea.

parents of these young people that did not inherit much in Romania in terms of belief, here there are many who discover their faith here in Italy. If they succeed in giving a proper Christian Orthodox education to their kids, the Church will have a ...how to say... a good future. If not, we will see once at a time.<sup>636</sup>

Pr. Matei argues that already in some churches liturgy or some church services are conducted partially in Italian. In Mestre when there are important religious services participated by also Italians the priest recites certain prayers in Italian. About the liturgy he argues that there is a possibility that in the future it will be in Italian as is the case with liturgy in English and Romanian in the ROCs in the US.<sup>637</sup> However, for the time being the priests in general believe that it is early to start conducting the liturgy in Italian, since the majority of the Romanians are first generation and their kids are still young. Therefore, people still speak and understand Romanian. Moreover, the Romanian used in the liturgy is not a very old form of Romanian, different from Greek or Russian Orthodox Churches, which use ancient form of the language. But in the future there is the possibility to use Italian, even though it will not be an easy choice:

[...] maybe in the future we can say yes, but it is painful to say this, it is better to keep the faith even if we lose the language. It is painful to say this. Because I like my language [he smiles sadly]. I also speak Italian but I like Romanian [...]<sup>638</sup>

Even though many priests say that it is early to talk about liturgy in Italian, some think that if the necessary steps are not taken it will be sooner than they expect. By giving examples from the experiences of different migrant communities in the US and how many of them lost their language and identity, Pr. Codrea argues that the ROC and the state as well as the families have to take action and do something very soon:

The Romanians, we are already here but what would happen to our kids. Our kids will be Italians and Orthodox? This is the challenge. If we now, the Church, has not understood, our Holy Synod, not even our state, Romanian state, the Romanian government has not yet understood absolutely what is going on with the immigrants in Spain and in....Italy and since last year also in UK. It did not understand absolutely nothing that today the last card is played regarding our children. Both

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>636</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>637</sup> In some ROCs in diaspora liturgy is conducted in the languages of the receiving country. Metropolitan Iosif has visited and celebrated the liturgy in Poole, UK on August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2007 with the participation of around 200 Romanian Orthodox faithful. The liturgy was conducted in English. After the liturgy, the Metropolitan has talked with the parish community. The main problem for the Romanian Orthodox community in UK is the opening of new parish churches, where the Romanian Orthodox communities are high in number. See: Liviu Barbu, (September 2007) "Trăire, Slujire și Cuvânt: Vizita Păstorului Nostru, Înalt Prea Sfințitul Iosif în Marea Britanie", *Foaia Sfântul Ioan Casian*, No.278, 18-19.

with regards to the affiliation to the Romanian culture and with regards to the affiliation to the Romanian nation and religious affiliation. Our children if there are not these culture and civilization projects of the Orthodox catechism, they will become deracinated, they will not be neither Orthodox nor Romanian.<sup>639</sup>

Then they try not to teach, not even their native language, while the children learn Italian language perfectly at school. The parents are illiterate because they have never learnt Italian language. I have found out some people in the church that do not know how to express what they want. They come and say to me "I want" then a word in Italian then another word in Romanian, these families are deracinated. They do not know how to say absolutely nothing. I have difficulty in understanding what they want. This is the extreme case of deracinated people. But for the total education of the kids, if these parents do not have the means to send the kids, if they do not have the means to teach their culture, not their kids but their grandchildren will come to condemn them.<sup>640</sup>

However, the problem is not that the children grow up speaking in Italian and do not know Romanian. They speak a different language, which is a reflection of a different mentality. One Romanian church-goer in Trento was telling me how concerned he is about his two year-old son. He was saying that at home he is trying to educate him with utmost care, but since he started going to the kindergarten he developed new habits. When he goes to the park, he picks up some phrases, which he does not like him to use such as "Che schifo!" He was also telling me he was disturbed to see a little Italian girl asking questions about everything without any hesitation or restraint. Remembering his childhood, he was saying that he would think two or three times before he would say something in front of people older than him. Therefore, he was concerned raising his kids in Italy and in a globalizing world, which would be much more challenging then it was in the past for his parents. Pr. Matei raises the same concern in a different way. The Church in Mestre organizes trips for the Romanian Orthodox kids and youth and the priest with his family attends the trips. This gives the priest the chance to get to know Romanian kids growing up in Italy. However, as Pr. Matei clearly states communication with the new generations is a challenge for the priests:

I have attended many trips but one I remember well. I was with a group of 27. They were speaking in Romanian, Moldovan, especially when I was around with my wife. Instead among each other they were speaking about some specific things of their age, of cartoons, of music, of what is on. They were speaking in Italian, they knew everything. I don't know the artists. I don't have the time to watch tv, I watch sometimes the news but  $[...]^{641}$ 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>639</sup> Interview with Pr. Codrea.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>640</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>641</sup> Interview with Pr. Matei.

Based on the experience of the Orthodox Churches in the US, Krinidatch argues that the Orthodox Churches tend to be very concerned with preserving the ethno-religious identity. The emphasis on the preservation of communal ties combined with lack of interest in proselytizing has the risk of alienating the second-generation who grow up wellacquainted with receiving society culture and language. It is possible to see the same wary attitude in the ROCs in Italy. In the near future, the ROCs might face the challenge of balancing their emphasis on preserving the Romanian Orthodox identity and transmitting it to the second-generation through Romanian with the need to make room for secondgeneration's self-perceptions and attachments. Therefore, the challenge is not only to teach the second generation their languages, culture and tradition within a migration context but also to do it in a globalizing world and finding the right way of constructing dialogue with the new generations:

We have to take into consideration the presence of this this globalization. Then the problem is how we, the church, respond to this challenge. Today I am talking about internet in Romania, both here and in Romania the young Romanians have access to the information through internet. Then what do we do with this globalization, to give responses that they are looking for. Obviously you have to use the tools that ...the world gives you. Through internet, through television, through any form of dialogue with the people.<sup>642</sup>

What we know for sure is that we have to organize ourselves well in the parish. Because depending on the way the parishes are organized, the way it deals with the youth and kids today, they will guarantee the future not only of the parishes but also of the faithful, of the Romanian Orthodox families. There is the need to invest a lot in this sense not because if we do it the God does not need to do it, but the Church is a synergy between the divine and human. We have to do our part, and our responsibility is to do our part. And these are not big words; they are the words which we try to put in practice with all we said. They are our activities of today not tomorrow.<sup>643</sup>

Another issue crucial for the future of the ROCs in Italy is the ecumenical dialogue between the ROCs and the Catholic Church. Apart from reaching out to the Romanians, the Romanian Orthodox priests are trying to create more awareness about the Orthodoxy and contribute to the ecumenical dialogue with the Catholic Church. The ROCs take part in different initiatives such as week of prayer for the unity of all Christians, attend meetings and try to disseminate information about the Romanian Orthodox tradition in Italy. Since the Pope's visit to Romania in 1999 and Patriarch Teoctist's visit to Rome in 2002, the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>642</sup> Interview with Pr. Codrea.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>643</sup> Interview with Pr. Roşu.

relations between the two churches are very well. Now the ROC has a new ambassador for the Vatican.<sup>644</sup> Third European Ecumenical Council in September 2007 in Sibiu, Romania has contributed to the dialogue. The Catholic Church's support for the formation of new Romanian Orthodox parishes and official recognition of the Romanian Orthodox Diocese is also a crucial element in the rapprochement between the two Churches. Immigration by creating the context for more dialogue and collaboraion has been instrumental in the rapproachment and is likely to do so in the future.

