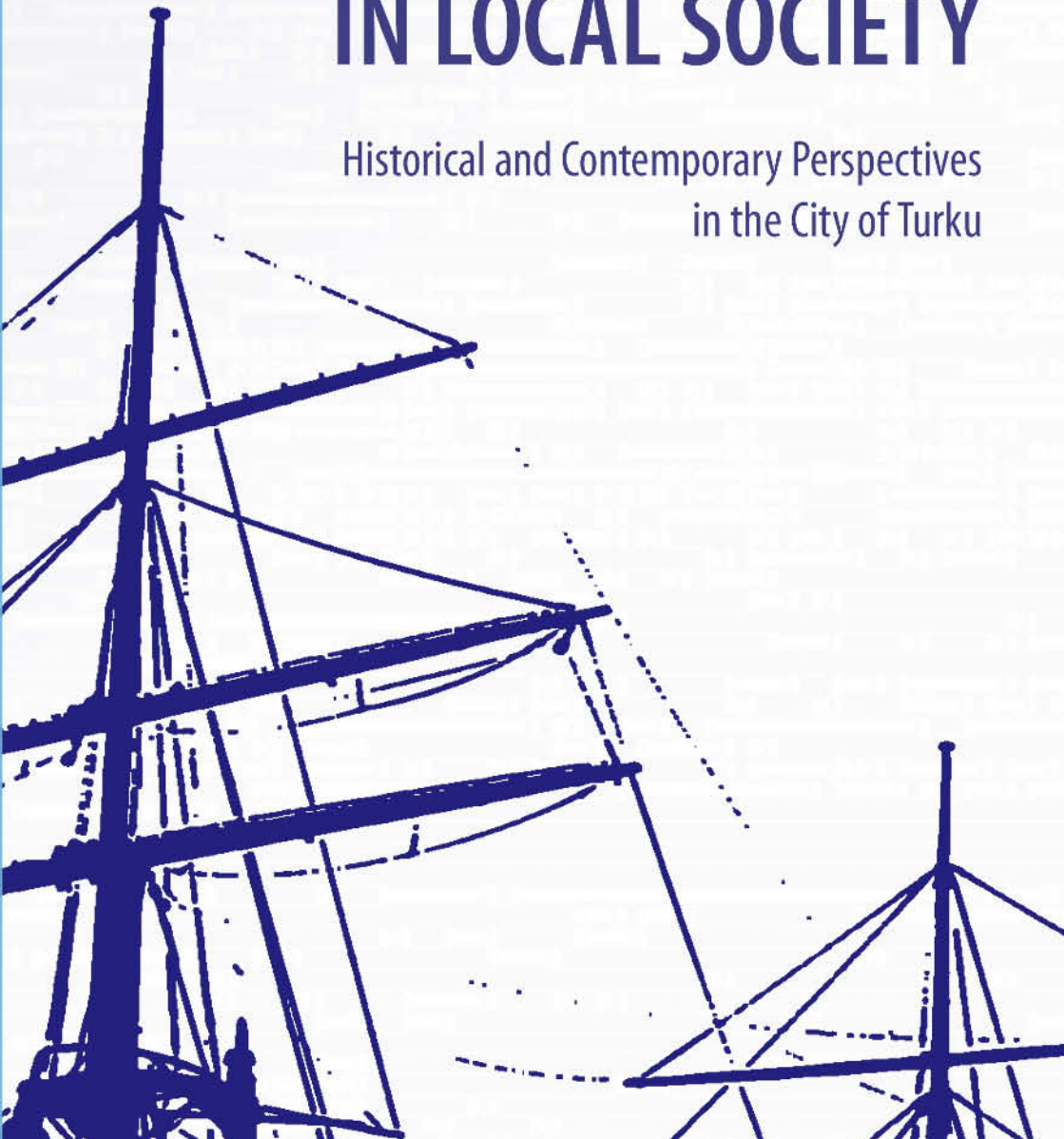


TUOMAS MARTIKAINEN

# IMMIGRANT RELIGIONS IN LOCAL SOCIETY

Historical and Contemporary Perspectives  
in the City of Turku





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# Preface

I have been interested of local religious communities in the city of Turku for many years. When I was in the secondary school I founded together with a friend, Pekka Tolonen, something that would much later turn into a full-time profession. We created the Turku-Åbo Religious Research Club—TÅRRC in abbreviation—and went to visit local congregations and wrote reports on them. Some years back I found some of the reports which we had written for our own amusement and realised that university education had indeed made a great difference to the ways in which I look at the same communities today. We had no idea of the principles of ethnographic work and it was rather embarrassing to look at our polemic descriptions of particular communities. I sincerely believe and hope that my approach has changed since those days, and that my insights and observations are of value and interest for people, who dedicate their time to reading this study. Moreover, religious communities in Turku are still very close to my heart and they function as my windows to the world at large.

This study would not have been possible without the support of a large number of people. First and foremost, I would like to thank my informants, who have made the study possible. I sincerely hope

that our relationship has not been one-sided, but that you have also found my exercise of interest. I am also aware that many of you do not necessarily see the issues described in this study in the same light as I do, but that is often the case with academic studies. That does mean that I would not appreciate different interpretations and understandings, quite on the contrary, but academic discipline requires one to concentrate on certain issues, while leaving others to the side. However, I would still like to emphasise that without your support and help, absolutely nothing would have taken place. Also your willingness to take students as visitors to your congregations as part of number of courses that I have conducted is something that I deeply appreciate. Thank you!

My studies began at the Department of Comparative Religion in the University of Turku in 1992. Lector Matti Kamppinen was my main teacher during that time and he also helped me in starting to become seriously involved with the study of local religious organisations. I have no clue where I would be now without your help in those days. I have many good memories from my days as a student at the department and I would like to thank Pasi Enges, Veikko Anttonen, Martti Junnonaho, Tiina Mahlamäki, Teemu Taira, Tuija Hovi, Annikki Kaivola-Bregenhøj, Maria Vasenkari and all the others for their smaller and larger contributions with regard to things academic. My years in the department gave me a good background to continue my studies in Åbo Akademi next to my alma mater.

My colleagues at the Department of Comparative Religion in Åbo Akademi University have provided me with a lively, friendly and scholarly atmosphere since 1997 of which I am most grateful. While you all have contributed in various ways, I would nevertheless like to raise a few individuals above others, as I have had closer connections with them. Professor Nils G. Holm has been supervisor and on many occasions shown that he has had faith in my work. Dr. Jan Svanberg has been my companion to an uncountable numbers of kebabs and pizzas. We also share an interest in English football, even though our ability to fill in the *stryktips* has not been the most successful. You may support Liverpool, whereas I am Leeds United,

but maybe one day we can do our pilgrimage and see a match together! Professor Ulrika Wolf-Knuts, doctor Siv Illman, lector Lena Marander-Eklund, secretary Anne Holmberg, researchers Blanka Henriksson, Ruth Illman, Kennet Granholm, Susanne Österlund-Pöttsch, Tomas Mansikka, Mäns Broo, Christian Wulff as well as many others at the department have all contributed in different ways to the often lonely adventure of being a post-graduate student. I have also had several roommates during the years, including Ronny Sjöblom, Maria Leppäkari and Sari Sjöblom with whom I have conducted many memorable discussions.

Additionally, I have spent three shorter periods in other research institutions in different countries. I visited the the Department of Theology and Religious Studies in the University of Leeds in autumn 1999, where I was lucky enough to get to know Professor Kim Knott, whose interest in religion and locality stimulated my own endeavour. Beside being a wonderful person, Kim also gave me the occasional lift to Chapelton to practice martial arts. Dr. Simon Smith is to be blamed for my interest in English football in general and Leeds United in particular. My heart is still at Elland Road and I will definitely join you Simon again someday for the lovely match-day adventures that we had. Sometime, maybe we are even brave enough to go to ‘the bitter end’. I also remember Dr. Philip Mellor as a great personality from those days. Both of the two other visits were directed to Denmark. In December 2000, I spent a month at the Department of the History of Religions in the University of Copenhagen and learned to know, among others, Margit Warburg and Mikael Rothstein as well as became more familiar with the Danish religious field. Furthermore, in the dark winter evenings I took the chance to see FC København in Parken, learning even more of international football and collective effervescence. In December 2003, I spent two weeks at the Center for Multireligious Studies in the University of Aarhus, where I got to know Professor Viggo Mortensen as well as the lovely bunch at the *Afdeling for Religionsvidenskab*. Among others, Marianne Qvortrup Fibiger, Lene Kühle, René Dybdal Pedersen, Lars Ahlin, Jørgen Skov Sørensen and Mikkel Pade made



me feel welcome as well as gave me a good introduction of the Danish Pluralism Project, a similar endeavour than the one that I have been involved with in Turku. We are certainly going to meet many times in the future and let us hope that our EU network of excellence receives financing, as that would make the meetings more frequent.

During my studies I have also had the opportunity to visit a large number of national and international conferences. In these events I have been able to share thoughts with many scholars whom I admire. These individuals include Peter Beyer, Jim Spickard, Helen Rose Ebaugh, Nancy Ammerman, James Beckford, Roland Robertson, Marion Bowman, Knut Axel Jacobsen, Harvey Whitehouse, Martin Baumann, Jonas Otterbeck, Afe Adogame as well as numerous others. All of them have helped me in getting a better understanding of what it means to be an academic scholar and why it is important to be transnational in the world of science. Moreover, presenting papers, receiving comments and listening to other people's presentations has been invaluable in getting a better understanding where one stands with respect to academic standards, theoretical reflection and new perspectives.

I have also been involved in two Academy of Finland funded programmes that have given me additional food for thought. I was a member of the Graduate School for Cultural Interaction and Integration (*Kulttuurisen vuorovaikutuksen ja integraation tutkijakoulu*) for one year and learned about the growing interest towards the Baltic Region in the humanities. However, it was the Muslims and Religious Equality in Finland project, which was part of the large Marginalisation, Inequality and Ethnic Relations (SYREENI) programme, that grew to a major forum for my part. I had the opportunity to co-operate with Tuula Sakaranaho, Marja Tiilikainen and Anne Alitolppa-Niitamo, who all share an interest in Islam, immigration, ethnicity and multiculturalism. It was inspiring to work with all of you and, especially, the help and support of Tuula in the last phases of my studies was essential.

During the last years I have become increasingly aware of the growing interest towards ethnic minorities, multiculturalism and in-

ternational migration in Finland. In June 2003, an academic society dedicated to these issues was founded: the Society for the Study of Ethnic Relations and International Migration in Finland (ETMU). I have been involved with this society since its foundation and it has become an increasingly important forum with regard to its subject area for myself. Through the society I have learned to know many people who are conducting exciting research in the area. Annika Forsander, Vesa Puuronen, Miikka Pyykkönen, Teppo Sintonen, Leena Suurpää, Outi Lepola, Petri Hautamäki, Timo Makkonen, Inga Jasinskaja-Lahti, Helena Jerman, Seniha Djihangir, Matti Similä, and all the other activists have been both a wonderful support as well as stimulating company during the formative phases of the society. I am certain that if we work hard and with dedication, we are able to promote the study of this important area of research in Finland and raise it to a new level. I have learned a tremendous amount about research and issues of this subject area in your company, of which I would otherwise not have any idea.

In addition to the above-mentioned forums, there are some further individuals and institutions that should be given their credit. The Network for the Study of New Religious Movements in Finland (USVA) has been a good forum to learn about new religious impulses to the Finnish religious field. Especially, co-operation with Dr. Kimmo Ketola has been extremely important for my part. Kimmo is an exemplary scholar as well as a fine colleague, who also understands the need for cross-fertilisation in the increasingly specialised academic world. Further, people at the Research Institute of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland have always been helpful in my queries and sent me many useful books. Harri Heino (deceased), Kimmo Kääriäinen, Kati Niemelä and Kari Salonen have also been a wonderful company in many conferences as well as always willing to share their knowledge of the Lutheran Church. Moreover, Andreas Häger and Östen Wahlbeck from Department of Sociology in Åbo Akademi University are both great personalities and I believe that due to our shared interests we will also collaborate in the future.

In the process of submitting this thesis to the Faculty of Arts I have had two external reviewers, who have helped me to improve the quality of my work in many ways. I would like to express my gratitude to Docent Susan Sundback from Åbo Akademi University and Professor Eila Helander from the University of Helsinki for their involvement in the process. Your comments on the manuscript not only made me aware of some of its weaknesses, but also made me reflect more deeply upon the inherent difficulties and tensions in interdisciplinary research. Susan also helped me in many different ways all through the process. Additionally, a number of other respected scholars have read the thesis at an earlier stage and given me clues in how to improve it. They are Östen Wahlbeck, Tuula Sakaranaho, Kimmo Ketola, Martin Baumann, Teemu Taira and Siv Illman. Your knowledge in different fields related to the study has been invaluable. Furthermore, as English is not my native language this dissertation has been proof-read by Professor John Skinner, who has helped me to improve the language in many ways.

It would not have been possible to conduct this study without financial support from a number of Finnish foundations that consider academic study worth of monetary investment. *Emil Aaltosen Säätiö*, *Jenny ja Antti Wihurin rahasto*, *Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland* and *Stiftelsen för Åbo Akademi forskningsinstitut* have given me longer grants that made it possible to pay bills and to concentrate on full-time research. Furthermore, *Otto Malms donationsfond*, *Gustaf Packaléns Mindefond*, and *Waldemar von Frenckells Stiftelse* have supported me with smaller but nevertheless important contributions.

However much one is involved in academic studies, there still exists a life outside the university. Sports may be fun to watch and practise, but there is something beyond mere physical exercise that caught my attention many years ago. An activity where one is always a beginner, namely the gentle Japanese martial art of Aikido. The study of Aikido has taken a lot of my spare time during the last years, but also given me relaxed shoulders to be again tightened by the computer. I am especially grateful that I have been able to train

Aikido in Turku Aikikai under the guidance of Mr. Petteri Silenius, a true *budoka* and a wonderful person, whose dedication to practice sets a standard, not easily achieved. Furthermore, I would like to thank for friendship and camaraderie Petteri Saisto, Asko Repo, Ollipekka Kangas, Teemu Varjonen, Jarmo Luomansuu and the rest of the bunch in Shaolin Dojo as well as in Sir Okke's. We know each other through sweat, pain and exhaustion, but, mostly, with glittering eyes and a silent smile on our lips. I have also functioned on the board of Finland Aikikai for several years, which has provided me a good overview of Finnish sports culture and how it meets with traditions of physical exercise that have their origin elsewhere; a truly fascinating development that would deserve a study of its own.

My family and friends have always been there in my support. My father Jouko and my mother Eeva-Kaisa as well as my sister Hanna-Kaisa and my brother Heikki together with Terhi and Tommi have all given their best support. I have also been lucky in that I have number good friends on whom I can trust in different situations. Antti Korpela, Kai and Tiina Kimppa, Ville Jansen, Ilkka Manninen and Kristoffer Sandelin, among others, have all been wonderful company during the last years. Finally, I would like to thank Heli for her support, understanding and love at home. You have been a much greater support than you probably know yourself.

Even though I have been fortunate to have many people who have helped me during the last years, I do naturally take all responsibility for the content of this study. I have tried to avoid mistakes and misinterpretations as well as I can, but because the subject area is rather vast, there still might be the occasional error. If that is to cause any stress or unhappiness for those involved, I will do my best to correct them. In such unfortunate cases, I would like to meet the critique directly and sort it out.

I would like to dedicate this book to my companions at the *kaffebordet* at the Department of Comparative Religion and Folkloristics in Åbo

Akademi University. There was really something magical about the companionship in Biskopsgatan 10 B.