The ROC besides being a migrant church within the Italian and European landscape should also be seen as an EU member state church, which affects its reconfiguration and agency within the Italian and European context (Carp. 2007: 18). The Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate's jurisdiction that goes beyond Romania cannot be constrained only to Italy. In addition to the Diocese in Italy, the Holy Synod has created a Diocese in Madrid, which has the ROCs in Spain and Portugal under its jurisdiction. The Metropolitan Church in Germany encompassing Northern Europe is also very active. Even though limited, there is interaction among the Romanian parish priests in Europe. General Assemblies organized every year at Metropolitan Sees bring together priests from different countries in Europe. Since the accession of Romania to the EU, the Patriarchate has a Permanent Office in Brussels for the official representation of the ROC at the EU institutions.<sup>645</sup> Moreover, the ROCs in the EU member countries besides representing the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate and reaching out to the Romanian Orthodox believers, can and is willing to reach out to other Orthodox communities whose states are not members of the EU such as the citizens of the Republic of Moldova and Serbia.<sup>646</sup> According to Pr. Vasilescu of Saint Parascheva Church in Turin, the ROC has this capacity:

The Romanians form a point of connection between two worlds, the East and the West, no? Because we are the only Latin people, of the Latin origin but of Orthodox, the Eastern faith. So this creates the possibility and value for this people, for this church to form a bridge for two worlds, like this to unite them, to make them understand that in fact we have the same vocations and there is convergence of values, etc.<sup>647</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>644</sup> On January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2007 the new Romanian ambassador to the Vatican, Marius Gabriel Lazurca, was accepted by the Pope. "Noul Ambassador Român la Vatican", (February 2007) *Foaia Sfântul Ioan Casian*, No. 272, 11.

<sup>645</sup> http://www.orthodoxero.eu/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>646</sup> Interview with Pr. Vasilescu.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>647</sup> Ibid.

The Italian territory proved to be a fertile ground for the Romanian Orthodoxy and churches to flourish. Transnational migration facilitated its emergence and growth in the Italian territory, while its growth led to the articulation of new transnational ties. The ROCs are small islands of Romania in Italy (Berzano and Cassinasco, 1999: 140) and as the Romanian migration gains a more permanent status, the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate devotes more attention to the Romanians and the Churches in Italy and Europe. Despite the problems, the Romanian Orthodox priests are determined to serve the Romanian communities in Italy and are optimistic about the future. They believe that the "Orthodoxy in Italy has a future" (Piovano, 2001b: 92).

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## **INTERVIEWS**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Interview with Pr. Lupăștean at San Marco ROC in Trento on May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2006.
- Interview with a young female practicing Orthodox, who is not a regular church-goer on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2007.
- Interview with the Priest Mircea Uța, Patriarchal consultant at the Ecclesiastical Relations Department of the Romanian at his office at the Patriarchate on March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2007.
- Interview with Rev. Prof. Alexandru I. Stan, who is a professor of cannon law and a priest, at his office/home on March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2007
- Interview with Prof. Adrian Niculescu at his home in Bucharest on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2007
- Interview with Mr. Dinu Zamfirescu, at his office in INMER, Bucharest on April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2007.
- Interview with Pr. Rîmboi at Saint Nicola ROC in Bologna on May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2007.
- Interview with Pr. Codrea at the ROC in Verona on July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2007
- Interview with Pr. Valdman at the Pentecost ROC in Milan on July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2007.
- Interview with Dositheos Anagnostopulos, Head of PublicRelations Office of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul on August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2007.
- Interview with Pr. Milăşan at the ROC in Bolzano on January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2008.
- Interview with Don Antonio Sebastiani, Diocesan Office for Ecumenism in Trento on January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2008.
- Interview with Imam Dr. Aboulkheir Bregeiche, President of the Islamic Community in Trentino-Alto Adige, at his clinic in Mezzacorona on January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2008.
- Interview with Don Giuseppe, *Fondazione Migrantes* on February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008.
- Interview with two male seasonal workers, who are church-goers on March, 17<sup>th</sup>, 2008.
- Interview with Pr. Roşu at Saint Cross ROC in Turin on March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2008.
- Interview with Pr. Vasilescu at Saint Parascheva ROC in Turin March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008.
- Interview with Irina Niculescu, Secretary of the Italo-Romanian Socio-Cultural Association OVIDIO in Chieri on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008.
- Interview with Magdalena Lupu, President of the Cultural Association Carpatina Onlus, Turin, on March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008.
- Interview with Pr. Babula at Sfântul Leontie ROC in Ivrea on March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008.
- Interview with Father Babiak at his house in Gazzadina on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2008.
- Interview with a young male church-goer on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008.
- Interview with Prof. Elena Radulescu, President of the Association Columna in Padua on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2008.
- Interview with a parochial council member of San Marco ROC in Trento on April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

- Interview with a Romanian lady, who is a member of the women's committee of San Marco ROC in Trento on April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008.
- Interview with a regular church-goer couple in Trento on April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2008.
- Interview with Pr. Verzea at Saint Apostles Peter and Paul ROC in Padua on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2008.
- Interview by Valentina Sandri with Pr. Lupăștean at the San Marco ROC in April 2008.
- Interview with Pr. Matei at the Saint Martyr Lucia ROC in Venice-Mestre on July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2007.
- Interview with a Romanian lady, who goes to the ROC occassionaly on May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2008.
- Interview with a Moldovan lady, who is a member of the women's committee of San Marco ROC in Trento on July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2008.
- Interview with Father Veniamin Onu at the Russian Orthodox Church in Vicenza on August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2008.
- Interview with Pr. Lupăștean at the San Marco ROC in Trento on August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008.
- Pr. Lupăștean, Speech at a meeting organized by Focolare Movement in Trento on January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008.

#### Appendix.A: The Root Causes, Evolution and Future of Romanian Migration

Large scale Romanian migration to Europe is a recent phenomenon, which has started just after 1989 and passed through different phases in less than two decades. The appendix chapter aims at giving a brief account of main factors behind large scale Romanian migration and main routes to Europe, the emergence of Italian-Romanian transnational space and the impact of emigration on Romanian society with some remarks on the future prospects for Romanian migration.

#### I.1. The End of the Communist Rule and Labor Migration from Romania

The late 80s and early 90s saw the fall of the communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe. Collapse of communism marked an important turning point for all the countries in the region and has led to radical changes in political, economic and social spheres in the entire region. All the Central and Eastern European states that were under the communist rule entered into transition processes to liberal democracy and market economy; however, each at a different pace. Among the other countires in the region, Romania's transition process stands out as an exceptional case. While the overthrow of communist regimes was relatively peaceful and bloodless in the region, the communist rule came to an ubrupt end in Romania with a violent uprising (Phinnemore and Light, 2001: 1). As compared to other countries, Romania became a "consistent laggard" in reform movement after the fall of the communism (*Ibid*).<sup>648</sup> It was the sudden collapse of the regime as well as delayed reforms that paved the way for labor migration out of Romania.

Under the communist rule in Romania workers had fixed jobs, guaranteed retirement pay, stability and certain standard of living. The communist regime has to a large extent created uniform economic conditions for all (Anghel, 2008: 39). It all ended in a very short span of time. Transition to market economy did not only mean dismantling of planned economy, privatization, price liberalization, de-collectivization of agriculture in Romania but also dissolution of ideologically determined social structure and radical transformation of social life (Phinnemore and Light, 2001: 2). Transition meant deep economic crises for Romania and first 10 years following the fall of the Ceausescu regime

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>648</sup> An OECD Report in early 90s states that there are differences among the Central and Eastern European states in their transition to market economy. Among all the Central and Eastern European states, it was Romania and Bulgaria that had longer and slower transition periods. GDPs' and production levels have fallen sharply in Romania and Bulgaria, while inflation and unemployment rates have increased considerably as early as 1992 (Castles and Miller, 1998: 105).

were quite problematic, which paved the way for Romania's deepest economic crises in 1999 (Smith, 2001: 127). Rapid increase in prices and inflation was one of the immediate consequences of economic decline (Sandri, 2008: 85). Following 1989 Romanian economy went through de-industrialization and the industry shrank by around 3 million jobs (Horváth, 2008: 775). For those who lost their jobs<sup>649</sup> there were either no jobs available or job prospects with very low pay. The unemployment rate reached an alarming state in mid-1992 (Sandri, 2008: 88). Rapid impoverishment of the population created big disparities among different segments of society (Cingolani and Piperno, 2004: 26). In parallel to growth in poverty and uncertainty, different forms of flexibility, informalization and new work relations started to shape labor market (Cingolani, 2007: 40; Horváth, 2008: 776). Transition period and shock therapies did not bring institutional re-integration of economy. Instead, they gave way to informal survival strategies (Stan, 2004: 2).

Under these dire economic circumstances the Romanian society developed some practical responses. One response was transformation of the *blat* practice. *Blat* emerged as a practice in Soviet Republics and Eastern Europe under communist rule and it meant exchange of resources that belonged to the state by the Communist Party officials. The people within the system of *blat* had to occupy an important position that would enable the person to reach state resources. However, it became much more common in the 1980s due to the erosion of the central authority in the Soviet Union. Following the collapse of the communist regimes, *blat* became a common practice due to collapse of resource reallocation system and economic crisis. While enabling people to get by, under some circumstances it became one of the means of the plunder of resources (Nazpary, 140).<sup>650</sup>

Another survival strategy was to move away from the cities where resources were scarce and hard to attain. Industrialization was the main factor behind Romania's economic growth under communism, which was accompanied by urbanization. Industrial zones emerged in different parts of the country, which consisted of 200 towns (Ianoş, 2001: 191). Due to industrialization and urbanization, labor force flow took the form of rural-urban

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>649</sup> Massive dismissals came in 1997 in the mining sector. Losing a job meant more than losing economic income but also the social status and professional identity. As Stan states miners, who were constructed as "heroes" and "honorable" members of the working class during the communist era, had to cope with performing a least respected job (Stan, Social, 3).

<sup>3).</sup> <sup>650</sup> A very distorted and redefined version of *blat*, which used to be a mutual aid system between friends, a network of relations that provide people with necessary goods and services within the Soviet economy, is put into use in order to distribute jobs in the domestic services sector within the Italian context. Within the Italian context blat, which was not based on exchange of money, is monetarized. Moreover, *blat* within the Soviet context did not have the time pressure, while in the Italian context the aid provided needed to be reciprocated immediately, which led to its monetarization. *Blat* turned into selling of jobs by the pioneers and mediators to newcomers in Italy.

migration or commuting. Commuting was a widespread practice in communist Romania and it emerged as a response to rapid industrialization of the country in the 60s and 70s. Commuting was in the form of daily or weekly mobility from rural to urban areas (Constantin, 2004). Industrialization policy of the communist regime, particularly under the Ceausescu rule has forced many people to immigrate to big industrial centers. Bucharest received a considerable amount of migration from all parts of the country. According to the account of Pr. Uta, it was and is possible to find Romanians from all parts of Romania living in the same apartment or coming to the same church. He states that his parish is composed of Romanians from all parts of Romania, some of whom have arrived in Bucharest 40 years ago bringing different religious and regional traditions together. However, economic crises, which particularly hit the industrial zones led to an escape from the cities to rural areas. The end of communist era led to economic restructuring, dramatic decline in industrial activity and urban unemployment, while redefining urban-urban and rural-urban relationships (Ianos, 2001: 192-3). Moreover, economic dismantlement and reform processes did not affect all parts of Romania equally. Regional inequalities, which were reduced to a certain extent during the communist era through five year plans and industrialization (Turnock, 2001: 150) resurfaced and sharp regional variations emerged with the fall of the communist regime (Ibid: 155). Regional imbalance while favoring Bucharest, the Centre and the Western regions, negatively affected North-east and Southwest, particularly Moldova region.<sup>651</sup>

Due to de-industrialization, people started returning back to their villages and buying land as a means for survival (Cingolani, 2007: 41). Starting from the early 90s internal immigration was reversed, took an urban-to-rural direction and in 1997 became the predominant mode of internal migration in Romania (Cingolani and Piperno, 2004: 7; Ghetau, 2005: 74; Sandu, 2000: 65-6; Sandu et al. 2004: 2). From 1992 up until 2005 around one million people have left cities to settle in villages (Ghetau, 2005: 78) and currently 47% people live in countryside in Romania (Bleahu). Rural-urban migration increased the pressure on the rural economy that was already destabilized (Horváth, 2008: 775) and reduction of resources in the rural context rendered migration as the main alternative (Ibid: 776). Particularly the villages at the centre of a county, with a high population that are located close to small and medium-sized towns that experienced a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>651</sup> Economic decline in North-east and South of Romania is accompanied by highest growth in population (Turnock, 2001: 159).

decline in rural–urban commuting (Sandu, 2005: 568) and villages with high rates of young people felt more pressure for emigration (Ibid: 570). The location and positioning as well as the social capital and resources of the village played important role in the formation of circular networks and conditioning of the transnational migration from Romanian villages to Europe. Thus, the history of migration in the form of commuting and internal migration to the nearest town and return migrants from the cities played a significant role in the emergence of international migration after 1989, which played an important role in reducing poverty in Romania through remittances (Baldwin-Edwards, 2008: 277).

After 1989 international migration emerged as a viable option in Romania (Castles and Miller, 1998: 104), as the changing political system eliminated the barriers of the Romanian state on external mobility and economic crises created incentives for emigration (Anghel, 2008c: 18). Migration flows in and out of Romania started to increase after 1989 (as internal, cross-border and – to a very limited extent – international migration existed during Communist rule).<sup>652</sup> Pull factors in the receiving country, the role of household or extended family in motivating and sponsoring migration, spatial aspects and selectivity criteria such as age, education, occupation, family status, home ownership, religion, ethnic origin, migrant networks, chain migration effects and information flows were important elements in influencing and determining migration conditions and patterns (Bleahu). The pioneers of migration initiative or post-socialist small-scale entrepreneurs (Anghel, 2008a: 40).<sup>653</sup> In the early 90s, Hungarians, Germans and Roma population<sup>654</sup> was making up the majority of immigrants (Sandu, 2005: 560). Moreover, for younger Romanians who did not have work experiences during the communist era did not have fixed jobs and during the 90s

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>652</sup> The communist state in Romania imposed rigid rules on immigration after 1950s. In case of irregular migration, which was a very dangerous thing to do, the family members left behind were punished. What was allowed was a limited mobility in the form of limited labor migration, border trafficking and travel for touristic purposes to socialist states (Lazaroiu 2007: 114-115 cited in Anghel, 2008c: 2). To work or study abroad was subject to visa given by the communist regime (Nicolescu and Constantin, 2005: 55). Due to good relations and through short-term work agreements with Libya, Iraq, Iran, Egypt, and Syria, the Federal Republic of Germany and Russia Romanians went abroad to work (Şerban and Grigoraş, 2000: 97; Stan, 2005: 6). In late 70s, Jews, Germans and Hungarians were allowed to emigrate from Romania (Anghel, 2008c: 2). Allowing emigration was a means to normalize relations with Western Germany, which was willing to financially support ethnic Germans' emigration. This facilitated German emigration from Romania (Ibid: 5).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>653</sup> Migration is now mainly the strategy of the middle income rural families in Romania as very poor in Romania cannot afford to emigrate (Baldwin-Edwards, 2008: 263).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>654</sup> The Roma population, which is poorest and marginalized in Romania, was among the first to emigrate, since transition to market economy exposed the Roma population to more poverty. In addition to economic motivations the prejudices against the population was another factor inducing their emigration (Sandu, 2005: 561). However, they could not escape from poverty or prejudices through emigration and they are constructed as "problems" and "unintegrable" in the destination countries.

have worked for precarious jobs in Romania emigration was a "natural" choice (Cingolani, 2007: 100).