# 1

## Introduction

A minaret, a dome and a façade of glass  
—The Islamic Centre of Turku will be built with Saudi money<sup>1</sup>  
(*Turun Sanomat*, 31 July 1997)

From the late 1980s onwards, the city of Turku has become the hometown of a growing number of Muslim immigrants. The quotation above is taken from the newspaper headline of a front-page story telling about a plan to build the first mosque proper in Turku. This construction plan was initiated by the new Muslim migrants. The article included a manipulated picture showing the future mosque as part of the existing cityscape. The mosque in the picture seemed to have been transplanted onto foreign soil and the fact that it would be built with ‘Saudi money’ strengthened this image of otherness. The publication of the article started a heated debate in the local media about whether a mosque should be built in Turku, or if such a project is somehow against the very nature of living respectably in Finland. We shall return to the debate later in this study and see how it con-

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<sup>1</sup> Original in Finnish: “Minareetti, kupoli ja julkisivu lasista: Turun islamilainen keskus rakennetaan saudirahoilla”.

tinued. For the purpose of my thesis, however, it is of central importance to note that in recent decades similar controversies have arisen around Europe and North America. In the background of these controversies we find an increased presence of populations of immigrant origin, including large numbers of Muslims. The ‘mosque controversies’ are obviously related to the phenomenon of international migration and to the ongoing globalisation of local societies. But are there other important issues involved when we look at the situation as a whole? Are the new local realities only conflictual? Are the Muslims the only influential immigrants? Are we today living in a special, new period or are there historical equivalents for the contemporary situation? My dissertation is part of the ongoing effort to understand the changing religious landscape of late modernity. In this study the immigrant religious activity in the religious field of Turku will be the focus of a case study, functioning as a specific example of local religious dynamics and transformation processes in a globalising world.

The city of Turku was founded around the year 1300 and it was Finland’s main urban centre until the late nineteenth century, when Helsinki became the dominant centre and the capital of the country. Turku—in Swedish Åbo—has historically been, and still is, one of the most international Finnish cities, with extensive political, commercial and cultural connections with the world outside. Ever since its foundation, foreign migrants have settled in the city and become members of local society. Descendants of some of the early newcomers can still be found in the city, now as essential members of it. In recent decades international migration has gained importance in a new way, as Finland, after a century of emigration, became a country of immigration. A new immigrant population has taken foothold in Turku and the rest of the country. In Finland, the city of Turku is one of those local societies where the effects of globalisation and international migration are strongest and most obvious. Even though, Turku has many original features as a local society, it also needs to be viewed in a national perspective, because this, too, constitutes a most important context.



Immigration to Finland started to increase significantly in the late 1980s and has continued to do so until this day. The number of immigrants is higher and their ethnic diversity much greater now than two decades ago. The number of people of immigrant origin was something over 100,000 in 2002, which was over two percent of the total population.<sup>2</sup> The figure is several times larger than in the 1980s (Statistics Finland, 2001: 6-7). This increase has brought about many changes in the national religious field: these include, the establishment of new religious organisations, significant immigrant membership in other religious organisations, new forms of interfaith activity and the emergence of public debate on the consequences of the presence of the new immigrants and their religions in Finland. The most notable change has been the rise of Islam, but also other religions have benefited from immigration, including Buddhism and long established religions such as the Lutheran, Catholic and Orthodox Churches. The effects and visibility of immigration come to the fore especially in the capital region and some other urban areas—for instance in the cities of Turku, Tampere and Oulu—and less so in the countryside where the number of immigrants is low (Statistics Finland, 2001: 25-26).

In a western scholarly context, interest in the religious organisations of the immigrants has gradually increased in the post-war period, but most notably over the last two decades. This has to do with the growing presence of non-western immigrants in western societies, and with the rise of the so-called fundamentalist movements. Many European countries, such as Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom, have received a large influx of immigrant workers and

---

<sup>2</sup> Statistics that are used to estimate the number of people of immigrant origin in Finland include 1) place of birth, 2) language (excluding Finnish, Swedish and Saami) and 3) citizenship. The figures for 2002 were: born abroad 152,057, foreign language 117,013 and foreign citizenship 103,682 (Statistics Finland, 2003a). There are certain problems in interpreting these statistics, but we can estimate that the number of people of immigrant origin is presently at least 100,000. For further discussion about the interpretation of the statistics, see Forsander 2000.

their families, refugees and other immigrants since the 1960s, which has broadened the ethno-religious composition of these countries. In Europe, the presence of Muslims has received substantial attention. The situation has also changed during the same period in the United States, too, due to changes in legislation and to the arrival of the so-called new immigrants. The research was long rather descriptive and locally or nationally bound, but this has changed during the last decade.

During the 1990s the nature of immigrant community studies took on new features. This fact can be related to the emergence of sociological globalisation theories. The importance of these theories can hardly be overestimated in the current literature on immigrant religious organisations. The recognition of continued connections between immigrants and their various countries of origin with its political implications, combined with changes in communication technology, travel opportunities and global media coverage, has led to new types of research interests and to the recognition of the transnational nature of immigrant communities. Some social theorists—such as Nancy Ammerman (1997), Helen Rose Ebaugh and Janet Saltzman Chafetz (2000, 2002), Peggy Levitt (2001) and Stephen Warner (1998)—give local religious organisations a central position in their studies and see them as valuable windows on contemporary social change. Local religious organisations are presented by these theorists as mediators of change, situated between society and the individual, the global and the local.

The notion of the local is interesting and, in many ways, it is positioned at the core of the globalisation debate at large. Social theorists, such as Arjun Appadurai (1996), Ulf Hannerz (1996) and Roland Robertson (1995), put great emphasis on analysing the changed local realities in order to understand the process of globalisation. They claim that the extra-local dimensions of local societies have been undertheorised and that a deeper knowledge of them sheds new light on contemporary cultural change. Local societies are no longer seen as independent and homogenous social spheres in a national context, or as the opposite of the global, but

rather as localities embodying complex social spheres, which may overlap and have significant translocal dimensions. In other words, the nature of local societies, including religious organisations embedded in them, is changing and we need new insights to understand the processes taking place, so that we can clearly see their impacts.

The globalisation theories provide a new framework for understanding historical and contemporary features of local religious life. This theoretical reasoning provides a new level of interpretation, where the local is no longer, or solely, seen as a subcategory of the national, but rather as a focal point on the continuum of local, national, regional and global. This leads us to ask new questions, including that of how local religious life is subject to, and conditioned by, transnational cultural flows, as well as what the implications of such transnational interconnectivity are on the local plane. The present study is looking for answers to these and other related questions, and places the local religious organisations at the centre of analysis, drawing its inspiration from overlapping debates in sociology, immigration and religious studies. With regard to academic positioning, the present work can be described as an empirical, comparative study of religion with its special focuses of interest falling within the borders of the ethnography and the sociology of religion.

## **1.1 Aim and composition of the study**

The aim of this study is to describe and analyse, from a globalisation perspective, the processes of immigrant religious organisation in the local religious field in the city of Turku. In my approach, these contemporary processes are placed from the beginning in a historical framework of growing global interconnectedness, where international migration and transnational connections function as the key components. Even though globalisation is a later phenomenon than what the early part of the historical presentation covers, similar processes of migration and cultural interconnectivity have been functioning on a smaller geographical scale. The purpose of this framework is that it permits a search for differences and similarities between ear-

lier and contemporary migrations, making it possible to find out what specific, new features are related to the current form of global cultural interconnectivity. It also makes it possible to discuss when globalisation with regard to religions in Turku began. A more detailed discussion of globalisation is given in Chapter 2, where the theoretical bases guiding the study are presented.

The study has two main sets of questions. *First, do immigrants' contemporary processes of religious organisation, and issues related to it, present a novel situation, or to what extent do they have historical predecessors in Turku and Finland? Second, in which ways have the contemporary immigrants organised themselves religiously and become part of the local religious field, and what does this tell us about the contemporary form of globalisation in Turku?* This means that I have to give a broad description of the local and national history of religions, as well as to present the contemporary religious field in some detail, even though the main emphasis of the study is on relatively recent developments. The research is based on literary, empirical and statistical material, including interviews with representatives of local religious organisations. The focus is on the level of religious organisations and, to some extent, public debate, and less on individual immigrants and their religious lives. In the study, Finland constitutes an important context throughout the text, but the city of Turku and religious organisations working there are the main area of interest.

With regard to the choice of Turku as the locality of research, there are some factors of which the reader should be aware. Turku is a regional centre in south-western Finland and the country's second largest immigrant centre. It is geographically close to Sweden and one of the main ports of the country. In contemporary Finland—after the Helsinki region—Turku is clearly among the most international local societies of the country. Historically, it has played an even more dominant role, as noted earlier. Turku is a relatively large city in Finland with over 170,000 inhabitants as well as an important centre of higher education with many young adults. It has also an old and influential Swedish-speaking minority population that

makes it effectively bilingual by tradition. Thus, Turku is not a typical city in Finland. However, when studying historical and contemporary forms of international migration and transnational connections, Turku is one of the best possible choices available. The city has a long history, a fact that makes historical comparisons possible, and enough different groups of immigrant origin to see broader patterns. The choice of Turku as a research locality had also good practical reasons. I was living in the city as well as already knowledgeable about local religions (see section 1.2.1). The city is also of a convenient size, so that one researcher can still manage the local field, which makes it an ‘effective locality’ for the type of research that this study represents (Knott, 1998: 284).

In order to approach the aim of the study, a historical perspective is a useful starting point, because much of the contemporary research on globalisation lacks a detailed historical framework. If we are to argue that there are specific features of religious change in our times, this can only be done in historical comparison. In this study the history of religions in Finland provides the broad perspective on the subject. This historical background is already well researched and it shows that, to a large extent, Turku has been at the centre of many developments. In the study, special points of interest, as well as important local developments, are given more attention. In addition to the historical issues, contemporary local society and the religious field in Turku today are also central. Local society is the everyday environment in which the immigrants live and the local religious field is the social structure of which immigrant religious activity becomes a part. With regard to the religious organisation of the immigrants, it is necessary to take a close look at the organisation processes of the communities as well as to look at what the main activities in these congregations are. These insights allow us to produce an informed opinion of the extent to which purely local developments are central, or whether translocal connections significantly condition local religious organisations and local society. Keeping these issues in mind, six main areas of interest emerge.

First, religious changes related to international migration and transnational relations are not new phenomena in Finland. As a matter of fact, the contemporary religious field in the country and in Turku illustrate well the myriad ways in which religious traditions have been shaped by external factors. There are very few wholly indigenous religious groups, while most of the religious organisations have their origins in different parts of the world. Chapter 3 will discuss the specific ways in which ways international migration and transnational connections have formed and changed the national and local religious fields. At the end of the chapter a question will be asked concerning the legacy of such international migration and of contacts across the borders to the contemporary religious situation. Another question asked of the material is to what extent the current immigration represents a new phenomenon. Theoretical issues related to this part of the investigation are discussed in section 2.1. The historical presentation is mostly based on existing scholarship on the history of religions in Finland and Turku. However, with regard to recent immigrant religions, the study also provides new data on the matter.

Second, the contemporary local religious field in Turku is rather complex. There are dozens of different organisations working in the locality. In order to draw conclusions about the position of immigrant religious activity and organisations in the city, it is necessary to provide a presentation of other religious organisations existing in the city. The following questions will be addressed to give a picture of religious organisations and their dynamics in Turku. What are the various religious organisations functioning in the city? What kinds of activities do they have? Do they take common initiatives over organisational boundaries? This part of the study is mainly based on interviews with representatives of local religious organisations and forms Chapter 4 of the thesis.

Third, the new immigrants in Turku are now living in a new social environment, which constrains but also provides opportunities. This issue will be approached with the following questions: How many immigrants are there in Turku? What is their ethnic and na-

tional background? What is the age structure of the immigrants in comparison to the local population in general? How have the immigrants integrated into the local labour market? Is there ethnic segregation in terms of, for example, housing areas? What can we find out about the religious backgrounds of the immigrants? These issues are the topic of section 5.1 and the presentation is mainly based on statistical material. Theoretical matters related to this part of the study are presented in section 2.3.3.1.

Fourth, as the immigrants have settled in Turku, an ongoing process of religious organisation has taken place. This process brings to the fore aspects of immigrants' structural adaptation to Finnish society. The points in this complex development will be illustrated by the following questions: How and why did the immigrants' collective religious activity begin? To what extent have the immigrants founded new religious organisations? Which previously existing religious organisations have received new immigrant members? How many of the immigrants have become members of local congregations? What are the places for immigrants' religious activity? Are there general patterns in the institutionalisation process? These issues are approached in section 5.2 with the help of statistics and interviews with local congregation leaders and activists. The theoretical base regarding this element of discussion is presented in section 2.3.3.2.

Fifth, the local immigrants have established a number of activities in their religious organisations. To discuss this aspect of immigrant religious life, the following questions are posed: What kinds of activities do we find in the immigrants' religious organisations? Do they provide religious education, and what is the role of this education? Are there secular activities beside the religious ones? What kinds of resources are used to run the organisations? Are transnational connections and networks important to local congregations? These issues are discussed in section 5.3 and will be illustrated by the interview material. The description will provide a picture of community life in immigrant congregations. Theoretical reasoning on the issues is presented in sections 2.3.3.3 and 2.3.3.4.

Sixth, with their arrival in Turku, the immigrants have brought new elements to the local religious field and become a part of the local society at large. The topic will be addressed with the following questions: How are the immigrant organisations positioned in the local religious field? Has the increased immigrant presence changed the activities of already existing local congregations? Have the immigrants changed interfaith relations? Have the immigrants become targets of mission and active outreach? In which ways have the municipal authorities received new immigrant religions? Are the immigrants visible in local media? These issues will be approached with interviews with local congregation leaders and authorities and, to some extent, newspaper articles. This material is presented in sections 4.3, on the local religious field in general, and in section 5.4, on the immigrant religions. These debates draw their theoretical ground from the whole of Chapter 2.

The study is divided into six chapters. The introduction presents the general aim, background, source materials and methods. Chapter two is the main theoretical chapter, presenting and defining central concepts and the theoretical framework. Chapter three presents the history of religions in Finland and Turku, with special focus on transnational connections and immigrant religious activity. Chapter four presents the contemporary religious field in Turku and lays a foundation for understanding the specific changes with regard to the recent growth of local immigrant congregations. Chapter five analyses the impact and various more concrete consequences of the presence and activities of the immigrant organisations in Turku today. This section is the most central part of the study. Chapter six summarises the results and findings and raises questions for further discussion and research.

## **1.2 Background**

The initial platform for this research is the study of religion and immigration in Finland, which is the focus of this section. The Finnish research on religion that is of relevance to this study can be di-



vided into two main sections. First, my own background in studying the local religious organisations was and is part of an ongoing project called *The Religious Field in Turku*. This was the primary platform to begin with, even though its role has become smaller. The project is, however, quite an interesting effort and thus worth describing more thoroughly. Second, there is a large body of research on religion, immigration and cultural minorities in Finland conducted in several different disciplines. The theoretical literature is presented in chapter two, which provides the theoretical framework of this study.

### 1.2.1 The Religious Field in the Turku project

The Religious Field in Turku (*Turun uskonnollinen kenttä*) project started in a student seminar run by Päivikki Suojanen in the Department of Comparative Religion at the University of Turku in 1973.<sup>3</sup> Since the beginning, a total of over one hundred undergraduate seminar reports, master's theses and licentiate theses, as well as a doctoral thesis concerning religion in Turku, have been written. All these reports have been archived at the department. The majority of the material is unpublished, but there are also several published theses and research papers, mainly in Finnish. Through the years, several staff members have supervised individual works belonging to the project, but the project itself has lacked long-term direction. In 1979,

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<sup>3</sup> The chair for Comparative Religion and Folkloristics at the University of Turku was founded in 1963 as a personal professorship for Lauri Honko. It was the first chair in comparative religion in Finland, although a chair for the history of religions had already been founded at Åbo Akademi University in 1961. The initial field of interest of the new discipline was Finno-Ugric religious tradition and folk religiosity, but it was to expand fairly soon to cover modern religions as well. Professor Honko's interest in ethnographic fieldwork and cultural anthropology became a main stimulus for the later development of the department and the discipline in Finland as a whole (Suojanen and Saressalo, 1980: 60-67).

a card index was established, which was subsequently updated and changed to a computer index (Suojanen and Saessalo, 1980: 71).