During 1990-2001 six major routes have emerged and developed from Romania, which are to Hungary and Yugoslavia in the west, to Germany in the north, to Turkey in southest and to Italy and Spain in southwest. There were also routes to France and Israel, which were secondary (Sandu, 2005: 558). Ethnicity, religion and regional characteristics were the factors influential in defining the routes and destination countries as well as migrants involved. Moldavia region, particularly Iaşi, Botoşani and Suceava started sending migrants to Italy; while Dobrogea and eastern Muntenia sent migrants to Turkey; Banat, southern Transylvania and western Oltenia sent migrants to Germany; Covasna, Harghita, Mureş, Cluj, Salaj and Bihor counties were well connected to Hungary; Oltenia and Vilcea county sent migrants to Yugoslavia (Serbia) (Ibid: 562).

Romanian migration to Europe after 1989 evolved mainly in three phases.<sup>655</sup> The first phase from 1990 to 1994 consisted of trans-frontier movements and shuttle trade. In the late 80s ethnic Hungarians started migrating to Hungary, while ethnic Germans to Germany, since they had relatives in the host countries (Ciobanu, 2008b: 560-1). The first big flow to these countries was in 1987, which grew rapidly after 1989 (Sandu et al. 2004:15; Horváth, 2008: 771).<sup>656</sup> Just after the fall of the communism, Spain, Germany, Italy, Israel, Cyprus, Turkey, Russia, Yugoslavia emerged as "experimental destinations" (Şerban and Grigoraş, 2000: 98).

The second phase from 1994 to 2000 consisted of migratory waves with or without visas, which were first directed towards Germany and then changed direction towards Italy and Spain, while the last phase from 2002 onwards involves different forms of mobility and circuits (Diminescu, 2003 cited in Cingolani, 2007: 96). Since Romanians did not need visas to enter Serbia, Hungary and Czech Republic, Romanians were trying to enter the EU space clandestinely from these countries (Anghel, 2008a: 33, note 7). These routes had a very dynamic nature and when something went wrong new routes were created (Ibid: 38).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>655</sup> Baldwin-Edwards defines four phases of Romanian migration into Europe: 1990-1993: mass permanent emigration of ethnic Germans and Hungarians; emigration of ethnic Romanians seeking political asylum in the Western Europe; 1994-1996: Romanian economic irregular migration to Western Europe at a limited scale; 1996-2001: growth in emigration, emergence of different types of migratory waves; 2002-to date: following the abolition of visa requirement for Schengen area growth in circular migration (2008: 260).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>656</sup> "Trader tourism" to Hungary, which was a response developed by the people to cope with shortages under communism and buy or sell scarce goods starting from the 70s up until the 90s, increased in the late 80s.

In the early 90s, Germany (and Austria) became one of the main destinations of Romanian migration for both ethnic Germans and Romanians (Anghel, 2008c: 3). The possibility to get German citizenship attracted many ethnic Germans and their ethnic Romanian relatives to Germany (Sandu, 2005: 570). The presence of family members facilitated the migration process through family reunification and provision of resources (Anghel, 2008c: 7). Upon arrival ethnic Germans received German citizenship, while Romanians applied for asylum status, which was easier to obtain at that time (Ibid: 9). By 1993 Romanian migrants ranked the highest among the applicants for asylum-seeker status in Germany (Ibid: 30). Most of the Romanians had succeeded in acquiring legal status and finding a job in the formal labor market in Germany. However, there were differences between ethnic Germans and Romanians in terms of accessing to the opportunities and resources. Mass migration from Romania to Germany started losing pace after the promulgation of 1993 law by the German state, which limited yearly Eastern European German migration to a quota of 200,000 (Ibid: 19). From 1994 onwards, migration to Germany was reduced and continued in the form of marriage and highly skilled migration (Ibid: 31). Starting from 1996 up until 2001 Italy became the main destination country, while Spain and Canada emerged as other destinations. From 2002 onwards Italy preserved its position by attracting 50% of the Romanian migration, while Spain became the second destination country by receiving 25% of Romanian migrants (Sandu et al. 2006: 15-6).

Migration to Spain started and soon intensified through the Adventist network. Coslada area close to Madrid with its booming construction industry attracted Romanian Adventists (Sandu, 2005: 563; Sandu et al, 18-19). In addition to Madrid, Almeria is the other main destination in Spain (Şerban and Grigoraş, 2000: 101). Relative ease in entering and finding a job in Spain and Spain's need for workers agriculture, construction and services sectors made Spain a favorite destination for Romanians. Enhanced mobility due to the abolition of visa requirement in Schengen area after 2002 stimulated more migration to Spain (Sandu et al, 19). Some Romanians working in Italy and Spain started moving up to Northern Europe, especially to Ireland, where there is more possibility to earn a higher income (Stan, 2005: 8).

### **II.2.** Transnational Romanian Migration to Italy

Italy is the main destination of post-89 Romanian migration to Europe. Romanian migration to Italy went through different phases depending on the receiving, the sending

and the EU policies, migrant strategies and particularities of the Italian context. Romanian migration to Italy is a *sui generis* case. It is the task of this section to explain what makes Romanian migration *sui generis* and identify and discuss factors that made Italy the destination country for Romanians as well as the emergence and evolution of Romanian-Italian transnational space through the agency of Romanian migrants.

The presence of family members, friends or acquaintances (Sandri, 2008: 118), job opportunities, particularly in construction, services and agricultural sectors, and relatively less strict entry and stay regulations historical ties and the similarity between two languages made Italy one of the main destination countries for Romanians (Cionchin, 2006: 153). Immigration to Italy was facilitated through family and friendship networks (Anghel, 2008a: 32). Impossibility to get by with very low salaries and possibility to earn more in Italy in a shorter time even if the job performed is a degrading one was another motivating factor for emigration. Despite having a good job, the search for self-realization and limited opportunities has brought some Romanians to Italy (Sandri, 2008: 124).<sup>657</sup>

Romanian migration to Italy started to gain pace after 1996. Up until 1998 majority of Romanians were arriving in Italy without a visa and clandestinely (Ponzo, 2005: 210). The pioneers that arrived had some acquaintances in Italy but did not have strong networks. Many used to arrive in Rome, where some acquaintances lived and then moved up to the north of Italy, where there are more chances of finding a job. Turin is one of the main cities in the north of Italy that attracted Romanian migrants (Ibid: 214). Starting from 1998 with the accession of Italy to the Schengen area many Romanians started to arrive in Italy with visas obtained from other Schengen countries. However, this did not always guarantee access to permit of stay and work. Those who arrived after 1998 tended to immigrate through family strategies and networks and started to arrive directly to the northern Italian cities where their family members lived (Ibid: 215).<sup>658</sup>

The pioneers went through difficult times when they arrived in Italy. They slept in the parks or abandoned boogies, abandoned houses or at the margins of cities (Ponzo, 2005:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>657</sup> The president of the Carpatina Association in Turin, Magdalena Lupu's story is indicative of this fact. She was working as a reporter back in Romania. However, after visiting her relatives in Turin, she really liked the city and told her relatives that she is willing to move to Italy if there is a job opportunity. Soon she has found herself working as a live-in care worker in Turin.

 $<sup>^{658}</sup>$  Anghel based on his fieldwork in Borşa – a small town in the north of Transylvania, and Milan in Italy argues that in the first years of immigration from Borşa to Milan the migrant strategies were more individualistic and irregular. In the following years, the development of kinship networks and buying and selling of visas facilitated and sustained migration (2008b: 790-1).