The department's interest in ethnographic fieldwork has encouraged many students to do empirical studies. Students have learnt at an early phase how to conduct interviews and in these elementary courses they have often done practice interviews with representatives of local religious organisations. The field material has been archived in the *TKU-Archive—The Archive of Folklore and Comparative Religion*. The archive has a collection of several hundred hours of recorded interviews, video recordings, slides, photographs and other diverse material on religions in Turku. Altogether, the archive has a good collection of oral tradition on local religious groups.

The Department of Comparative Religion at the Åbo Akademi University is a latecomer to the project. The co-operation between the two local departments began in a religious mapping project of Turku in 1995. In 1997, when I moved from the University of Turku to Åbo Akademi University to pursue my doctoral studies, I, in a sense, took the project with me. Since then, more Åbo Akademi students have been involved with research on local religious groups. Material gathered at Åbo Akademi is stored in the department's own archives.

Attempts to combine the diverse information gathered have been made in the form of ethnographic *mapping projects*. To date, four general mappings have been made under the umbrella of the project. Two of them were religious mappings (Junnonaho, 1981; Martikainen, 1996), one concerned alternative medicine (Kurkinen, 1997) and one regarded martial arts clubs (Martikainen, 1997). All of them have concentrated on the local field.

In 1981, Martti Junnonaho made the first comprehensive effort to map religions in the city. The religious mapping of 1981, titled *Turun uskonnollinen tarjonta* ("The Religious Supply of Turku") is a 28-page booklet and presenting the local religious field at the time. The study was based on previous research, telephone interviews and a mail questionnaire. Junnonaho divided the study subject into Lutheran communities, non-Lutheran Christian communities and non-

Christian communities. The division was a practical one, which reflected the local field, and not a theological division. The report presents about 40 congregations and associations and names several others. The individual presentations vary in size and length, but usually they include some remarks on the history of the movement, present activities and limited demographic information. The booklet provides a decent snapshot of the local religious field in the early 1980s. With regard to immigrants' religious organisations, the mapping does not provide any insights, except for its references to the old cultural minorities of Jews and Tatar Muslims.

During 1995 and 1996, a new mapping of the local religious field was conducted by myself, which eventually became my master's thesis, later published under the title *Moniarvoinen Turku: Käsikirja uskonnollisista, maailmankatsomuksellisista ja etnisistä yhteisöistä* ("Pluralistic Turku: A Handbook of Religious, Ideological and Ethnic Communities") (Martikainen, 1996). The project was a co-operation between the two local departments of comparative religion and the administrative board of the Province of Turku and Pori. Governor Pirkko Työläjäarvi and the administrative board of the province had ordered a practical handbook of religious and ethnic minorities in the area for their own use, but the original idea had been somewhat reshaped when I was commissioned to carry out the work. I was quite free to model the study in my own terms. The final published version contained an overview of the religious history of Turku followed by presentations of local congregations, religious associations and ethnic groups. The 177-page book was based on telephone and personal interviews with representatives of local organisations. It included circa 100 different groups. Since then, I have written some articles in which I have deepened insights from the original research, with the addition of further fieldwork (Martikainen 1998, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c, 2002a, 2002b, forthcoming).

Questions arising from the original fieldwork have been in the background to the current effort to understand the role of immigrant organisations in the local setting. In this respect, the situations in the early 1980s and the mid 1990s were radically different. Fifteen years

before, questions on immigrants were not on Junnonaho's agenda; while by the time of the new mapping, local ethnic diversity was already significant. This also reflects well my personal experience of growing up and living in Turku, where the street presence of non-European immigrants rose suddenly in the early 1990s.

In 1997, two further mappings were conducted. First, Ulla Kurkinen conducted a mapping of local alternative medicine<sup>4</sup> therapists that became her master's thesis *Vaihtoehtolääkintä Turussa* ("Alternative Medicine in Turku") (Kurkinen, 1997), a comprehensive guide to alternative therapies in the city. The study was based on extensive fieldwork and interviews. In her study, Ulla Kurkinen presents therapies of a vastly differing nature. The nucleus of the study is presentations of various therapies, including their history, present state and central concepts. Ulla Kurkinen found circa 50 different therapies and over 200 therapists working in Turku at the time. The study included such diverse therapies as Acupuncture, Aromatherapy, Chiropractics, Homeopathy, Pranic Healing and Shiatsu. Second, I undertook a small-scale survey on martial arts clubs in Turku (Martikainen, 1997). *Itämaiset kamppailulajit Turussa 1997* ("Oriental Martial Arts in Turku in 1997") is a handbook and guide to local martial arts studios, which presents the different arts and styles, their history, the local clubs and their activity in Turku. It was based on a survey conducted in August 1996, when I personally interviewed representatives of all the 24 local clubs. During the survey, it became quite clear to me, that certain clubs had an interest in alternative therapies and oriental philosophy, usually Japanese or Chinese, and certain clubs did not. The interest appeared to be connected with the club's orientation towards the art's tradition in general. While both of these mappings added a new flavour to the picture of religion and spirituality in the city, neither of them shed any light on the role of the immigrant congregations.

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<sup>4</sup> The therapies are alternative to the official medical services, as their customers do not receive the health insurance support of the public welfare system.

Beside these mappings, some seminar reports and master's theses have been completed on local immigrants and their communities. The following have been among the most interesting: Reetta Helander's (2000) thesis on young Somali girls, Virpi Kinnunen's (1996, 1999) thesis on Iranian refugees and their religious life in Turku, Tiina Palonen's (1996, 1999) thesis on Finnish female converts to Islam, Harri Rautio's (1996, 1998) thesis on the acculturation of Iraqi refugees, Anu Salmela's (2000) thesis on Somali women and Kirsi Timonen's (1999) seminar report on Kosovo Albanian refugees. None of these works concentrate directly on religious organisations, but local religious life is at least one element in all of them. These studies provide insights into certain questions, but their value is limited for the current purposes of understanding the role of the immigrant religious organisations.

The Religious Field in Turku project has never been fully evaluated owing to the large amount of material gathered. Some general remarks can be made, however. First, students have learned field methodology and realised the closeness of interesting cultural phenomena. Moreover, the possibility of understanding the close, but often ignored, culture in which one lives and the opportunity of evaluating it critically are also valuable. That is the educational value of the project. Second, the various studies made within the project have increased our knowledge of particular communities and phenomena. Third, the collected empirical material is potentially valuable for future researchers. The collection of information about the local religious groups is very large and accumulating all the time. There are few comparable collections around the world.

A major shortcoming of the project has been the lack of systematic leadership. The collection of material has been without clear guidance or direction. So far, the project has been mainly an ethnographic material-gathering endeavour. After thirty years of the project, many local religious groups are still practically unknown in the material. This is especially true of many Christian associations and the Swedish-speaking congregations. The students have favoured the— from their point of view—the exotic and unusual groups, such as

the Pentecostals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Muslims and Hare Krishna. The "duller" groups have remained unstudied. Furthermore, little use has been made of the material already housed in the project. The Religious Field in Turku project is a rough diamond which has the potential to develop into an exciting research project.

### **1.2.2 Studies on religion and cultural diversity in Finland**

There exists a significant corpus of research on religions in Finland that has been mainly conducted within the fields of comparative religion, theology and sociology. Research on immigration and cultural diversity has had a more prominent role in the disciplines of ethnology, history, social psychology and sociology. Even though Finland is a relatively small country, the same problems of specialisation can be seen as in other countries, so that people in different disciplines are not always up-to-date with each other's current research. Bearing this in mind, I shall now present thematically various strands of research that are of relevance to this study. The following presentations of the particular research traditions, together with my remarks on them, are offered mainly from the viewpoint of this study, and my critique should be understood in that light as well.

First, the history of religions in Finland has mostly interested Lutheran church historians and, to a lesser extent, scholars of archaeology, comparative religion, ethnology, folklore and history. The Finnish history of religions has been principally written by Lutheran church historians, who have published significant amounts of literature on many aspects of the history of the medieval Catholic, and later Lutheran, Church. The latest summary of these studies is the four-volume *Suomen kirkon historia* ("The History of the Finnish Church") (Laasonen, 1991; Murtorinne, 1992, 1995; Pirinen, 1991). Studies on other religions are less frequent and of more diverse quality. These include studies of the Catholic Church (Vuorela, 1989), the Orthodox Church (Ambrosius and Haapio, 1982; Piironen, 2002;

Purmonen, 1984), the Pentecostal Movement (Ahonen, 1994) and the Methodist Church (Elfving, 1981). Scholars of comparative religion have concentrated on pre-Christian religion (e.g., Siikala, 1992), non-official folk religiosity (e.g., Pentikäinen, 1990) and new religious movements (e.g., Ahlbäck, 1995). Archaeologists (e.g., Huurre, 2000), ethnologists (e.g., Talve, 1980) and historians (e.g., Palola, 1997) have occasionally touched on religious matters, but usually these have been short excursions into the field. While this literature lays the historical foundation for the present study, it is also open to criticism. Despite the extensive publications in the field, summarising efforts have been rare. Individual histories of certain movements or developments are often well documented, but the role of non-Lutheran and, especially, non-Christian developments has not been well integrated into the general history of religions. Since the role of immigration has become more important lately, it is also a good time to re-evaluate some earlier formulations. Furthermore, in historical studies the division between different eras is also one of scholarship and thus the focus between the eras shifts slightly from the point of view of church organisation towards more sociological perspectives through the centuries. The lack of a guiding perspective easily leads to the reproduction of the past in a non-theoretical and stereotypical way, especially by non-specialists.

Second, analyses of contemporary religion are, by and large, found in the works of church sociologists and scholars of anthropology and sociology of religion. The church sociologists have had almost a monopoly in the interpretation of mainstream religion in this country, as their main interest has been the role of the majority's church—the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland. For long the most prominent author was Harri Heino (1944-1999), who was the director of the Research Institute of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland and published regularly on various aspects on contemporary religion in Finland. Among the most significant publications are the four-year reports of the church edited by him, together with Heino's handbooks of religion in Finland (1985a, 1997). Other prominent, sociologically inspired authors include Tapio Lampinen (e.g., 1990),

Eino Murtorinne (e.g., 1992, 1995) and Jouko Sihvo (e.g., 1979). Beside these scholars the most prominent writer has been the sociologist Susan Sundback, who has written on many aspects of contemporary religion (e.g., 1988, 1991, 1994, 1996, 2000), but as she mainly writes in Swedish, her publications have received surprisingly little attention. However, her works of modernisation and secularisation in Finland are among the most interesting.

Scholars of comparative religion with their anthropological and sociological approaches have been less interested in mainstream religious culture, but have instead concentrated their efforts on more or less marginal and alternative phenomena. Within this research, new religious movements and alternative spirituality have been major themes (e.g., Holm, 1990; Holm, Suolinna and Ahlbäck, 1981; Junnonaho, 1996, 1999; Kaplan, 2000; Niemelä, 2001). The first wave of interest was in the 1980s and interest resurfaced again in the late 1990s. Now there is a whole new generation of young scholars in comparative religion interested in these issues. Recent studies have included works on neo-Hinduism (Ketola, 2000), neo-Paganism (Sjöblom, 2000), the New Age Movement (Ketola, 1999; Martikainen, forthcoming; Mikkola, 1999; Mikkonen, 2000, 2001) and the UFO movement (Närvä, 2001). A few researchers have also studied immigrant religious communities. The group that has received most attention are Muslims (Holm, 1993, 2000; Martikainen, 2000b, 2000c; Sakaranaho and Pesonen, 1999; Tiilikainen, 1999, 2001, 2003). However, most of the smaller immigrant groups have received only minor attention and thus there are significant gaps in our knowledge and a need for elementary ethnographic research among these communities.

A striking feature of research on contemporary religion is that the mainstream and alternative views have been mostly unaffected by each other. Rare exceptions have been Eila Helander's (1999) brief analysis of religion in post-war Finland and a fresh study on Finnish religiosity (Kääriäinen, Niemelä and Ketola, 2003). While the situation has its historical, practical and disciplinary reasons<sup>5</sup>, the case has quite likely disrupted many potentially fruitful efforts



at collaboration. One of the aims of this study is to bring to the foreground certain developments in contemporary religious life that have to do with immigrant religions and that have not been noted to a large extent in the existing research.

Third, studies on national cultural minorities combine aspects of historical studies and an interest in the contemporary age. The study of cultural minorities has taken place mostly on the margins of different disciplines and is not an established field of research as such, but for current purposes it can be seen as one distinct approach. Through recognising this perspective, we become more aware of the pitfalls in studying contemporary minorities. The traditional cultural minorities in Finland are the indigenous Saami people, Swedish-speakers, Roma, Jews and Tatar Muslims. Lately this group has grown to include Ingrians and Russians. Exemplary presentations of this field of research are *Suomi: Maa, kansa, kulttuurit* ("Finland: Land, People, Cultures") (Löytönen and Kolbe, 1999) and *Cultural Minorities in Finland* (Pentikäinen and Hiltunen, 1995). Several further studies of particular minorities have been conducted. These include studies on Jews (Illman and Harviainen, 1995; Lundgren, 2002), Tatar Muslims (Leitzinger, 1996) and the Swedish-speakers (Sundback, 1994).

Studies of cultural minorities represent them as part of the national heritage and cultural map. That perspective is very different compared to that through which the more recent immigrant communities are represented. The major difference here is that the so-called

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<sup>5</sup> While, on the one hand, church sociologists can often be criticised for not seeing the long-term importance of the quantitatively lesser developments, scholars of comparative religion, on the other hand, have showed surprisingly little interest in taking part in discussions on the Lutheran Church. In the latter case it seems that the discipline's identity has an "anti-theological" flavour beside the recognition of its own limited knowledge of Christianity in general and the Lutheran Church in particular. The question is no doubt more complex than as presented here, but in any case the situation has by no means been propitious for the analysis of contemporary religion in Finland.

cultural minorities are legitimated by the discourse of Finnishness while the new minorities are more often presented in the light of multiculturalism. This shows the political implications of the positioning of the new immigrants communities, which may have serious consequences for the groups in question. In one rising field of cultural minority studies the case is actually contested. As the Ingrians are at the same time an old national and a new immigrant minority, their status has become problematic. This means that some minorities are implicitly seen as more able to adapt to Finnish society than others. Furthermore, it also shows how the new minorities' position may change in the future.

Fourth, studies on multiculturalism, ethnicity and immigrant communities are a large and growing field. Prior to the 1990s, only a handful of researchers were interested in studying these issues and then mainly from the viewpoint of cultural minorities. As a consequence of the growing immigration, many scholars in different disciplines have become interested in studying immigration within a variety of academic traditions and this has led to a remarkable rise in the number of studies published in the field. While studies on ethnic relations and international migration have not been institutionalised to a large extent so far, we can already say that the basic form of national studies on the field has taken shape. Over the course of time its character has also become more specialised (Matinheikki-Kokko, 2002; Wahlbeck, 2003). An earlier field that is close to these studies is the study of Finnish emigration, where the lives of Finnish emigrants abroad have been studied, mostly in Sweden and the United States.

Prominent themes in multiculturalism research have been the following: *ethnic relations, integration and multiculturalism* (e.g., Jaakkola, 1995; Jasinskaja-Lahti and Liebkind, 1997; Liebkind, 2000; Schulman and Kanninen, 1997; Wahlbeck, 1999; Åström, 1995); *ethnicity and the labour market* (e.g., Forsander, 2002; Forsander et al., 2001; Trux, 2000); and *ethnic minorities* (e.g., Pentikäinen and Hiltunen, 1995). With regard to ethnic minorities, some in particular have received more attention than others: these

include Ingrians (e.g., Jasinskaja-Lahti and Liebkind, 2000) and Somalis (e.g., Lilius, 2001; Tiilikainen, Axmed and Lilius, 2001). As many of the published works are article collections, there is also a large mixture of the above-mentioned orientations in the publications.