219; Anghel, 2008a: 27). Many got entrapped in precarious work and living conditions. The Romanians that have immigrated to Italy during this period have left a context in which they had a fixed job was a right and duty, while in Italy many have found themselves in grave uncertainty and new work relations (Cingolani, 2007: 39). Many Romanians arrived in Italy with a different picture in mind, a picture based on great expectations, idealizations rather than solid facts (Anghel, 2008a: 26). As one Romanian guy, who has arrived in Italy at a very young age with great expectations, told me the colors of Italy looked very bright when he arrived; however, they have faded quickly and now everything seems black and white. The disappointment and change in perception regarding Italy has a lot to do with hardships incurred throughout the migration process, particularly for those who arrived before 2002 and who had an irregular status in Italy. Irregular Romanians were fearful of getting caught by the police and expelled. As irregular migrants they could not claim their rights at work or seek legal solutions when they were not paid or discriminated against (Perrotta, 2007:128). Since they could not open bank accounts, they tended to remit more (Anghel, 2008b: 796).

The factors conducive to irregular migration in Italy started attracting many Romanians, especially after migration to Germany started losing pace in 1993-4 (Anghel, 2008a: 39). Perrotta argues that during his field work on Romanian workers in Bologna he met many who have worked in public institutes and offices, universities, supermarkets and police stations without having a permit of stay in Italy (2007: 102). There are different forms of being irregular migrant: irregularity at entry, stay and/or work (Anghel, 2008a: 26, note 2) and Romanian migrants experiences all these different forms of irregularity throughout the immigration process. Their irregularity rendered Romanians highly mobile within the Italian context.

In the earlier stages of migration, the number of female Romanian migrants was much higher than male migrants, since female migrants had higher chances of finding a job as live-in domestic and care workers or in the cleaning sector in Italy. However, with the maturation of Romanian migration, male migrants grew in number. While in 1999 there was a considerable difference between the Romanian female (18,754) and male (15,023) migrants in Italy, in 2004 the number of Romanian men reached up to 86,754 and female Romanian migrants to 91,058 (Cionchin, 2006: 168). As Romanians incrementally reached a certain level of stable and regular status, they started bringing their families to Italy, which helped reducing the gap between male and female Romanian population. In 1997-98

majority of Romanians arrived in Italy through family reunification and family networks (Ibid: 162).<sup>659</sup>

Romanian migration to Italy continued through networks and by October 2001 Romanians became the third most numerous group (74,885) among foreign nationals after Moroccans and Albanians (Ibid: 145). However, it was 2002 that transformed Romanian migration patterns to Italy. Foreign policies of and international cooperation among the EU member states affect the direction of the migratory waves and repositioning of the receiving and sending states (Gambino and Sacchetto, 2007: 13; Anghel, 2008: 788). In 2002, the decision of the EU to abolish visa requirements for Romanians for Schengen area (Anghel, 2008a: 39) has had a crucial impact on the Romanian migration to Europe. A policy change from above (at the EU and the Italian level) has led to change in patterns, relations and transnational practices from below. 2002 is also the year when the Bossi-Fini law,<sup>660</sup> which regularized many immigrants including Romanians, was passed and had a crucial impact on the mobility of Romanians in Europe.

With the abolition of visa requirements Romanian migration to Italy turned into mass migration (Anghel, 2008a: 46). With freedom of movement in Schengen area irregularity of migrants also changed shape. Before 2002, migrant irregularity was in terms of access, stay and work, while after it was more about residence and work (Anghel, 2008: 793). Before 2002 Moldavia region, which is a less industrialized, relatively poor region with higher birth rates and high proportion of young people in Romania, was the main sending context to Italy (Sandu, 2005: 563). After 2002 almost all regions in Romania started sending migration to Italy. Moreover after 2002, the transportation costs went down to 200 euros, while the selectivity criteria for migration were redefined, the role of networks were reduced (Anghel, 2008a: 42; Anghel, 2008b: 792) and Romanian immigration to Italy has turned into mass migration. At the beginning of the 90s, the number of Romanians in Italy was not more than a few thousand, while in 2002 Romanians became one of the most populous migrant communities in Italy (Anghel, 2008a: 19).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>659</sup> The second motive for visa applications in this period was tourism, which was another means for many Romanians to arrive in Italy to search for work.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>660</sup> After regularizations in 1986, 1990, 1998 in Italy, the latest and the biggest regularization in scale came in 2002. During the parliamentary debates the push for a new regularization, only for the *badanti* at the beginning that turned into a regularization covering all the immigrant workers. On 30 July 2002 the law no. 189 (the Bossi-Fini law) is passed and 702,156 irregular immigrants have applied for regularization. Colombo and Sciortino, 2003: 195). 143,000 Romanians (highest number of applications among migrant communities) applied for regularization in 2002 (Baldwin-Edwards, 2008: 262). Bossi-Fini law regularized 141,673 Romanians that were present on the Italian territory without a stay permit (Cingolani, 2007: 97).

Following 2002, labor market in Milan was inundated by the Romanians, which increased the competition for jobs. At the beginning of the 90s there were around a hundred Romanians in Turin and Northern Italy, while in 2002 Romanians was second migrant group after Moroccans (Ponzo, 2005: 216). After 2002, in addition to free movement transfer of remittances took a new, easier and more secure form (Anghel, 2008b: 797). The accession of Romania into the EU in January 2007 has meant further changes regarding not only the status of the migrants but also the resources available to them. Beyond the right to mobility, they became the EU citizens. Therefore, the changes at the Italian and the EU level "opened up a space for multiple forms of mobility" (Anghel, 2008a: 795). The abolition of visa requirements and accession of Romania to the EU imposed the circular character on Romanian migration (Ciobanu, 2008a: 22). With the accession of Romania to the EU, the Romanian migration gained the character of the "mobility within the European Union" rather than migration (Silaşi and Simina, 2008: 320).

In addition to policy changes at national and the EU level, geographical, cultural and linguistic proximity of Romania to Italy and decreasing travel costs facilitate migration to Italy and provide Romanian migrants with certain opportunities to perform transnational practices within the transnational migration space. Political and economic problems, ethnic diversity in Romania and the possibility to earn more in Italy also act as factors that fuel and sustain transnational migration between Romania and Italy (Cingolani: 3). Within the transnational space under construction the transnational ties with Romania are maintained through constant circulation of capital, goods, people and values (Anghel, 2008b: 19). Young Romanians with migration experience abroad have high propensity to migrate again, since they are dissatisfied with the conditions in Romania and in their own localities (Sandu, 2006: 19). Thus, Romanian-Italian transnational space is under construction and constant evolution.

Pendolarism between Romanian villages and Italy for seasonal work comprises an important part of the Romanian migration to Italy (Cionchin, 2006: 170). There are many seasonal workers who stay in Italy for three months and go back to Romania<sup>661</sup> (Cingolani: 2-3) to avoid any problems related with lack of work permit and to reap the benefits of being embedded in two places through maintaining contacts and networks in both contexts

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>661</sup> After the accession of Romania into the EU, Romanians have to apply for *carta di soggiorno* to stay in Italy for more than 3 months (*Cinformi News*, 2006:12).

(Perrotta, 2007: 104).<sup>662</sup> Territorial mobility is a resource and strategy that is used by the migrant in accordance with the changes in external conditions enabling him/her to enter different contexts (Cingolani, 2007: 37) and post-89 temporary migration from Romania is a social innovation and is the most dynamic segment of Romanian migration (Sandu et al. 2004: 1; Sandu, 2000: 78).<sup>663</sup> As temporary migration and mobility is facilitated, permanent migration becomes less likely (Sandu et al. 2004: 6). Circular migration has become a "life strategy" (Sandu, 2000) for many Romanian migrants, as the selectivity criteria of the circular migration and transnationalism rather than being essential characteristics of migratory flows are based on the choices of migrants as well as the opportunities presented to them. Rather than a detailed planning and reflection, migration decision is a result of "contingent conditions", right timing and improvisations (Sandri, 2008: 130). Being embedded in more than one setting provides transmigrant with the agency in transnational social space.