There are four features of this new body of research that are of relevance here. First, it is to a large extent problem-oriented so that it concentrates mainly on the problems with regard to immigrants' experiences of exile, their inability to enter the labour market and racism. This is partly explained by the practical, socio-political or socio-psychological nature of many studies and by the real existing anxieties. Criticism can be directed towards the sometimes paternalistic attitude that turns immigrants into objects of care and sees them as helpless puppets in a hostile environment. This brings us close to the danger of cultural essentialism, where group properties become the central feature in analysis. Second, while the larger ethnic groups or nationalities have often been extensively studied, many others remain unmapped territory. This produces an unbalanced picture of the whole immigrant scene and can lead to misrepresentation of the situation. For example, in Forsander et al. (2001) the description of contemporary ethnic minorities in Finland includes more thorough presentations of Vietnamese, Somalis, Russians, Estonians and Ingrians, while others only receive a brief mention. The groups discussed are the largest communities, but they do not present the whole picture. Third, for the most part religion plays only a minor role in this type of research. This is partly due to the common neglect of religion in social sciences, but also from the questions posed. Fourth, at the same time as the researchers are studying the groups, they are also actively creating them, sometimes contrary to the self-understanding of the people in question. For example, the fact that we have immigrants from the same nation-state or religious tradition does not make them a community. Therefore, the scholar should bear in mind what consequences the study has on this plane (see section 1.4.4).

Fifth, studies on local religious fields, beside the Religious Field in Turku project, have been conducted in small number. Local histories usually include a chapter on local religious life through the centuries, but these are of limited value, with the exception of *Turun kaupungin historia* (“the History of the City of Turku”), which is an eleven-volume history of the city. One interesting study of urban religious organisations is Paavo Kortekangas’s (1965) study of the effects of urbanisation on local religious life at the turn of the twentieth century in the city of Tampere. Susan Sundback (1987) conducted a sociological study of religious life in the city of Vaasa, but it gives few references to immigrant experiences of religion in Finland, as the theme was not yet topical. The Research Institute of the Lutheran Church has also published two reports on the religious life in Helsinki (Heino, 1984) and Tampere (Heino, 1985b), but these were published before the wave of new immigration to Finland.

### **1.2.3 Assessment**

The motivation for the description of the national background of the research has been that of positioning this study in a living scholarly context, as well as to point out directions for the current initiative. It should have become clear that there exists a large background towards which I can confidently direct my own efforts. Therefore I can leave certain issues on the level of statements, as they have been dealt with extensively elsewhere. However, there are also gaps that need to be filled and questions of emphasis that, at least, deserve rethinking.

While many immigrant communities have been extensively studied, there are still many others that have not. As my aim is to analyse the whole immigrant religious field in Turku, it therefore becomes necessary to place emphasis on some minor developments that have not previously been considered elsewhere. More important, though, is the fact that the immigrant *religious* organisations have not been studied to a large extent. Thus, a main motivation for the study is to find fruitful directions to promote research on immigrant religious

organisations that are changing the current national religious field. A similar interest of mapping the immigrant scene can be seen both in other European countries (e.g., Baumann, 2000; Mortensen and Fibiger, 2002) and in the United States of America (e.g., Eck, 2001).

At the moment it is quite difficult to estimate what Finland's ethnic composition will be like in ten or twenty years' time. It seems, however, that immigration will continue and the number of immigrants will rise, especially if the country's economy prospers. Finland faces an extensive number of people retiring from the labour market during the next ten to fifteen years, when the large post-war generation will end their working lives. A major scenario includes a more active and open immigration policy, quite likely from countries nearby, such as Russia and Estonia. Furthermore, by joining the European Union in 1995 Finland has taken steps to open its doors to European migrants. Even the global refugee and asylum seeker flows seem to be more often directed to Finland than before. Bearing this scenario in mind, it should be obvious that the role and number of immigrant-origin religious organisations will grow in the future. Therefore this development should be analysed from its beginnings as well as followed up subsequently.

### **1.3 Source material**

The lack of elementary research on immigrant religious organisations has been the major reason why they have not been given the place they deserve in the study of contemporary religion in Finland. Therefore, and in order to better the situation, those interested in the issues have been forced to do elementary ethnographic fieldwork on these new organisations. In the adventurous spirit of exploring this hitherto unknown territory, the present study is also to a large extent based on first-hand ethnographic material gathered from local religious organisations, especially immigrant congregations. These include several in-depth, focused ethnographic interviews. I call this material *the interview material*. Further, I have used a more diverse corpus of official documents, newspaper cuttings, statistics

and academic studies, which I call *the literary material*. This group also includes leaflets and other printed material that I received during the interviews. The literary source material adds to the interview material and is in a more prominent position in certain case studies and in chapter three, which is almost entirely based on existing academic studies. Next, I shall present these principal sources in more detail.

### **1.3.1 Interview material**

The interview material consists of semistructured, focused ethnographic interviews. The background for the interview material is already present in the interviews that I conducted during the mapping of the local religious field in 1995 and 1996. It provided me with a fairly good idea of the local religious organisations and their leading personalities as well as giving elementary data about their activities. Thus it was much easier later to choose and make contact with the groups in question. The interviews used in this study were conducted in four different phases. First, during the spring of 1998 I was preparing a conference paper on Muslim groups in Turku and interviewed several people in the city involved with the local Muslim organisations and a mosque-building project. The paper was later published as an article in the *Journal for Muslim Minority Affairs* (Martikainen, 2000b). Second, during the spring of 1999 I twice interviewed, together with Anna Rustén, the leader of the local Mandaean community, as part of Rustén's seminar project. Third, during the autumn of 2000 I prepared an article on Muslims in Finland (Martikainen, 2000c) and also contacted local organisations about their activities. Parts of these were conducted by telephone. Fourth, the final interviews were conducted in the winter of 2002-2003. There was one general, thematic scheme that I followed in the interviews, although it was applied individually in each case (see Appendix). Altogether, this corpus includes circa 70 interviews and they provide the empirical base for my study. All the recorded interviews have been transcribed and on all others there are written notes.

A list of these interviews is to be found in section 7.1 with details whom I have interviewed, when the interview was conducted and which organisation does the person in question represent.

### 1.3.2 Literary material

During the research process I gathered and received an ever-accumulating mass of literary material. This material is invaluable as it offers insights and alternative viewpoints into issues that are not evident in the interview material. While the literary material is indeed multifaceted, it can be divided into certain subcategories. First, during the interviews the organisations in question handed me additional material of different kinds. These included newsletters, leaflets, brochures, booklets and printed texts. Second, to a lesser extent I used official documents from the city council and demographic data from, for example, the Turku magistracy and Statistics Finland. These illuminate cases where the organisations have been in touch with local authorities and provide basic demographic data. Third, a number of leaflets, magazine articles and reports have come from local and national authorities and voluntary associations working with immigrant questions. This helped me to stay tuned with topical issues with regard to the integration of immigrants and the third sector in general. An example of this kind is the *MoniTori* magazine, which is a journal specialising in immigration issues published by the Ministry of Labour. Fourth, I have followed closely writings on religion in the local newspapers *Turun Sanomat*, *Turkulainen* and *Aamuset* since 1996 and have cut out many articles, debates and advertisements during the years.<sup>6</sup> This corpus also includes the Lutheran freely distributed tabloid, *Kirkko ja Me*, which is the main information channel of the local Lutheran parish union. The local

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<sup>6</sup> I followed the local Swedish-language newspaper *Åbo Underrättelser* only sporadically, but the above-mentioned Finnish-language newspapers are the most important local newspapers that also have the largest local circulation. Fortunately my colleagues at the department have kept me informed on many issues dealt with in *Åbo Underrättelser*.

newspapers have been my main source of information in forming a better idea which issues related to immigrants have become of interest to the general public. Fifth, a large number of academic studies have provided the base for the discussion of various issues presented in the study. The historical part of the study, chapter three, is almost entirely based on earlier studies, but these play a significant role in many other parts as well. Altogether, the literary material highlights many issues from new perspectives and has given a voice to those with whom I have not been personally in touch. It has also helped me to stay more up-to-date with many issues that have been outside my main research interest and to place my effort in a national, scholarly tradition.

## 1.4 Methods

Different methods are the ways in which the source material is applied—and in the case of ethnographic fieldwork, also created—so that the questions of the study can be answered. As this study is, to a large extent, based on empirical material, mostly interviews, the questions of field methodology are central. Fieldwork guides often present a coherent, step-by-step model, which the researcher is supposed to follow in matters of material-gathering and methodology, but the reality is often something quite different. In many cases the written field methodology is an ideal reconstruction of what has actually happened. This is commonly acknowledged (see Vidich and Lyman, 2000: 37-40) and also true with regard to the material-gathering and field methodology of this study. The following is a reconstruction of that process. It is best read as a description of the elementary features that I have tried to follow and not as a direct replica of the process. The term ‘researcher-as-methodological-*bricoleur*’ is one that suits this study well, as I have used several formal as well as informal methods, which are elaborated in the following section. After discussing the methods, I shall consider what limitations and what potential the source material presents. In the end of this section, I will discuss issues related to the role of re-



researcher, the ethics of the study as well as its possible political implications.

### 1.4.1 Fieldwork

To start with, I have lived in my ‘field’ most of my life and followed local religious developments more closely since the early 1990s. However, even though I am part of the ‘field’ in a broad sense, in the local immigrant milieu I am still an outsider and observer. Reading local newspapers, exchanging words with congregational activists on the street or meeting them in seminars as well as listening to the occasional gossip, are examples of how I interact with the field on an almost day-to-day basis. During my post-graduate years I have also become known as somebody who studies local religious groups and I have been interviewed on several occasions in the local media, written a couple of popular articles and given talks at different meetings. In other words, I am a part of the local religious scene as a commentator, observer and sometimes participant. With regard to most of my informants, the role of a local university researcher is the position where I find myself when doing fieldwork. I have also got to know some of my informants quite well, even on a more personal level. The situation provides me with a lot of *contextual data* that is difficult to pin down directly, but which is essential for a broader understanding of the field (see Fontana and Frey, 2000, 652-654). It also gives me a basis for discussing matters with local informants on issues which I know from elsewhere they have been occupied with.

Keeping this background in mind, let us turn to the central field method—*focused ethnographic interviewing*—that I have used. Focused ethnographic interviewing combines elements from focused or thematic and ethnographic interviewing (Hirsjärvi and Hurme, 2001: 47-48, 160-161, 173). They are focused in the sense that the researcher asks mostly predetermined questions and ethnographic in the sense that they are part of a larger fieldwork project, which dwells on the issues from several different angles. This type of in-

terviewing is also commonly referred to as semistructured, open-ended interviewing (Hirsjärvi and Hurme, 2001: 47). The interviews provide the empirical basis for chapters four and five.

The corpus has been collected mainly in personal, face-to-face situations and, in certain exceptional cases, by telephone. Usually I have conducted only one interview with the person in question. I had contacted the informant previously by phone and arranged the meeting on their premises, if possible. In practice, the interviews were conducted in various places, including my office at the department, informants' homes and localities of the congregations, depending on the situation. At the beginning of the formal interviews I explained the purpose of my study and tried to make its objectives as clear as possible. I considered it of the uttermost importance that the informants had a good idea of my research, because that led the discussion more easily to the questions in which I was interested and it also ensured that we were dealing on equal terms as far as possible. The discussion topics were predetermined, but additional questions were also asked, if it seemed necessary. The questions included inquiries about the number of participants, members, immigrant presence and various other aspects of the organisation's activity in Turku (see Appendix). The interviews were either recorded or I made notes during the interview. The notes or the transcript were in all cases sent to the informant, who then had the opportunity to comment. In some cases the notes or the transcript were changed to some extent in the process. Every now and then I also received additional information by telephone or e-mail after the initial interview.

The majority of the issues were not controversial or sensitive to the informants and relatively easy to answer, but some issues were considered more difficult. For instance, in larger organisations it was often difficult for the informant to remember in detail about the activities he or she was not in regular touch with, or to be precise about church attendance and the like. In these cases I often received more information later on, if such was available. Also personal relations in some organisations appeared to be sensitive issues. Occa-

sionally I was even told about issues that should not become public, but which the informant reasoned would be important for me to know. I guaranteed the informants' anonymity if they so wished, but most of them did not consider that necessary. During my interviews I received literary material on several occasions, including different publications, newsletters and statistics.

My informants were mainly leaders and activists within the local religious organisations. The reason for this is simple. I was interested in the activities of the organisations and considered the leaders and other activists to be the best representatives of their groups. While this might lead to a certain bias and silence some critical voices, I did not find it too limiting. I received additional information on many congregations from a number of sources and took it into consideration if necessary. This was also a practical decision. If my study subject had been a single group or a few congregations, it would have been easier to include more voices in the presentation. I am aware that in some cases my understanding has certainly been guided towards a more officially approved view, but I see it more as a necessary limitation of broad comparative studies, than as a major methodological problem as such.

Language skills were also one factor in choosing or getting to know the informants. The discussions were mostly conducted in Finnish and to a lesser extent in English and Swedish, all languages in which I am more or less fluent. Obviously not all immigrants have very high skills in these languages, so this was one potential source of misunderstandings. In these cases I relied on my judgement on how reliable the material was. Interpreters were used only in exceptional cases, partly because they are expensive and partly because I do prefer to talk directly to the persons in question. Using interpreters also makes the practical arrangements more complex and vulnerable to change.

My fieldwork period was long and it has lasted from 1998 until spring 2003, with intermittently more active periods. The reason for this is that it took a long time before the theoretical framework was ready, and I did not want to conduct certain parts before that. Even

though it was quite stressful to wait to begin these parts, I do feel the choice was correct. In the end, the remaining part of the fieldwork was done quite rapidly, partly because I had already dwelt on the issues for many years and had a feel for what was waiting in the field. The fieldwork continued long after the field contacts. During the more intensive fieldwork periods I kept notes on the interviews, recorded them and wrote a summary of the meetings soon afterwards. These were invaluable in recalling the situation more vividly than simply questions and answers. I tried to keep a field diary proper, but did not find it practical.

### **1.4.2 After the field**

Methodological choices do not end with the fieldwork. The main material in my use during the writing process was different kinds of texts: transcribed interviews, interview notes, leaflets and other diverse, textual material, alongside the various academic studies as well as statistics. To start with, the empirical material is not just texts. It is also memories and feelings of encounters with people I met and talked with. The empirical material superseded the mere textual level. It had a context that I have been a part of. The same applies to many other textual documents, such as newspaper articles, as I personally know many of the people and the events that are written about, and I have heard additional information on them. This *contextual knowledge* of being a part of the field leads my interpretations, insights and judgement. It provides the basis for my discussion on the matter. However, even though that is important, it is not enough. Solely relying on one's intuition and contextual knowledge may lead to a failure to recognise one's methodological premises.

Interpretative qualitative research on texts, such as interviews, can adapt at least two different analytic approaches, the *realist* and the *narrative*. The realist approach is based on the "assumption that the interview responses index some sort of external reality" (Silverman, 2000: 823), which means that the answers refer to actual happenings and are descriptions of reality that the researcher

then interprets with theoretical analysis. The narrative approach, however, claims that instead of receiving true visions of reality, the stories should be seen more as plausible accounts and cultural stories. This type of analysis sees the texts as narratives that are plausible but not 'true' representations of the world as such. Both of the approaches are widely used, but the realist view in particular has been the target of criticism, because of its implicit or explicit claim that the texts are indeed true accounts of reality. For my part, I still adopt the realist approach as I see the difference between the approaches more in the different practical goals than in the plausibility of research. For this study's theoretical interests the realist approach is suitable, while the case might be the opposite in a different setting.

The basis for the interview analysis is grounded on a realist reading of the focused ethnographic interviews and understood through the contextual knowledge provided by the fieldwork. The interview questions were originally formulated to correspond to the theoretical framework as described in the following chapter. The actual analysis is based on a comparative approach, where answers from different interviews are thematically considered together and interpreted through the theoretical perspectives as explained in the next chapter. I call this method *theory-based, comparative ethnographical analysis*. The name refers to the discursive nature of analysis, where both the theory and the fieldwork provide the ground for analysis. Theoretical notions guide the analysis in the first place but in the analytical phase the theory is tested and modified according to the data. Thus, this study follows more closely the *inductive* rather than the deductive approach within qualitative research.

With regard to the historical part of the study, I have in many cases relied on general accounts of the history of religions in Finland. This can be justified by the fact that the general features of history of interest in this study are already mostly well researched, and majority of them are not controversial issues. Specialist literature has been searched in those issues where necessary. In the historical chapter I will apply a framework presented in the latter part

of section 2.1.4, which looks at the spatio-temporal and organisational attributes of global interconnectedness, including migrations and transnational connections. However, as the current study looks at the historical developments from a different point of view than much of literature available, it is clear that the framework cannot be applied to its fullest and I had to rely on those facts which were available. To what extent this caused difficulties is discussed in the end of the historical chapter.

### **1.4.3 Remarks on the material**

With regard to all source material, it is necessary to ask questions about its reliability and validity, even though these concepts were originally created for quantitative research and are somewhat problematic in qualitative research (Hirsjärvi and Hurme, 2001: 185-190). Even though reliability and validity are not straightforward matters, and they vary remarkably with each individual piece of data, some general statements can be made. While I have attempted to gather the material listening to the pulse of the field, my field methods and other factors still necessarily affect such material; such as from whom and in what conditions it has been collected.

Reliability refers to what extent the same results can be duplicated by a different researcher, using different methods or doing the same research anew. As every interview is a unique situation and people's opinions change over time, the issue of reliability in qualitative studies is not the same as in other types of research. It is more about the researcher's capability to create trustworthy explanations that correspond to the informant's views at the time of the interview than a possible reproduction of informant's views at any particular time and place. With regard to reliability, one should not forget the possibility of misunderstandings and conscious misguidance. I have tried to bypass these issues by at least double-checking central matters and relied on my knowledge on the immigrant scene on the whole. The more informed I have been on a matter in general, the more difficult it is to make wrong conclusions in specific cases.

Furthermore, in uncertain situations I have been able to confirm my views from other sources or by asking the person anew. For instance, organisation leaders often have the tendency to overestimate their membership. In such cases different population statistics and a closer examination of what is meant with membership or with people affiliated to the organisation has often reduced the number. Thus, different ways of creating trustworthy explanations or interpretations have been used, including double-checking and combining data from different sources.

With regard to the representativity of my material I assume that it highlights well the general situation in Turku. I have included almost all the immigrant religious organisations in the city of Turku. While most local religious organisations have indeed been interviewed, I was not able to create a link with one of the local Shia mosques. They told me on the telephone that they are not interested in this type of research, and said that they have the same type of activities as in the other mosque and advised me to talk with them. With regard to this group, I only have second-hand information and I have restricted myself to merely mentioning some basic information. Furthermore, with regard to a small section of Christian associations and alternative religious organisations I have based my views on my earlier research, as there did not appear to be any immigrants involved. However, all congregations have been approached and no major actors that have activities directed at immigrants have remained outside of this study, as far as I am aware of.

Regarding the informants, I have listened more to the voices of organisation leaders than other members, which has undoubtedly produced some bias. Still, I consider that on the level of organisations the leaders represent the official ethos that is also central when they interact with each other or with the authorities. On the level of individual members the situation might be different, but that is another matter. In my material there exists a definite gender bias. Most of my informants have been male and often middle-aged or older. This reflects my choice of informants, many of whom have been leading figures in congregations, and, as often is the case, the public

sphere is male-dominated. Furthermore, it was strengthened due to the fact that many immigrant communities have more patriarchal gender roles than is customary in Finnish society. Women's religious activities also take place more often outside the official setting of the immigrants' congregations and thus they are not as prominent in my presentation as they otherwise could be. However, in my interpretation, the gender bias reflects more the existing local reality in religious organisations than a methodological flaw. If the viewpoint had been immigrants' private religious lives, the role of women would certainly have been much larger, if not dominant (see Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2000: 391; Tiilikainen, 2003).

Comparing Turku with other Finnish cities could be more problematic. Turku is, in the national setting, a large immigrant centre and more developed in immigrant issues. Still, even though local circumstances always vary, the general organisational and cultural climate in the country is fairly homogeneous. Immigration is also quite recent and local practices have been to a large extent guided from above (for example, the Ministry of Labour) and the national administrative tradition also favours similar strategies in different localities, which is a typical feature of the Nordic welfare states. However, different religious organisations are more prominent in different localities and this is perhaps a more significant factor. For example, there are proportionally many more Iraqi refugees and fewer Somalis in Turku than in some other cities.

The validity of the research setting regards whether the material answers the questions posed. Are the central concepts related to the subject of the study? Is the study logically constructed and undertaken, and do the arguments hold? How much can one generalise from the data? The validity of my reasoning is in the hands of the reader and open to debate, but I have tried to be clear on my standpoints and on theoretical formulations, so that the relationship between the data and the reasoning is clear. Obviously the nature of ethnographic research is a much debated issue and far from unproblematic, but I have attempted to create a setting that is both valid and open to inspection. Altogether, I have taken into account



the restrictions the material poses, and consider it trustworthy and reliable enough to form the basis for the current initiative.

As this study is conducted in a mostly Finnish and, to a lesser extent, Swedish-language environment, and this thesis is written in English, a note on the principle of translation is necessary. I have used the official English translation of the name of the religious organisation if such was available. Otherwise I have translated the name myself. In all cases the original name is given, at least, when the group is mentioned for the first time. Regarding place-names and the like, I have systematically used their Finnish names, and in some cases given their Swedish equivalent, if it was of importance.

#### **1.4.4 Self-positioning and ethical considerations**

While a significant feature of academic study is the capacity for self-reflection and for distancing oneself from the study object as well as having sympathy for it, the role of the researcher has become an area of active debate in ethnographical and anthropological circles over the last decades (e.g., Anttonen, 1999: 23-29). I do not have the illusion that my personality and appearance has not affected my research, and thus I feel it is worthwhile to remind the reader who the writer actually is. I approve of the tradition of the self-positioning of the researcher and I will give a short presentation of my background, which in various ways has certainly affected this study.

I was born the second child of three in a university educated family in Turku in 1971. I was raised both in Turku and, to a lesser extent, in the German City of Göttingen due to my father's work abroad. As my father was a Lutheran priest and later a professor of theology, I was naturally socialised into the Lutheran faith as well as into an academic milieu. Religion was a natural part of family life, even though I have not been religiously active in my adult life. During my time in Germany I was forced to experience being an outsider in a foreign community and feel that this has given me insights into otherness that have affected my later thought. I have also spent

longer or shorter periods going to school, studying and working in several North European countries, so that I am familiar with a certain type of cosmopolitan everyday life.

It was due to family background and personal reasons that I ended up studying comparative religion at the University of Turku in 1992. Beside comparative religion, I took courses in Russian, geography, philosophy and economics. While for a time uncertain about where to direct my studies, it was by chance in 1995 that a religious mapping project of Turku was offered to me. I finished my master's studies in 1996, after which I moved to the Åbo Akademi University as I was offered financial support there to start my doctoral studies. From that time on, my interest has slowly moved towards contemporary religiosity and immigrant religions. During my post-graduate years I have also studied sociology. The experience of working in a minority-language academic milieu has opened my eyes to the multicultural nature of Finnish society, which is far from obvious in a Finnish-language background. I feel that the experience has been very transformative in my personal relation to minorities in Finland and opened up a new sensitivity to minority issues.

As for my personal life, I have not been active in religious or immigrant matters, unlike many people who study these things. My relationship towards religious activities is in general that of an interested outsider rather than an active participant. I feel sympathy for immigrant communities and for the cause of voluntary associations and others that try to better their conditions in Finland, but have not taken steps to work actively with them. My surplus energy has found itself manifested in active sportsmanship, mainly Japanese martial arts, which has also brought an awareness and some knowledge of the cultural other and of different ways of seeing the world.

Being a white male and representative of a state institution naturally places me on the side of the majority culture. This becomes especially obvious when I study non-European immigrant religious organisations. From the organisation's viewpoint I can be conceived as a threat, neutral or as an opportunity for the community and its

cause, and I have also felt all of these attitudes during my research. Furthermore, by studying minority organisations in Finnish society it becomes difficult to avoid positioning oneself along pro or contra lines with regard to immigration questions and policies. This means on a personal level that this study has been as much a study of my society and my values as of the more abstract meeting of cultural traditions.

No research is value-free, neutral and without possible consequences in the society where it is conducted (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000: 6). Beside myself, the study process and its possible consequences have also touched, and might continue to touch, the lives of many other people, individuals and groups. Beside the pragmatic textbook solutions for protecting the integrity and safety of informants that have been taken into account as described earlier, other serious issues of research ethics also exist. These have mainly to do with the possible implications of this and other academic studies for the immigrant communities in Finland.

While my research interest is based on the issues raised in the theoretical literature as well as on my own observations and, even though I regard my own efforts more as an academic study than an emancipatory project, I am nevertheless part of the ongoing debate on immigrant minorities in Finland. Academic studies often try to deconstruct the stereotypical images of immigrants in the media, but at the same time they are part of the game. Academic researchers need to legitimate their work and study subject, and that is very difficult to do in solely academic terms. Thus, at the same as I am studying the immigrants I am also creating images and opinions on them. Even the use of the word ‘immigrant’ positions my study subject within an already defined field and presupposes the existence of non-immigrants, that is ‘native Finns’.

To talk and write about immigrants strengthens the view that this group of people exists and that the ‘immigrant nature’ is the defining character of it. On the one hand, real social boundaries between different groups exist—based on ethnicity, religion, language and the like, although on the other hand these boundaries are seldom

fixed and constant. The immigrants themselves may or may not want to emphasise these boundaries and base their identity on them. Researchers, for their part, can accept the situation or start deconstructing and challenging it. Let us take an example: many Muslim organisations in Finland emphasise the unity of all Muslims in the world as well in this country. Researchers then challenge this view based on the common knowledge that Islam is indeed a multifaceted religion and even Muslims in Finland are a diverse group representing many traditions within the world religion of Islam. How is one to understand the situation? The Muslims' reactions are based, on the one hand, on a pan-Islamic rhetoric and, on the other hand, they are a safety measure against outside pressure of the view of 'Islam the evil, terrorist religion'. Both parties are working on a legitimate basis and with good intentions to defend their position, but the debate may cause stress to the Muslims in question as their safety barrier is collapsing, while researchers are satisfied that not all Muslims are seen as one homogeneous group. The example shows that different pragmatic interests may cause unwelcome results.

Issues related to immigration and to immigrant's integration into Finnish society are highly political and arouse deep emotions. As a researcher I thus need to be aware of the possible consequences of my study subject. With my studies I am a part of the process of creating images of immigrant groups and positioning them in Finnish society. This is a challenge to be taken seriously and with care. While there are no ways of foreseeing all the possible consequences of the research, one should be careful enough to listen to anxieties and be honest enough to present the platform on which one stands as clearly as possible. As a final remark before entering the study, I would like to remind the reader that the thesis in their hands is as much an attempt to describe and analyse reality as the creation of a new reality with possible consequences.

## 2

# Globalisation, Local Society and Religion

The aim of this chapter is to explain and clarify the theoretical framework and concepts used in this study. As suggested in the previous chapter, the purpose of the study is to describe and analyse, from a globalisation perspective, the processes of immigrant religious organisation in the local religious field in the city of Turku. For my part, this means a widening of the previous, mainly descriptive knowledge of the local religious field in Turku. My background in mapping the local religions produced a number of unsolved problems, which did not seem to be comprehensible in the framework of the local society or the nation. For example, in which ways do transnational contacts provide resources for local immigrant congregations and to what extent do congregations attempt to use these connections? In this regard, the recent globalisation debate has provided many insights, which I attempt to incorporate into an understanding of the local religious field. This means an emphasis on the transnational aspects of local religious life. Such an approach permits an emphasis on certain trends which would not be comprehensible in a purely national setting.

The globalisation debate started in the 1980s and expanded tremendously during the 1990s. Now, after the turn of the third millen-

nium, globalisation is a buzzword in the social sciences and a widely used slogan in the media and politics. The discussion is today pursued in most human and social sciences, and even in some natural sciences. Major contributors to the sociological debate include Arjun Appadurai (1996), Peter Beyer (1994), Mike Featherstone (1990, 1995) and Ronald Robertson (1990, 1992, 1995). A recent six-volume compilation—*Globalization: Critical Concepts in Sociology*—edited by Robertson and White (2003) provides a picture of the diversity of interest that the debate has created. The article collection includes texts on themes such as international relations, citizenship, human rights, gender, religion and culture. The cross-disciplinary nature of the debate is, as a matter of fact, a distinctive feature of globalisation theory.

Globalisation theory is not, however, a unified set of theoretical formulations and insights, but rather a matter of academic debate, including opposing views and opinions. The theory is also of fairly recent origin, so that there are many unexplored arenas, which make it an exciting and rewarding, but challenging, mode of thought. My purpose is not to try to make sense of the debate itself or of all its offshoots, but I will instead use the theoretical literature as a guide in identifying important topics and in creating an analytical framework for the current purpose. Different views on various matters are presented when necessary, but the focus is in linking the global and the local in a way that allows the religious field in Turku to show the ways in which it is connected to religious life beyond the national plane. The following section starts with a lengthy presentation of the globalisation process, as that provides the broad interpretative scheme of the study. After that it moves on to look at local society as a scene for globalisation and continues to discuss religion and immigration in the contemporary world.

## **2.1 Globalisation**

Sociology as a science has since its early days been preoccupied with the universal features of human societies and cultures: an inter-

est that is also at the core of the contemporary globalisation debate. However, current globalisation theorists claim that their view of social life and change is distinct from the earlier formulations of various modernisation theories. Still, it is obvious that globalisation theory, or theories to be more precise, arise to a large extent from discussions of modernity (Robertson, 1992: 8-24; Featherstone and Lash, 1995: 1).

The historical relationship between modernisation and globalisation is also a question of active debate. Malcolm Waters (1995: 4) has found three different perspectives on the issue. First, globalisation has been taking place since the early stages of human history, but it has accelerated recently. Globalisation precedes modernisation, even though there are important connections. This is approximately the view held by Roland Robertson (1992). Secondly, globalisation is contemporaneous with modernisation and capitalism, but it has accelerated recently. Thus, modernisation and globalisation are closely related phenomena or globalisation is a part of modernisation. An example of a theorist in this line is Anthony Giddens (1990). Thirdly, globalisation is a recent phenomenon and contemporaneous with postmodernisation, postindustrialisation and the disorganisation of capitalism. Thus, globalisation is seen as a successor to modernisation. Examples of such theorists are Martin Albrow (1996) and John Eade (1997a).

It is obvious that many central features of globalisation theories—including cross-cultural trade, mission and other contacts—precede the modern era, but it is debatable to what extent these can be called ‘globalisation’. However, these aspects of premodern societies can be seen as predecessors to globalisation, as exemplified in *Global Transformations* (Held et al., 1999), which studies the phenomenon in a historical perspective. In this study these premodern, transcultural connections will also be taken into account, even though it will be left open to debate whether they represent ‘globalisation’ as such.

### 2.1.1 Definitions

The main idea of globalisation theory is to introduce a transnational or global level of analysis to supplement the previous local, national and regional planes. In fact, economic, political and cultural relations can be studied on different analytical spatio-temporal planes, and globalisation refers to the widest processes linking together different localities, states, regions and, ultimately, the whole globe. The notion also implies that the society of a nation-state is no longer seen as the optimal functional unity in which social changes should be studied and that even though the nation-states are important, their role is changing (Featherstone and Lash, 1995: 1).

This study will follow the line of Roland Robertson's understanding of globalisation. For him,

[g]lobalization as a concept refers both to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole. (1992: 8)

The central argument is that globalisation has brought about the realisation that societies and cultures are essentially and inseparably interlinked.<sup>7</sup> The realisation is related to 'the compression of the world', which refers to various cultural, technological, economic and political ways in which the world has become a more unified place. The implications of this definition will be discussed shortly.