To sum up this section, at the initial stages, emigration from Romania was a very innovative individualistic initiative. With the formation of networks it became more a widespread and standardized process. Religious and ethnic selectivity was instrumental in defining migratory flows that were channeled through family and community networks (Sandu, 2005: 565). The pioneers used their earnings to sponsor migration of their relatives. Rather than being a source of enrichment, transnational migration was a strategy for survival and getting out of poverty (Stan, 2004: 9). Religious and ethnic selectivity of the initial stage was reduced in the following years. With the increase in immigration to Italy, besides long-term migration, seasonal migration started and grew in time. As Romanians gained the freedom to move freely in Schengen space, more and more Romanian villagers started to go to Germany, Italy, Spain and Hungary for seasonal work (Ibid: 8). Following the abolition of visa requirement for Romanian citizens by the EU and liberalization of the circulation in the Schengen area, migratory flows started to take the form of seasonal or circular migration and currently it became three times more intense as compared to the situation in 2002 (Sandu et al. 2006: 19). Today Romanians are the most numerous migrant

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>662</sup> Pr. Ion Rîmboi of the Romanian Orthodox Church of Bologna also confirmed the increase in the circular migration among Romanians living in Bologna following 2002 decree of the EU. Interview with Pr. Rîmboi at the Saint Nicola ROC in Bologna on May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>663</sup> Romania is the major sending country in terms of seasonal agricultural and illegal prostitution market within the European Union (Silaşi and Simina, 2008: 320).

group in Italy. According to *Istat* 2008 figures there are 625,278 Romanians in Italy,<sup>664</sup> which however does not include many seasonal and circular migrants. However, some Romanians claim that there are more than 1,000,000 Romanians in Italy.<sup>665</sup>

## **III.3.** The Future of the Romanian Migration to Italy

Since post-89 Romanian migration has a history of around twenty years, it is difficult to estimate what shape it will take in the future. However, there are certain trends that allow us to make some predictions. There are indications showing that there is return migration to Romania or migration to another country, while the Romanian community in Italy grows through new migrants as well as the second generation. In this section factors conducive to return migration and to ongoing transnational migration to Italy are elaborated to estimate future of Romanian migration to Italy.

Pr. Uţa is of the opinion that the Romanian migration abroad will lose pace and will be temporary. He is hopeful that the Romanian accession into the EU will bear fruit and lead to further economic development and political stability, which would bring people back to Romania,<sup>666</sup> while Pr. Stan would disagree based on the previous migration experiences:

I would say yes, the Romanian diaspora would stay there. Immigrants from Romania would live or have lived in U.S. from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century have not come back. Very few came back. So I would say this is a permanent feature of immigration from these countries, from Romania, from Poland, from Bulgaria, from Turkey even it won't come back. They hope to come back, even if the status of the Romanian economy would be very much increased they will have their children there, they will have their relatives, the sacraments, the customs and so on. Their peace and their new customs, new accommodation [...]<sup>667</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>664</sup> According to 01/01/2008 *Istat* figures, the number of foreign residents in Italy is 3,432,651 (1,701,817 male and 1,730,834 female) and foreign residents constitute 5,8% of the Italian population. The majority of the foreign residents live in the North of Italy; 35,6% in North West and 26,9% in North East, while 25% live in the center, 8,9% in the south and 3,6% in the islands. *(ISTAT, Annuario Statistico Italiano, Capitolo 2, "Popolazione".* 

http://www.istat.it/dati/catalogo/20081112\_00/PDF/cap2.pdf) The migrant population in Italy is composed of more than 180 migrant groups of different origin, but only 30 migrant groups have members over 50,000 (Amato, 2008: 24). With Albanians, Romanians and Ukrainians among the most numerous communities migrants from the Balkans and Eastern Europe make up the 40% of the migrant population in Italy (Ibid: 25).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>665</sup> According to Italian authorities there are around 1 million Romanians in Italy, while according to Romanian authorities there are 1,5-2,5 Romanians in Italy. The big difference in numbers stems from high level of circular migration between the two countries (Simina, 2005: 13 cited in Baldwin-Edwards, 2008: 262) as the range of circular migration is around range 600,000-1,000,000 (Ibid: 263).

<sup>666</sup> Interview with Pr. Uţa.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>667</sup> Interview with Rev. Prof. Stan.

Moreover, Pr. Stan is quite optimistic about the growing Romanian migration to Europe and does not consider decrease in the number of the Orthodox population in Romania as a challenge. Because:

No, you know why, we have good women. They can give birth to other children, new children. We would have one thing to fight against; abortion in Romania. I can have as many people as you want to send...<sup>668</sup></sup>

The decision to return back to Romania does not only depend on socio-economic conditions of Romania but also of Italy as well. Recent economic downturn in Italy and rising cost of living in Italy makes it less attractive for many. Given the economic stagnation in Italy, Magdalena Lupu expects an increase in the return migration and foresees that in five years time half of the Romanian population in Turin will go back, since what they earn does not allow them good life standards even after 15 years or support families neither in Italy nor in Romania.<sup>669</sup> Testimonies of migrants also show that in previous years the difference between the salaries migrants earned in Italy and Romania, were sufficient for migrants to save money. However, due to the increase in prices and problems in Italian economy as well as Romania's entry into the EU, the difference started to shrink and reached a level which does not allow Romanians to remit much (Sandri, 2008: 96). A Romanian guy I met in Ivrea, who has arrived in Italy in 1992 without any ID and was irregular until 1996 and who has been living in Italy for the last 11 years thinks that Italian economy is not doing well. He said when he was earning 3,000,000 Italian lire he could save and send half of what he earned, sometimes 2,000,000 lire. After Italy entered the EMU, he hardly saves anything and the money is just enough to cover his monthly expenses.

Most of the priests I have talked to have had some parishioners returning back to Romania. During the fieldwork in Trento, I have met families who were planning to move back to Romania or to go to another European country (UK,<sup>670</sup> Ireland and Spain), since with what they earn they could not afford to cope with high cost of life in Italy. Romanian parish council member since its establishment and one of the founders of the Romanian

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>668</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>669</sup> Interview with Magdalena Lupu.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>670</sup> It is not possible to talk about mass migration to UK from Romania. Those who prefer to migrate to UK are those already in Europe, particularly those in South-Eastern Europe (Silaşi and Simina, 2008: 343-344).

association, who is in Trento for the last 10 years also states that many Romanians are leaving Italy but not all of them go back to Romania:

Now you see that there is a little crisis, a little crisis here and for this I'd say that many Romanians go away but not only to Romania, they go to another country, other countries. There is my...I can tell you, I have three brothers in Spain. They went only three years ago, they are in Spain, one is 3-4, one is 3 years, another for 4 years that lives better than me. In only 4 years they could buy a house. I am here for 10 years, I could not. In 4 years, one of them has a construction firm. He started from scratch. He has a house with garden, with everything.<sup>671</sup>

Another factor that affects the return migration is the Romanian state's calls for its workforce back to Romania, since there is shortage of workforce in certain sectors. The Romanian Minister of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises, Commerce, Tourism and Free Professions during his visit to Turin has asked his co-nationals to return back, work and invest in Romania. He said that in the next four years the county will have 32 billion euros European funds at its disposal for investment. He added in the Timişoara Arad zone, where there are many Italian firms there is high demand for workforce and Italy is the main economical partner of Romania (Lupu, 2007b: 6).

Transnational ties between Romania and Italy established through transnational migration also creates incentives for Italian businessmen to make investments in Romania. Italy is the main trade partner of Romania. There are around 15,500 Italian enterprises in Romanian and every year more Italian enterprises carry their production activities to Romania creating new jobs for Romanians. Timişoara has become an "Italianized city" due to the increase in Venetian entrepreneurs in industry and energy sectors. With the accession of Romania to the EU, the partnership is expected to grow (Cionchin, 2006: 153). With this prospect in mind, the Ministry of Labor in collaboration with the Department for Relations with the Romanians Abroad has also started working on a program to induce return migration of Romanian workforce (Activity Report, 2006: 25). The number of Romanian entrepreneurs that establish Romanian-Italian firms also keep growing in number.