Alongside 'globalisation' there are a number of other related concepts that need to be defined. First, a distinction between *global*, *globality*, *globalism* and *globalisation* is useful. Global refers to the planet Earth or the globe: for example, a globally known person. Globality is a condition. Globalism is an ideology. Globalisation is a process. This distinction is applicable to other terms as well: for example, modern, nation and region. Second, there are concepts that are related to the discussion of the global, but have distinct mean-

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<sup>7</sup> For the development of the idea of humankind as one community, see Kilminster 1997.



ings. These concepts are to be understood on a national-global axis. *National* refers to independent processes inside a nation-state. *Regions* refer to

the geographical or functional clustering of states and societies. Such regional clusters can be identified in terms of their shared characteristics (cultural, religious, ideological, economic, etc.) and high level of patterned interaction relative to the outside world. (Held et al., 1999: 15, footnote 2)

However, regions may equally well refer to specific areas in nation-states. *International* refers to processes and actions between nation-states. *Multinational* refers to actors that are based in two or more nation-states, but which are highly dependent on these states: for example, multinational companies. *Transnational* refers to processes that still have some national connections, but which also are largely independent of them: for example, non-governmental organisations and new social movements. *Global* refers to processes, in which the role of the nation-states has effectively ceased and which are global in scope. Within this terminology most international religious actors could be best described as ‘transnational’.

### **2.1.2 The arenas of globalisation**

Now that globalisation has been defined, it is time to move on to the realms in which the changes are taking place. A widely used categorisation to understand social life is to divide it into three functional arenas: economy, polity and culture (Waters, 1995: 7; Alasuutari and Ruuska, 1999). The arenas are structurally relatively independent of each other and their absolute influence on social life may vary in time and space. Still, changes in any of the arenas may cause important alterations in the preconditions of the other arenas. This is, however, by no means necessary (Waters, 1995: 8). Globalisation studies in each of the arenas are to some extent independent of each

other, even though various attempts to unify different perspectives have been made (for instance, Held et al., 1999).

First, the study of globalisation and the global economy is a major strand in the debate. The global integration into a more or less unified world economy has been a long historical process, which has needed many organisational and technological innovations, especially in transport and communication. The emergence of nation-state structures has given a political framework for economic negotiations on global trade.<sup>8</sup> The origin of global trade is often related to the colonisation of the Americas, beginning in the fifteenth century. Thereafter, it gradually developed into a forerunner of current capitalist world economy and had its first 'Golden Age' at the turn of the twentieth century. The post-war division into East and West and the emerging Cold War divided the world into economic camps, even though the capitalist West was *de facto* more powerful. The post-communist era has seen a rapid spread of capitalist economy and ideology to almost every corner of the world. The major economic powers in the contemporary world are the United States of America, the European Union and Japan. World trade is organised from *global cities* that are the nuclei of the world's financial markets (Waters, 1995: 65-95).

The study of the globalised market economy has been at the centre of the globalisation debate. The reason for this is quite simple. Western transnational companies have immense economic and political power in the contemporary world. Another noteworthy development is the growing interdependency of nations, so that international agreements on trade have become extremely important as well as controversial. The relative political power of nation-states has declined and many international organisations and individual nation-states have started to question their role in the international distribution and execution of power. Also, several national and transnational political activists, organisations and researchers have

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<sup>8</sup> It has been argued that the emergence of nation-states is in itself a result of globalisation (for instance; Robertson 1992: 58).

reacted negatively to the rising power of transnational companies and to the change in the balance of power.

Important topics in the literature on the globalisation of the economy have been questions related to world trade, the international division of labour, multinational enterprises, organisational innovations, global financial markets, migrant labour and transnational classes. All these have specific consequences, for instance, for the spread of social welfare and globalisation of religion. These changes may be culturally indirect (new technology) as well as direct (new immigrant minorities). The changes are typically multidimensional, complex and contradictory, so that their effects can be best understood from specific case studies. However, the importance of the global economy is essential in large, as well as in small-scale, structural and cultural change (Waters, 1995: 65-95). According to Kasvio and Nieminen (1998:5), Finland has become increasingly intertwined in the global economy fairly recently, but this has brought about major structural changes with regard to, for instance, the movement of capital and organisation of production. That Finland joined the European Union in 1995 is understood as an attempt to balance these effects.

Second, the study of global politics has been the second largest area of research. During the last two hundred or so years the world has been organised into nation-states, which, in principle, have political sovereignty over their territory and population. At the dawn of the twenty-first century the nation-states function as a global, interdependent economic-political community. Countries that are for some reason separated from this unity or try to be independent of it are, more or less, in trouble. The global interconnectedness is a situation taken for granted and includes, for example, certain codes of diplomatic behaviour and a degree of respect for particular legislative systems. In this context, somewhat paradoxically, the central question of the globalisation of polity debate has been the future of the nation-state (Waters, 1995: 96-123).

National politics have become meaningful in a new way in the globalised condition. Both the politico-economic interdependence

of states and the spread of democratic ideology, which is connected to western economic hegemony, combined with rising ecological, consumer and political consciousness in the world as a whole, has brought certain issues to the fore. For example, questions of global ecological problems, human rights and inequalities in the spread of welfare have led to a questioning of the role and integrity of sovereign states. International agreements between states are the first level of the self-regulatory global system, but in certain cases military intervention has been motivated, for example, by human right issues, even though the true intentions might have been purely economic. All this means that nation-states have to take into account, more than before, the ideological climate of which they are necessarily a part (Waters, 1995: 96-123).

However, this does not mean that the relative importance of states is automatically declining. States are still the major structural unity in which people live and this conditions the effects of global interdependence. Many states are economically dependent on exports, imports and financial aid, which means that developments in world trade condition their national polity. Traditionally, global unity has worked almost entirely through states and their élites and, thus, state structures are an essential part of globalisation. This bears a relation to people's mobility. Earlier, people were more bound to their immediate surroundings and even though there were large-scale migrations, people continued to live like they did before under the new conditions or were assimilated. Today there are many more international and transnational actors that make the field more complex than before. The emergence of new communication technologies, inexpensive transportation and global media has brought a significant change even to the execution of national politics (Appadurai, 1996: 2-4).

Transnational, rather than international, consciousness is rising and that can break down traditional solidarities on which nation-states are founded. Nationalistic ideologies, which were legitimated and supported by state structures, begin to experience pressures for re-evaluation, as they have to take into account the transnational

reality in which people live. This may lead to nationalistic reactions or to emphasis on global or regional community. However, whatever the case may be, new divisions and understandings of the meaning of the nation and the state are emerging in the global condition, of which just one example is the renewed interest in nationalism (Smith and Hutchinson, 1994). To put it in a nutshell, the state is well but the nation less so (Waters, 1995: 96-123). This is well illustrated in the debate on Finnish identity that was popular in the 1990s (e.g., Alasuutari and Ruuska, 1998). According to Petri Ruuska (1999), the decade witnessed a change in how Finnish identity was understood due to the EU membership process. The nation was re-defined and common European roots were stressed more than earlier.

Third, globalisation and culture has been a prominent theme in sociology. The globalisation of culture provides an excessively complex development that is related in many ways to the globalisation of economy and politics, but still partially independent of these. Through culture and, more importantly, lived and embodied culture, we interact with people and give meaning to all things. Neither economy or polity is independent of culture, but they both embody their own systemic cultural logic and values. However, the main difference is the often symbolic nature of culture<sup>9</sup>. Therefore it is more fluid and less bound to rigid structures, which makes it more 'mobile' than economic or political relations, even though all of these usually have an influence, in one way or another, altogether. Culture is more globalised than economy and politics, and it proceeds most rapidly in contexts where relationships are mediated through symbols (Waters, 1995: 124-125).

The traditional, essentialist notion of 'culture as the way of life of a certain people', even though not any longer literally accepted,

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<sup>9</sup> It is useful to point out the symbolic nature of culture in this context, even though this overemphasises its fluidity. Not all cultural forms are free to float, but they are deeply embedded in the lives and practices of people. However, especially through the global information flows, cultural forms are much freer than before from direct human contact.

provides a good point of departure for discussing the globalisation of culture. The sociological standpoint is to contrast national and global culture. Culture in nation-states—including, for example, the idea of the nation, its ‘mythical’ creation, customs and the cultural unity of the people—was examined as a product of specific social structures and historical experience and as a nationally closed system, which was more a reflection of political and economic developments than a self-sufficient realm. Even though international cultural exchange was obvious, for instance in religions and social movements, the national nature of culture was not deeply questioned, which was in turn dependent on the idea of society as the unit of analysis. However, cultural differences were admitted, but they were mostly reduced to the existence of minorities and classes. The nation-state remained the fundamental unit of analysis<sup>10</sup>. In the end, this fairly narrow understanding of culture did not prevent interest in subcultures such as ethnic minorities and youth cultures (Featherstone, 1990).

There are considerable differences in how national and global cultures are seen. According to Held *et al.* (1999: 2-10) the viewpoints can be roughly divided as follows. *Hyperglobalisers* argue for the end of nation-states and for the creation of a unified, homogeneous global culture. *Sceptics* believe that nothing really important has happened and that the changes are merely superficial. *Transformationalists* argue for a transformation in national cultures and for the creation of new global cultures (for instance, Featherstone, 1990, 1995; Hannerz, 1996; Robertson, 1992). I shall follow the line of the transformationalist thesis, as that best describes the position in which contemporary immigrant minorities are placed and what their presence has brought about in the new social context.

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<sup>10</sup> The whole idea of the essentialist understanding of culture is deeply questioned (for example, Pieterse 1995). However, at this stage it is enough to state that even though essentialist cultures probably never existed as such, the nation-states have still provided a framework for ‘national cultures’ to exist and, therefore, this can be a point of departure for discussing contemporary global cultures.

The global culture(s) should not be understood as a replacement of national forms of culture, but rather as a new perspective in understanding national cultures and new non-national cultures. The debate on global culture is an attempt to free culture from implicit connotations of cultural unity within nations and from seeing the nation-state as the centre of analysis (Featherstone, 1990). Malcolm Waters (1995: 126) describes a scenario of globalised culture:

[it] is chaotic rather than orderly – it is integrated and connected so that meanings of its components are ‘relativized’ to one another but it is not unified or centralized. The absolute globalization of culture would involve the creation of a common but hyperdifferentiated field of value, taste and style opportunities, accessible by each individual without constraint for purposes either of self-expression or consumption.

Even though this specific scenario is unlikely, it brings to the fore a central feature of one possible type of global culture: the private construction of culture from globalised resources. Resources for identity creation and self-expression have become vast, but, unlike what Waters seems to suggest, would still not be totally decontextualised from local and national settings.

Globalised cultural forms have been called, for instance, *hybrid* (Pieterse, 1995) and *creolised cultures* (Hannerz, 1996), both of which terms refer to a new combination of cultural resources. The process of hybridisation includes both the separation of cultural forms from their previous contexts and their recombination in new contexts, which become meaningful in new ways. The result is a new, hybrid form of culture. Even though this process is nothing new in itself, hybridisation has accelerated in the global condition and touches more people than before. Globalised cultural forms are still experienced and lived locally in specific social environments. The change has been more in resources and not to the same extent in the physical settings of life. People have access, for example, to new ideas and lifestyles and through them their local lives acquire new

dimensions and reference groups. However, people have varying opportunities to access cultural resources. For instance, whereas the mass media easily reach large masses, travel is already a scarcer resource. If people previously lived locally differentiated lives in local, regional and national settings, the settings have now turned global and, thus, the odds for greater difference are obvious. Still, to underestimate the meaning of specific local or national cultures is misleading (Smith, 1990).

According to Ulf Hannerz (1996: 106-107), transnational cultures are born under global conditions. They originate in the framework of modern technology and transport, and they are, more or less, extensions of westernised ways of life and they are usually related to specific occupations. Transnational companies and non-governmental organisations are examples of organisations that create such cultures. They are important mediators of cultural change. For instance, development workers in poor countries bring more changes to the remote localities than just water pipes and literacy. They create whole cultures around themselves and provide new models of life for local people. However, to an increasing degree, there are non-western forms of transnational cultures. For instance, the indigenous Indian *Tablighi Jama'at* Islamic faith renewal movement is highly transnational, but definitely non-western (Masud, 2000).

Important topics in the globalisation of culture debate have included the emergence of fundamentalism and ecumenism; technology and culture; cosmopolitanism; localisation; new ethnicities; the rise of consumer culture; transnational lifestyles and cultures; the role of global media and, a question related to all of these, whether global culture brings about homogenisation or heterogenisation (Waters, 1995: 124-157). Some of these issues are discussed at greater length later on, when I deal with religion in a globalising world.



### 2.1.3 The globalisation process

The globalisation process does not offer any simple answers about which direction the world is changing in. Neither is it an inevitable process. Rather, it states the framework in which, and in relation to which, the multifaceted changes take place. Certainly there are ideas about the hows and whys of the process itself, but it should be stressed that globalisation does not lead to an inevitable, predetermined result. The process is historically and currently uneven and non-linear, it can be and has been challenged, and even though in the current world it is alive and well, it can also be disrupted. However, in the contemporary world even anti-global movements and actions can be viewed in a globalisation perspective. The claim is that the global spread and, sometimes, the scope of these movements means that they are based on globalisation and function within the condition of globality. To put it briefly, even though globalisation is not an inevitable process, it is a major factor in the contemporary world and can provide the framework even for anti-global actions, including seemingly reactionary religious fundamentalism.

Let us now return to Robertson's idea of globalisation 'as the compression of the world and the intensification of the consciousness of the world as a whole'. It argues that globality, or the global condition, becomes a framework for action and thought. The transformation is based on 'the compression of the world', which is a historical and contemporary process. Robertson uses his energies to examine change in the global condition and leaves to the side other, non-cultural elements, which he sees as the carriers of the change. In order to obtain a clearer picture of the transformation process, David Held *et al.* (1999) are helpful, because they have directed more efforts towards the 'material' and 'practical' side of globalisation.

Held *et al.* (1999: 16) define globalisation as:

a process (or set of processes) which embodies a transformation in the spatial organisation of social relations and transactions - assessed in terms of their extensity, intensity, veloc-

ity and impact - generating transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction, and the exercise of power.

This definition conceptualises the essential features of ‘the compression of the world’. Even though Held *et al.* ultimately understand globalisation quite differently to Robertson, their definition is useful in identifying how the globalisation process works. The main difference in the view of Held *et al.* is its openness to the nature of the transformation in question, which for Robertson is closely tied with the transformation of consciousness. However, the implications of this definition clarify some central features of the globalisation process.

First, globalisation is not a single or one-dimensional process, but rather a combination of many processes that have ‘the globalising effect’. This stance gives globalisation a fluid nature and does not reduce it to a single mega-process. This approach is useful, because it allows a more distinct approach to the phenomenon.

Second, globalisation brings about a transformation in the spatio-temporal organisation of social relations and transactions. Spatially, globalisation implies a change in the spatial distribution of previously territorially defined relations and actions. It also implies that this spatial redistribution is the core of the change and that a new, transcontinental and interregional framework is emerging.

Third, the transformation can be studied by its extensity, intensity, velocity and impact. All four of these components are essential markers of the scope of globalisation. Extensity refers to the spatial distribution, intensity to the qualitative nature, velocity to the speed and impact to the results of the globalisation process. Thus, a truly globalising feature needs to have high qualities in all four of these dimensions. Held *et al.* (1999: 16-21) have developed these four qualities into a framework which makes it possible to analyse the nature of globalisation in different historical periods and places. These notions will be presented later in this chapter, together with Arjun Appadurai’s (1996) ideas of global cultural flows.

Fourth, the transformation is generated by transcontinental and interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction and the exercise of power. The flows and networks of activity and interaction are central to globalisation, because they are the forms through which people, organisations and states around the world—to an increasing degree—engage with each other. These forms of activity are related to the exercise of power, which generates power relations between various places around the world. According to Held *et al.*, the main point about the flows and networks is their transcontinental and transregional scope. This leads us to the questions of Westernisation, homogenisation and heterogenisation.