The suffering of being away from the loved ones, family members and friends, from the city, town or village that one has grown up, facing hardships or discrimination within the new setting and in many cases a downwards social mobility can inspire the decision to go back as well. Recent anti-Romanian feeling spread by the Italian media is an important concern for Romanians. Starting from 2006, it is possible to observe negative

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>671</sup> Interview with the parochial council member.

representations of Romanian citizens in media and public debate. Crimes committed by the Romanian citizens become the focus of media attention. Particularly Roma population is stigmatized and is becoming victims of attacks at their camps. The fact that Romanian citizens are the EU citizens since January 2007 does not seem to legitimize the presence of Romanians in Italy (Frisina and Cancellieri, 2008: 7).

This however does not mean that all the Romanians would prefer to go back. The number of Romanians, who prefer to settle in Europe, exceeds the returnees. Romanians identify themselves as very hard-working people and very well-integrated into the work environment in Italy (Perrotta, 2007:110). Many Romanians have developed attachments to Italy through their experiences, marriages, children, which make Italy their country as well. Mixed marriages between Italians and Romanians are a diffuse phenomenon, which can be considered as an indication of integration of Romanians into the Italian society (Cionchin, 2006:179; Sandri, 2008: 194). Physical similarities between the Romanian and Italian women and cultural factors play an important role in the preference of Italian men towards Romanian women. According to the elaboration of 2001 census data in Italy out of 123,745 mixed marriages between Italian men and foreign wives, Romanian women rank the third with 7,614 marriages after German (8,811) and French (8,706) women (Santangelo: 11).<sup>672</sup> It is mainly young couples that are more willing to stay, while older people and those who have their family members back home are willing to go back. Children who are born and growing up in Italy tend to see Italy as their country and they have a low propensity to go to Romania, which also makes the parents to stay in Italy.

Latin-origin of Romanian people, culture and language are also factors facilitating integration. While the similarity between Italian and Romanian facilitates learning Italian for Romanians in a short period of time, their Romanian becomes amalgamated with Italian words and expressions. They tend to mix Romanian and Italian, even when they are only with Romanians.<sup>673</sup> A Romanian language professor working at the University of Turin that gave a short speech at the *Kilometrul* photo exhibition of Pietro Cingolani in Ivrea was very concerned about the second-generation, who grows up without learning proper Romanian and preferring to use Italian words when speaking Romanian. This new form of Romanian is also carried to Romania and affects the local context.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>672</sup> According to 2007 Cinformi data, in 2006 there were 34 mixed marriages between Italian men and Romanian women and 7 marriages between Italian women and Romanian men in Trentino. In terms of mixed marriages of Italian men with a foreign wife Romanian women in Trentino is in the first place.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>673</sup> Interview with a Romanian lady, who is the women's committee member.

#### **IV.4. Impact of Migration on Romania**

Estimates show that there are around 2-3 million Romanian citizens living abroad (Nicolescu and Constantin, 2005: 79; Şerban and Toth, 2007: 20; Horváth, 2008: 772). Post-Romanian migration to Europe has reached a certain level of stability and is sustained through transnational networks and ties. Certain level of economic stability, higher standards of living, increase in salaries, new investment opportunities as well as positive impact of Romania's accession to the EU on Romania's economy may create incentives for some Romanians to stay and some to return back (Cingolani, Piperno, 2004: 40). Therefore, through transnational as well as return migration Romanian migrants keep affecting the Romanian context and will affect in the years to come.

The impact of Romanian migration on the Romanian society is manifold; however, the effects can be categorized into three main groups. First category of effects is in the economical sphere such as the decline of workforce, emergence of transnational economic enterprises and increase in foreign investment and migrant remittances. Second and third categories concern social and cultural sphere such as the emergence of culture of migration through social remittances and change in social values and care drain and redefinition of family relations.

One important consequence of labor migration is departure of considerable amount of workforce (around 2,5 million) from Romania, which creates workforce drain in Romania. Today Romania is a country trying to cope with labor shortages and it is difficult for Romanian companies to find workers in a growing economy based on the EU investments and funds as well as remittances (Silaşi and Simina, 2008: 328). In addition to international migration, population aging and falling birth rates are the factors that lead to labor shortages (Şerban and Toth, 2007: 7). After 1989 the birth rate started to fall and mortality rate started to increase (Ghetau, 2005: 66). From 1992 to 2002 Romanian population has fallen by 5% (Ibid: 72). The shortage is not in all the sectors but a selective one, given the qualifications required by different sectors (Şerban and Toth, 2007: 13). Labor force shortage is more acute in construction, textiles, and hospitality sectors of the Romanian economy (Ibid: 6). The difficulty in finding Romanian workers, enterprises started to resort to workers from abroad. The majority of foreigners in Romania are Moldovans (8,100) followed by Chinese and Turks and to a lesser extent by Italians, Greeks and Syrians (Baldwin-Edwards, 2008: 280). Number of Chinese workers increased in recent years, while Hungarian workers started commuting to Northern Romania and Turkish entrepreneurs started bringing Turkish workers to work for their companies in Romania (Şerban and Toth, 2007: 5). However, these are temporary solutions, which would not suffice to solve the labor force shortage, because the problem is related with demographic structure (Ibid: 17) and it is only at its initial stage.

As ethnographic researches indicate, emigration has a negative impact on traditional occupations in the rural areas. Since the young generations are not interested in continuing their parents' economic activities and prefer to emigrate, traditional occupations and activities are dying. <sup>674</sup> However, through transnational migrant activism and return migration new types of economic activities emerge, which benefit particularly the construction industry. Romanians tend to send remittances to support their families in Romania or to buy, construct or repair a house (Sandri, 2008: 94).<sup>675</sup> The remittances of Romanian migrants are an important contribution to national and local economy. Pr. Valdman explains the level of the migrant remittances and where they are used:

[...] we have to say that this immigration, at economical level brings Romania's annual remittance ... in the month of August almost the remittance was half of the annual budget of Romania. Because they go to construct houses, to make houses, to help parents and bring money. There are localities in the north of Romania in which the banks are inundated with the money from abroad  $[...]^{676}$ 

As is clear from the above statement, the Romanians prefer to invest in consumption and particularly in real estate (Anghel, 2008b: 799). New villas are built in villages, which imitate the Italian style villas are constructed one after another. With new houses, new forms of consumption patterns gain ground, creating a considerable gap between those who have had immigration experience and who have not.<sup>677</sup>

Besides monetary remittances, transmigrants send home social remittances, which are "the ideas, behaviors, identities and social capital that flow from host- to sending-country communities" (Levitt, 2001b: 54). Apart from spending money for basic necessities and/or paying for the debt, Romanians imitate Italian consumption patterns in Italy and carry them to Romania. "Consumptionist integration" could be defined as the form of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>674</sup> Photo exhibition based on the ethnographic research conducted by Dr. Pietro Cingolani on transnational migration between Suceava and Turin organized by *Casa delle Culture* in Ivrea in December 2006. <u>http://www.casacultureivrea.it/files/kilometrul%201772.ppt</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>675</sup> Paying for children's or family members' education or paying for a debt are also the motives behind sending home remittances.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>676</sup> Interview with Pr. Valdman.