Historically and contemporarily, globalisation has a strong relation to “the expansion of European culture via settlement, colonization and cultural mimesis” (Waters, 1995: 3) and to the spread of capitalism. Western technological, organisational, economic, ideological, etc. developments have been at the heart of globalisation and furthered the birth of a global society. Waters (1995: 3) argues that globalisation means that “[e]very set of social arrangements must establish its position in relation to the capitalist West”. Even though the notion correctly points out the absolute power of western societies and economies in the world, it should be made clear that globalisation is not the same as Westernisation or Americanisation. Rather, whilst not undermining the importance of western factors, the influence of other cultures should be acknowledged. Appadurai (1996: 32) notes on Americanisation that “[w]hat these arguments fail to consider is that at least as rapidly as forces from various metropolises are brought into new societies they tend to become indigenized in one or another way”.

Globalisation not only means the export of western ideas and practices to non-western cultures, in which they are often reconceptualised in novel ways, but it also enhances and creates possibilities for non-western ideas and practices to spread around the world. Export of various goods, philosophies and immigration are obvious examples of this (Robertson, 1995: 37-40). These, in turn, can be building blocks for new ideologies, identities and cul-

tures. Globalisation affects both western and non-western societies just as fundamentally. Globalisation is a major force in transforming western societies and to see it as Westernisation or Americanisation is ultimately misleading (Beyer, 1994: 132; Pieterse, 1995). Obviously the process has a strong correlation to western hegemony, but it is not Westernisation as such.

The question of homogeneity and heterogeneity is also related to globalisation. Whereas popular discourse expresses fears of homogenisation, academic discourse sometimes praises the coming of heterogeneity. Robertson (1995: 27) makes the following remark emphasising the point: “homogenizing and heterogenizing tendencies are mutually implicative” and it “is in fact much more of an empirical problem than might at first be thought”. Malcolm Waters (1995: 139-140) takes a similar stance by stating that “[g]lobalization implies a complex interweave of homogenising with differentiating trends”. Still, the whole point in ‘the world becoming one place’ is, to a certain extent, more homogenising than heterogenising, because more people will be sharing similar, but not necessarily identical, cultural resources, experiences, commodities and ideas of the world, and they are also aware of that. That does not mean sameness or cultural unity, but it merely points out the obvious, that ‘the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole’ includes the idea of similarity in the human condition. In other words, it is not homogeneity as similarity, but it is homogeneity as similarity in difference and choice.

### **2.1.4 Global cultural flows**

The globalisation of culture has been conceptualised in different ways, but one widely used approach has been to view it as ‘global cultural flows’ (Appadurai, 1996; Featherstone, 1990: 6; Waters, 1995: 126). In this perspective, the globalisation of culture takes the shape of ‘flows’. The term ‘flow’ is an abstraction referring to the fluid nature of change and the implicit reference to water attempts to describe the cultural flows much like water, in the sense that even

the most permanent structures and barriers can be inundated, broken and eroded. The cultural flows thus come from many different directions and break existing boundaries in ways that are difficult to control. However, in a particular study setting the flows can be revealed and examined.

The global cultural flows can be looked at through Arjun Appadurai's (1996: 3) theory of global cultural economy that takes *media* and *migration* as the two major, interconnected elements of cultural change. Appadurai (1996: 33-36) has formulated the ideas into a widely cited framework, which centres on the global cultural economy "seen as a complex, overlapping, disjunctive order that cannot any longer be understood in terms of existing centre-periphery models" (1996: 32). The idea is based on the notion of 'scapes', which characterise the fluid and irregular landscapes of global movement and influence. Appadurai's original model includes five different scapes: *ethnoscape*, *mediascape*, *technoscape*, *financescape* and *ideoscape*. Like all stimulating frameworks, this one, too, has been redeveloped by other scholars and more scapes have been added: for instance, *socioscape* (Albrow, 1996, 1997) and *sacriscape* (Waters, 1995: 126) or *sacred landscape* (Lyon, 2000: 100-106). For the current study it is the original model and, specifically the ethnoscape and mediascape, that are the centre of focus.

Ethnoscape refers to

the landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guest workers and other moving groups and individuals constitute an essential feature of the world and appear to affect the politics of (and between) nations to a hitherto unprecedented degree (Appadurai, 1996: 33).

Ethnoscape refers to people on the move in the global context and suggests that new types of communities are being born. There are still stable communities and relationships, but they too have to live with the knowledge and effects of the flowing and shifting

ethnoscapes which are a major feature of the global condition. Ethnoscapes reflect the cultural, political and economic realities, and also combine changes in the different arenas of social life.

Mediascape refers

both to the distribution of electronic capabilities to produce and disseminate information (newspapers, magazines, television stations and film-production studios), which are now available to a growing number of public and private interests throughout the world, and to the images of the world created by these media. (Appadurai, 1996: 35)

The mediascape provides “large and complex repertoires of images, narratives, and ethnoscapes to viewers throughout the world, in which the world of commodities and the world of news and politics are profoundly mixed” (Appadurai, 1996: 35). This mix of reality, fiction and consumption is received and interpreted as a blurry and more or less interconnected whole by different audiences. The mediascape is an essential part of the experience of living in a global condition and offers fragmented realities that are further developed by individuals and communities.

The three remaining scapes—technoscapes, financescapes and ideoscapes—refer to the technological, economic and ideological flows that cross national boundaries and produce change far away from their origins. Their fluidity is the nightmare of national politicians, who try to attract them but at the same are afraid of them. The technological, financial and ideological global flows are behind many features of current cultural change. However, the ethnoscapes and the mediascape are the most central in this regard. These five scapes are the medium in and through which global cultural flows occur. The growing disjunctures, or independence, of these scapes make it increasingly difficult to forecast what will be the direction of social change. It is therefore the particular interaction of these scapes in specific cases which define their relative importance to social change.

The mobility of people (international migration) and ideas (print as well as electronic media) have a long history and were significant long before the present era. While Appadurai stresses the fluidity of these scapes, David Held *et al.* (1999: 16-21) have created a practical framework for analysing historical and contemporary globalisation, thus providing tools for analysing globalisation as a historical process, as well as for pointing out its current, specific features. The framework presented here includes spatio-temporal and organisational attributes of global interconnectedness. The dimensions provide a tool for both quantitative and qualitative globalisation analyses.

The *spatio-temporal attributes of global interconnectedness* can be divided into four categories: (1) The extensiveness of global networks, (2) the intensity of flows and levels of activity within these networks, (3) the velocity or speed of global flows of interchange and (4) the impact of global flows on particular communities. The impact on particular communities can be further studied in four different ways: (a) “Decisional impacts refer to the degree to which the relative costs and benefits of the policy choices confronting governments, corporations, collectives and households are influenced by global forces or conditions” (1999: 18). Decisional impacts are the direct influences of globalisation. (b) Institutional impacts refer to “the ways in which organizational and collective agendas reflect the effective choices or range of choices available as a result of globalization” (1999: 18). These are indirect results of global processes. (c) Distributive impacts refer to “the distribution of power and wealth within and between countries” (1999: 18) that is, how the benefits and burdens of globalisation are distributed. (d) Globalisation can also produce structural impacts “as it conditions patterns of domestic social, economic and political organization and behaviour” (1999: 18).

The *organisational attributes of global interconnectedness* reflect the specific form which globalisation assumes in different societies and communities. (5) Global flows, networks and relations need physical, regulative/legal and symbolic infrastructures, in which

they can function. Infrastructures are important, because they facilitate or constrain the extensity and intensity of global connectedness in any single domain. (6) The institutionalisation of global flows, networks and relations is facilitated by infrastructures. However, first institutionalisation allows the regularisation of patterns of interaction and makes possible their reproduction in time and space. (7) Through global interconnectedness, societies and communities become part of global stratification. Stratification may be internal or external and its extent may vary in different realms of life. (8) The dominant modes of interaction are also important. Whether it is, for instance, trade or military action is of major importance (1999: 19-20).

The effects of globalisation vary in time and space between societies and domains. There are various outcomes from the process, which strengthen the idea of the unevenness of globalisation. Based on the spatio-temporal dimensions of global interconnectedness a typology of globalisation can be constructed (see Held et al. 1999: 21-27). Four ideal types emerge from the typology, representing different types of globalisation. The values for extensity, intensity, velocity and impact are shown in Table 2.1. Note that extensity stays constant, intensity and velocity are interrelated, and impact varies. *Thin globalisation* consists of extensive flows and networks, but low intensity, velocity and impact. This would be the case, for instance, with early pre-modern trade routes, which were essential for cultural change, but very slow by modern standards. *Expansive globalisation* is a state where extensive global flows are relatively high, not intense and fast, but have a great influence on local culture. This would be the case, for example, with western imperial expansion in the sixteenth century before more extensive contacts were established. *Diffused globalisation* refers to high, intense and fast global flows, but the impact varies remarkably in different domains. For instance, some institutional realms may be highly mediated and regulated, whereas others are more open to external influence. *Thick globalisation* is a state of affairs where global interconnectedness is high in all spatio-temporal attributes and in all social domains. How-



ever, that state should not be confused with a uniform global culture, because that is only *one* possible version of thick globalisation, where local variation and adaptation has ceased.

<b>Extensivity</b>	<b>Intensity</b>	<b>Velocity</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Type of globalisation</b>
High	Low	Low	Low	Thin globalisation
High	Low	Low	High	Expansive globalisation
High	High	High	Low	Diffused globalisation
High	High	High	High	Thick globalisation

**Table 2.1** Four ideal-types of globalisation

The framework of globalisation presented above forms the basis for discussing globalisation and religion in Finland. It will be applied both to the history of religions and to the contemporary religious situation. The material and the scope of the study will not allow a thorough analysis of all these aspects, but will be able to give at least preliminary answers to most of them. It is also assumed that the historical development of the country moves from thin to diffused or thick globalisation as we approach the current era.

## **2.2 Local society**

Studies of local societies have a long history in the social sciences. Martin Albrow (1997) has outlined the history of these studies in sociology, which also reflect certain developments in anthropology. In classical sociology of the early twentieth century, local community and society were central analytical categories for studying social processes as well as for data collection. A well-known example of these studies is Lynd and Lynd's (1926) research on Middletown, a small American city. Similar studies were conducted in many other places with corresponding frameworks. All possible aspects of social life were taken into account and these were related to the community and not analysed separately, which would also have been possible. The places were generally regarded as culturally homogeneous and resistant to outside influences. The approach was based on the assumption that *place was linked to community through lo-*

*cal culture* and that migrants ultimately became assimilated to local culture and part of the society. The classic paradigm was based on an unreflecting use of the relationship between locality and community. The territorial and physical aspect of local society (locality) was taken for granted. The notion is nostalgic and presents problems for wider analysis. The treatment of culture as a self-sustained system in a local society denies the influence of, migration, trade contacts, etc. (Albrow, 1997: 37-38).

The fruitlessness of traditional studies on local societies became evident during the post-war urbanisation period, which included large internal and external migrations and structural changes. During the 1960s and 1970s these studies were severely criticised for their inability to reflect wider social realities and interest in them decreased. In British and American research interest turned towards ethnic minorities.<sup>11</sup> Minorities were studied and different political, social, economic and cultural factors were taken into account. The studies were especially interested in how these groups formed their own realities by creating ethnic and cultural boundaries in local societies. In a way, the basic orientation of the research stayed the same as before, although the study object changed (Albrow et al., 1997: 21-23).

Gradually, the emphasis of the studies began to change and new aspects were brought into focus, including such issues as 'hybrid identities', 'diasporic communities' and 'new ethnicities'. Minority studies "emphasized the central role played by migrant workers, refugees and tourists (...) in the changing definitions of belonging where nation-state boundaries and loyalties are challenged or bypassed by global/local dynamics" (Albrow et al., 1997: 23). One main discovery was that 'locality' need not only refer to the physical locality where people live and interact, but to a much larger, even global network of social relations which are relevant in this specific local community. In a way, the old concept of local society as a more or

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<sup>11</sup> In the Nordic countries society became the main category of analysis, but as the importance of British and American approaches is central for contemporary immigration studies, it will be placed in focus here.

less homogenous cultural unit was turned upside down. Instead, they were seen as constructed or imagined places that were not necessarily shared by all the people living in the same place. There could be several localities and communities in one local society (Albrow et al., 1997: 23-24).

Local society and globalisation are essentially linked to each other and their relationship has received new attention in recent years (Hannerz, 1996). Globalisation as a large-scale process promotes change in the everyday life of particular localities, communities and individuals. As Roland Robertson writes, globalisation is “a massive, twofold process involving the interpenetration of *the universalization of particularism and the particularization of universalism*” (Robertson, 1992: 100).

### **2.2.1 Locality and community**

The relationship between locality and community is more complex than it seems at first glance. Traditionally, locality or locale referred to the physical settings or place—for instance, a city or a village—where the community lived and their unity was embodied in a more or less homogeneous local culture. However, in contemporary times the nature of both locality and community has changed to such an extent that a definition of this kind is no longer possible. Both locality and community have become globalised so that their implicit reference to a specific place has become more ambivalent. The relationship is in many cases still there, but alongside it new meanings can be found.

Locality means simultaneously many different things and a closer look at locality needs to be aware of these dimensions. (1) The *territorial* dimension is the geographical and administrative area of the locality. (2) The *historical* dimension refers to the community which has evolved in time and space into its current state. The historical locality is typically the subject of the heritage industry and essential in the creation of local identity. (3) The *visual* dimension is related to the significant places and landscapes of the locality that are the

symbols of the community. All localities have certain features by which outsiders and inhabitants know them: for example, historical buildings, churches, a river, a market square, etc. (4) The *social* dimension is about the social relations of local people and their interaction with local institutions. (5) The *political* dimension refers to the power relations inside the local community. For instance, a locality may be ‘red’ or ‘conservative’. The political locality is the subject of debate and action in elections and political revolts. (6) The *cultural* dimension refers to the different cultural groups or minorities in a locality. Localities can have large immigrant populations and diasporic ethnic or religious minorities. (7) Finally, the *subjective* dimension is an individual’s understanding of a particular locale. It is his or her personal experience and life-world in the locality (O’Byrne, 1997: 85; see also Urry, 1995).

The unifying feature of all the dimensions in the locality is that they are constantly being constructed and deconstructed, maintained and challenged. In other words, local societies are constructions of both lived and imagined reality. The meaning of locality differs in time and space and between individuals and groups. The condition of globality has changed the conditions for local communities to such an extent that “[t]o understand community ... a break has to be made with an intellectual tradition which was shaped by our nineteenth-century forebears and which associated community with a disappearing world of traditional solidarities and values” (Albrow et al., 1997: 24). The notion that is hard to defend in the new globalised condition is that culture is bound to specific people in a specific territory.

Knott’s (2000) definition of community—a social group with one or more common features or interests, which has a greater or lesser awareness of these, and thus a more or less conscious communal identity—may today refer equally well to a village in North Wales as to an ethnic diaspora, or to neither of them. Communities are no longer as bound to specific locales or places as they largely used to be. Communities can exist in diaspora, where a physical (Jerusalem) or imagined (Paradise) place may serve as the unifying

locale. Even for regular local communities the locality can be understood very differently due to differences in lifestyles, occupation, social class, etc. The fact that people live more differentiated and privatised lives than before means that they can create distinctly different spheres of life.

All in all, when a local society is studied, careful attention must be paid to the nature of contemporary locality and community. Neither of them are straightforward categories to be taken at face value. Local societies are still the main practical environment in which people live, but they extend differently in various directions.

### **2.2.2 Milieux and glocality**

The concept of *milieu* will further elaborate the nature of localities. "By 'the milieu' we refer to our ability, but also necessity, of creating our own environment according to our intentions and always in co-operation and conflict with our fellow beings" (Albrow et al., 1997: 30). Milieux are social constructions in the sense that they require social interaction and they may change over time. The territorial aspect of milieu changes because of increasing external contacts and reference groups outside the local society. An elementary distinction can be made between *local* and *extended milieux*. Local milieu refers to the practical physical settings of life where people live and where everyday routines are conducted; life in the local milieu centres on home, family, work, friends, everyday consumption, hobbies and, perhaps, neighbourhood. Local milieu is also the plane of action in which one is in contact with other local residents. Extended milieu refers to the varied places and reference groups that people have outside the locality. It may consist of relatives abroad, everyday work contacts, leisure time activities etc. (Dürschmidt 1997).