<sup>677</sup> http://www.casacultureivrea.it/files/kilometrul%201772.ppt

adoption and adaptation to the consumption patterns of the mainstream society (ISMU, 1998: 48 cited in Armbruster, 2002: 56). This is not only restricted to Romanians in Italy. As Salih states in her study about the transnational lives of Moroccan women between Italy and Morocco, women construct their identity through the transnational flow of commodities (2002: 65).<sup>678</sup> Similarly, Romanians who work for low-paying jobs in Italy try to take gifts with them when they visit Romania and spend more in Romania. Pr. Lupăştean argues that some Romanians save money for 11 months to spend it in one-month-stay in Romania.<sup>679</sup> Through the gifts or during their visits Romanian migrants introduce new consumption patterns to their localities. For villagers in Romania, products from Italy have become very fashionable and even if they are not useful within the local context they are attributed greater importance and value (Anghel, 2008c: 57).

Romanians' earnings abroad and their remittances while changing migrants' social status in Romania, nurture culture of migration. Immigrants and their relatives become the new rich of their villages (Ibid: 43). In August, when Romanian migrants return to Borşa the divisions within the town becomes more visible as the new rich come back with their cars and new consumption habits to claim a higher social status. The consumption turns into a way of "showing off", a display of wealth (Anghel, 2008b: 799) and a higher status. The periods they visit their hometowns leads to increase in prices and widens the gap further between the rich and the poor, while Romanian migrants are seen as a source of profit by those who live in Romania.<sup>680</sup> Romanian migrants become the embodiment of the opportunities Italy presents for Romanians and create the desire for more immigration to Italy (Anghel, 2008a: 45). During this period, many Romanian migrants have an impact on the marriage market as they marry Romanian women from the town and take their new wives to Italy with them.

Pr. Uta defines migration as a challenge, since Romanians go abroad and change and bring change to the Romanian society. What concerns him is the changed mentality and attitudes that Romanians bring with them as they return home. Regarding return migration, the migration literature refers to change in mentalities of migrants, particularly with regards

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>678</sup> Salih argues that Moroccan women have different social status in Italy and Morocco, but in order to preserve their higher status and image in the sending context. While they perform low-status and low-paying jobs, they try to invest their savings on their dressing, gifts and other commodities that will help them preserve their image in the eyes of their families and friends back home (2002: 61-2).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>679</sup> Interview by Valentina Sandri with Pr. Lupăștean.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>680</sup> Ibid.

to individualism and competitive and interest-driven attitude, which they bring to the country of origin (Horváth, 2008: 773). It is not always negative as many Romanians state that in Italy they have encountered and learnt a professional attitude regarding work, particularly regarding entrepreneurship (Anghel, 2008c: 59). In addition to change in mentality, the networks and relationships they have established in Italy become useful resources for Romanian migrants after their return to Romania (Ibid: 47). The Romanian migrants that visit or return to Romania bring with them ideas and perceptions, which can evolve in different forms within the local context (Gambino and Sacchetto, 2007: 34). However, the most important impact of higher income and social status as well as ideas and experiences of Romanian migrants in the Romanian setting are is the creation of the desire among Romanians to emigrate; the culture of migration.

Culture of migration could be defined as penetration of migration into decisional contexts of a society and construction of migration as the only alternative or as a rite of passage (Horváth, 2008: 774). Despite the improvements in the economic and social conditions, according to a survey conducted in 2006, 9% of the adult population and 23% of the young population (18-24 years) in Romania were planning to spend 2007 abroad. Majority of recent migratory waves from Romania are composed by "young, low or barely qualified rural migrants" (Ibid: 772). While older generations see migration as a risk generating factor, younger generations see it as a "resource generating practice" (Ibid: 779). Village youth is less interested in university education as compared to urban youth and they have lesser chance in accessing to formal and stable employment. Moreover, younger generations tend to be "status-insensitive" (Ibid: 778) and do not see any problem in doing low-status jobs abroad, which they would not do in Romania. What a Romanian guy I met in Ivrea has told me confirms this tendency. He told me that his parents always considered him as a "failure", as the "black sheep" of the family, since he left school. However, he soon left Romania and after doing different kind of jobs at the age of 20 he had enough money to buy a car, construct a house in his village in Romania and repair his parents' place. He was proud to have earned more than any of his relatives, who used to criticize him.

Another important and underestimated consequence of emigration in Romania is the care drain. Due to care drain and division of families divorce rates are increasing. Care drain leads to different problems such as abandoned kids, school drop-outs, conflicts between grandparents and grandchildren and different forms of psychological problems.

The negative impact of migration in this sense is so disturbing that one interviewee in Stan's research defines migration abroad as a *flagel*, disease (2005: 15). Migration also has an impact on gender relations, since women are also involved in the migration process and the fact that they earn an income and have work and life experience abroad increases their status in their villages (Ibid: 16). For similar reasons, younger generations who have worked abroad tend to redefine and renegotiate their relations with older generations.

Romanian migration changes the Romanian society through transnational flow of people, goods, symbols and values and through presence and absence of the Romanian migrants. Migration impacts the economical and social sphere. Decline of labor force and emergence of new forms of economic activity, change in social values through social remittances sent by migrants and care drain and divided families are the most visible impact of migration on the Romanian society. More in depth analysis and further research would reveal deeper and other aspects of migration.

In the light of what has been put forward in this appendix chapter it could be argued that transnational Romanian migration to Italy is *sui generis*. First of all it emerged and evolved in a very short span of time.<sup>681</sup> The biggest change in Italian migratory systems was in the rapid growth of Eastern European (Albanian, Romanian, Serbian, and Macedonian) immigrants starting from the last regularization act in 2002 (Ambrosini et al. 2006: 44). It was particularly the Romanians that grew exponentially (Ibid: 45). Secondly, the Romanian migration is more linked with circular and transnational migration and less oriented towards family settlement (Ambrosini et al. 2006: 52; 55). Moreover, it is a very dynamic migration system and there is constant flow of goods, resources, ideas, experiences and symbols between Romania and Italy, which keep shaping the Romanian migration. Last but not the least since 2007 the Romanian migratis are the EU citizens with many rights and resources that are not accessible and available to other migrant communities in Italy. All these factors render Romanian transnational migration to Italy a *sui generis* migration.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>681</sup> While the migratory waves from North Africa, which reached Italy starting from late 70s, evolved in long span of time and in the last 15 years was reduced to half, the Latin American migratory systems (Brazilians, Colombians, Ecuadorians) could sustain 10% share among the migrant population. While the migratory waves from North Africans, which reached Italy starting from late 70s, evolved in long span of time and in the last 15 years was reduced to half, the Latin American migratory systems (Brazilians, Colombians, Ecuadorians) could sustain 10% share among the migrant population.

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# Appendix B. Distribution of Romanian Nationals in Italy

inguites		
Region	Number	% per region
Piedmont:	102.569	16,4%
Valle d'Aosta:	1.232	0.2%
Lombardia:	95.698	15,3%
Trentino-A.Adige	7.197	1,2%
Bolzano-Bozen	1.228	0,2%
Trento	5.969	1,0%
Veneto	76.861	12,3%
Friuli-V.Giulia	13.593	2,2 %
Liguria	7.879	1,3%
Emilia-Romagna	41.637	6,7%
Toscana	51.763	8,3 %
Umbria	15.580	2,5%
Marche	15.400	2,5%
Lazio	120.030	19,2%
Abruzzo	13.501	2,2%
Molise	1.720	0,3%
Campania	12.565	2,0%
Puglia	10.013	1,6%
Basilicata	2.768	0,4%
Calabria	13.306	2,1%
Sicilia	17.470	2,8%
Sardegna	4.496	0,7%
ITALIA:	625.278	100%

 Table 4. Regional Distribution of Romanian nationals in Italy according to ISTAT 01/01/2008

 figures<sup>682</sup>

Table 5. Distribution of Romanian nationals in Italy according to ISTAT 01/01/2008 figures<sup>683</sup>

Regions	Number	
North West	207.378	
North East	139.288	
Centre	202.773	
South	53.873	
Islands	21.966	
Total	625.278	

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>682</sup> ISTAT (2008), "La Popolazione Straniera Residente in Italia al 1° Gennaio 2008"
 <sup>683</sup> Ibid.