Mobility is a key factor distinguishing locality and milieu (Appadurai, 1996: 3-4). In comparison to earlier times, more people are on the move. The previous self-evident relationship between a locality and its inhabitants has changed. Therefore, it is only natu-

ral that a new understanding of locality as a resource is emerging. Locality is no longer the only reference point of individuals, but now only one among many. An understanding of a wider world is inevitable for large numbers of people in contemporary times. Individual mobility has also modified old social relationships (e.g., with relatives and neighbours), so that new forms of social engagement are necessary. These changes have had important consequences in the personal life sphere (Dürschmidt, 1997: 57-63). Contemporary immigrants' religious communities are illustrative examples of groups that live both in a local and an extended milieu; they live in a new local environment but also continue to have active contacts with their country of origin as well as with relatives and friends around the world (e.g., Levitt, 2001).

Sometimes the words 'local' and 'global' are replaced by the word 'glocal'. This play on words, which combines both of the original notions, originates in sociology with Roland Robertson, who considers whether the issue is 'probably the most central one' in his article on *glocalisation* (Robertson, 1995). In reinterpreting the originally Japanese 'glocalisation' concept, he draws attention to the local aspects of globalisation, which he fears have become somewhat obscure. Robertson writes that:

globalization has involved the reconstruction, in a sense the production of 'home', 'community' and 'locality'. To that extent the local is not best seen, at least as an analytic or interpretative departure point, as a counterpoint to the global. Indeed it can be regarded, subject to some qualifications, as *an aspect* of globalization. (1995: 30)

Globalisation is, according to Robertson, essentially local or, more precisely, glocal. The process should not be separated from its immediate surroundings or it may lose its true flavour: the local interpretation. Contemporary local society still provides the main physical and social milieu in which people (locals) live, but they have, to a growing degree, extra-local points of reference, which are estab-

lished parts of their community and milieu. The glocalisation perspective emphasises the complexity and multidimensionality of local life and stresses its ultimate embeddedness in the world outside.

## 2.3 Religion

Religion is again a timely issue in the study of contemporary social life. Whereas various theories of secularisation ruled much of the sociology of religion and ideas of religion's future during the 1970s and the 1980s, the times have changed and many new topics have emerged. For instance, both religious fundamentalism and New Age spirituality have challenged some of the established presuppositions about the fate of religion in the western world, and many earlier theories have been reformulated. Also the presence of new immigrant religions in the west, especially Islam, has brought religion back to the agendas of both civic organisations and state institutions. Religion, which seemed to be in a never-ending decline just a decade or two ago, is still a vital and creative force in late modern societies, even if in a different guise than before.

The transnational aspects of religion have received substantial attention during recent years and studies of religion and globalisation are an emerging and, to some extent, already established part of the current sociological study of religion. Globalisation is a word to be found in most new publications dealing with contemporary religion, even though for many the word merely denotes a descriptive tool rather than a theoretical perspective. More theoretical works include Roland Robertson's (1992) and Peter Beyer's (1994, 1998) writings, which specifically try to make sense of religion under globalised conditions. However, religion and globalisation studies are only emerging as a new subfield, so that at this stage it is rather difficult to describe globalisation studies as a whole. In the following section I shall present a general picture of religion in western societies with a special emphasis on globalisation and immigrant religions, which will later help us to place the Finnish case in a wider context.

### 2.3.1 Definitions

Religion is a central concern in this study and it is therefore necessary to specify the notion. According to Meredith McGuire (2002), religion can be approached by distinguishing between its *official* and *nonofficial* forms. Her definitions for them are the following.

[Official religion] is characterized by institutional specialization: standardization of the worldview in a well-defined doctrine, religious roles performed by specialists, and an organization to control doctrinal and ritual conformity, promulgate group teachings, and promote organizational programs (McGuire, 2002: 99).

Nonofficial religion is a set of religious and quasireligious beliefs and practices that is not accepted, recognized, or controlled by official religious groups. Whereas official religion is relatively organized and coherent, nonofficial religion includes an assortment of unorganized, inconsistent, heterogeneous, and changeable sets of beliefs and customs (McGuire, 2002: 113).

Official religion is close to the everyday understanding of 'religion' and refers to organised religious institutions and practices related to them. Nonofficial religion, however, is commonly labelled superstition or 'popular religion' and regarded as inferior to 'true' religion. It is far less bound to institutionalised forms and often more flexible in the ways it is expressed and understood. Both official and nonofficial religion exist beside each other and in the lives of individuals they are closely related, if not inseparable (McGuire, 2002: 97-127).

McGuire's definitions are also functional in the Finnish context, where there are two aspects of religion and religiosity that need to be taken into account. First, the realm of differentiated religious organisations is important, and that is also the common-sense con-



notation of religion. Second, the realm of various types of less institutionalised spirituality—for example, New Age and neo-Paganism, which are noted for their uneasiness with traditional definitions of religion, also plays a role in the contemporary religious scene. With the help of McGuire’s conceptualisations we can make an analytical separation between different types of religion and religiosity which forms the basis for the following presentation. However, in the current study I am mostly discussing official forms of religious activity, as my main interest are the local religious organisations and their activities.

With regard to the diverse religious communities that are the topic of this study, the following definitions will be followed. *Religious organisation* is a formally organised religious institution according to Finnish legislation. Examples of such are parishes of the Lutheran Church, congregations of registered religious community organisations (*rekisteröitynyt uskonnollinen yhdyskunta*) and other religious groups that are organised as registered, voluntary associations (*rekisteröitynyt yhdistys*). *Congregation* is a religious organisation that functions as an institution for communal religious services, such as a Pentecostal congregation. *Association* is a religious or non-religious voluntary organisation that is usually organised as a registered association. On the level of religious organisations, the *religious field* refers to the different local religious actors combined. In discussing contemporary immigrant communities, the concept of ‘*ethnicity*’ cannot be avoided. Ethnicity is a narrower concept than culture, and it refers to an identification with a group of people that share some of the following characteristics: common ancestry, common culture, social interaction within the group and a feeling of distinctiveness from surrounding society (Hautaniemi, 2001: 17). In this study ethnicity is also closely related to organisation, in the sense that ethnic communities often become organised in order to represent themselves for authorities, to promote their own cause and to be able to arrange desired activities for group members.

### 2.3.2 Religion in the contemporary West

Religion takes many forms in today's world. It would be a never-ending task to describe all the possible forms, but it is possible to describe some significant features of contemporary religion and religiosity. A lot has been written about the religious situation in the western countries (for instance, Beyer, 1994; Bruce, 1997; Davie, 2000; Fischer, 1999; Heelas, 1988, 1996; Luckmann, 1967, 1999; Waters, 1995), but within that field there are certain fundamental differences in how the contemporary role of religion is understood (McGuire and Spickard, 2002). Thus, it is necessary to clarify my position in that debate; and to start with, it will be useful to take a closer look at the forms of contemporary religion.

According to Thomas Luckmann (1999), there have been four different social forms of religion at different periods in history: (1) the *archaic*, (2) the *traditional*, (3) the *institutionally specialised* and (4) the *privatised social forms of religion*. The archaic and the traditional forms are of purely historical importance, but the two latter forms are essential for the current situation. The institutionally specialised form of religion was dominant in Christian Europe from post-Roman times until the late twentieth century, even though it was greatly weakened due to “the great social transformations of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries” (1999: 253), such as urbanisation and changes in family structure. That “form of religion was characterized by institutional specialization of religious functions and a corresponding monopolization of these functions in one distinctly religious domain” (1999: 252). Since the late twentieth century, a new, structurally privatised form of religion has taken its hegemonic place, even though earlier religious institutions are still there in a socially weaker form.

The origin of the new privatised social form of religion lies in two main developments. First, due to the *functional specialisation of institutional domains*, the two most influential domains—the economy and the state—slowly freed themselves from the direct influence of the religious domain. Thus, the place of religions moved

from public to private life, because public life was guided by norms that did not have any direct religious significance. The role of traditional religious institutions was redefined later according to the new privatised social form of religion. Second, a *modern variety of pluralism* means that different worldviews are, in principle, available to anyone. Contact between different groups is not formally restricted nor effectively restrained by social norms and custom. There is a pervasive sense that most decisions are optional and that people are supposed to make choices. This development can be largely traced back to the joint effects of democracy and market economy (Luckmann 1999: 253-254).

The privatised form of religion is available to people as a relatively open religious market. The production and distribution of religious collective representations is not censored and nobody controls the content of the products. There is no general canon to which the products should conform. The producers compete with each other in the market. The products are extremely heterogeneous and diverse. The majority of the products concentrate on the cultivation of emotions and sensations. Knowledge of these products is transmitted through many media, but their internal inconsistencies (when compared to traditional religious products) creates space for mediating, secondary institutions, such as sub-institutional movements, cultic milieux and networks characterised by low levels of institutionalisation (Luckmann 1999: 254-256).

The specific forms of the privatised social form of religion include both old and new manifestations. First, established religious institutions (churches, sects, etc.) still have a role to play, even though they have been forced to adapt to the new conditions. Their message still has some demand, even though the 'clientele' is smaller than before. However, as many immigrant religious organisations illustrate, traditional forms of religion are still important, even though it remains to be seen to what extent they will adapt to the western situation. Second, proponents of twentieth-century ideologies, such as nationalism and communism, are still successful to some extent. Third, there is an array of new producers: for instance, new reli-

gious movements, alternative spiritualities and media representations of religion (Luckmann 1999: 254).

Luckmann's perspective is distinct from traditional secularisation theories in one main sense. He does not argue for a generally diminishing role of religion in the West, in part because of his functionalist understanding of religion (see McGuire and Spickard, 2002). He rather states that the social position of religion has changed, but religion as such has not disappeared anywhere. The following three developments illustrate important trends with regard to religion in the contemporary west. These are the rise of religion in politics, increasing religious pluralism and immigrant religions.

First, there has been a world-wide resurgence of religion in politics (Beyer, 1994; Haynes, 1998; Holm (ed.), 1992; for an alternative view, see Bruce 2003). The most commonly used examples of this are the New Christian Right in the USA, the Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979 and, more recently, the September 11, 2001, attack on New York. Haynes (1998) explores the continents and shows that religions still play various kinds of active roles in the public lives of many countries. These, in turn, can be analysed with the help of Beyer (1994), who tries to understand the socio-political interests of traditional religious organisations as possible forms of adaptation to an all-pervasive global modernity, where religious institutions can take either a conservative or a liberal stance to modernity. Perhaps the main observation from different studies concerning religion and political issues is that, even though religion does not generally have much political influence in secularised societies, it can have it under some circumstances, which means that secularisation is not as straightforward a process as is sometimes understood.

Second, there has been a rise in religious plurality (Davie, 2000: 5-14). Historically, very few European countries have been entirely mono-religious, but all of them have had one or two main Christian Churches and a small number of various minority religions. However, local societies were traditionally fairly mono-religious, even though the countries as a whole might not have been that. Usually,

only cities and towns were multi-religious. The main churches dominated the local, as well as the national, scene and the various small churches and sects were living more or less on the margins of society. Within the majority church there were naturally regional differences, as well as differences in the religiosity of the laity and higher social strata. Basically the various religious groups were living their own lives relatively independently and unaware of each other. This unawareness of other religions is now gone. Religious pluralism not only means choices, it also means that one needs to live one's religion in relation to other people's religion (see McGuire and Spickard, 2002: 288). This fact, combined with the growing awareness of global human unity (Robertson, 1992), further relativises religious truths.

New religions or new religious movements are not a new phenomenon, although the so-called new religious movements—however understood—are an exceedingly popular area of research for many sociologists of religion and have raised many interesting research issues (Wilson and Cresswell, 1999). For example, many new religions are part of transnational organisations, this being an important part of their self-identification. They see themselves as part of a global movement. They can also create contacts between places that have not had them before and thus promote local, small-scale change. The customary religious-studies understanding of new religious movements as post-Second World War, Asian-inspired religions is narrower than the one I have in mind. There have always been new religions and religious movements, but it has been claimed that their number has increased since the nineteenth century and that this, in one way or another, is a sign of more pluralistic societies and life-worlds, as well as, of globalisation.

Third, immigrant religions are also on the rise all over the world and in Europe (e.g., Baumann, 2002; Ebaugh and Chafetz (ed.), 2000, 2002; Eck, 2001; Haddad and Smith (eds.), 2002; Warner and Wittner (ed.), 1998). Immigration is closely related to the spread of religions in general, but in contemporary pluralistic societies its consequences have been less studied. In the West, especially Europe and the United States have received a large influx of new immi-

grants during the last forty years, which has altered the religious fields quite drastically in many societies. To understand these new minorities it is necessary to take into account their more or less active relations to the old home country and to their fellow expatriates in other countries. Many of the new immigrant minorities are good examples of diasporic communities that have transnational loyalties and identifications in addition to the national ones (Baumann, 2002). Do these new minorities become institutionalised like their counterparts? How do they adapt to new societal settings? And to questions like these, answers are only just beginning to emerge.

### **2.3.3 Immigrant religious organisations**

In addition to missionary activity, migration has been one of the main ways in which religions have spread to new places, cultures and civilisations. The course of human history has witnessed many dramatic and mundane, as well as voluntary or forced, migrations of populations and the related spread of religions to new environments, which have altered the pre-existing religious situation (Park, 1994: 93-127, 133). The matter is still topical in today's world as the global ethnoscaples actively fluctuate and people move to new places, at the same time creating a religious pluralism on a global scale hitherto unseen (Fisher, 1999: 12-14). In recent decades, immigrant religious activity has brought about significant changes that have had profound effects in many societies, as witnessed, for example, by the case of Muslim communities in Europe (Davie, 2000: 124-134; Nielsen, 1995) and the new immigrants in the United States (Eck, 2001).

Immigrants' lives within a new society and religion have often been closely connected. Sometimes the migrants challenge firmly rooted local religious structures and sometimes their influence is merely of marginal importance. The importance of migrants' religious activity is best seen in a larger cultural context, where religion has been one of the main ways of supporting the migrants' identity and cultures. Also, migrant communities often keep their religious

traditions long after other indicators of their cultural tradition have fallen into oblivion. Obviously, the opposite has also sometimes happened, so that migrants have given up their traditions and religions (Gustafsson, 1997: 96; Hamberg, 1999). There nevertheless exists much evidence to indicate that religion, even in the contemporary world, is one of the last features of one's identity to be abandoned (Baumann, 2002; Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2000: 401-402). The many 'ethnic versions' of Catholicism in the United States, Judaism around the world and the various Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist communities in today's Europe exemplify how religions have travelled far away from their places of origin and found new, fertile ground on which to operate in the modern world (Park, 1994: 153-154).

Religious traditions, almost by necessity, need to adapt to the new surroundings, since, as a result of migration, many things in their environment have changed and new forms, interpretations and functions must be found (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2000: 325; Warner, 1998: 20-23). It is exceedingly difficult to sustain the old ways of life completely and even the most conservative groups still have to adapt in some ways, as exemplified by the Amish (Park, 1994: 123-127). The adaptation can be the change from a majority to a minority position, the task of socialising the next generation to the faith or simply organisational features that must be functional in the new home country. Adaptation is always needed—sometimes more, sometimes less. How do these changes happen? What implications do they have? What resources are available for the reinterpretation of tradition? Answers to these types of questions are central to our understanding of immigrants' religious activity in a new social environment, where old, established ways of thought and action are no longer functional or even acceptable.

In the following section, the immigrants' religious activity in a new local context will be considered from four perspectives. First, immigrants land in some environment, which has both constraints and opportunities for them. For instance, how do demographic factors affect their situation? Second, adaptation to a new society and local community is essential for the immigrants to be able to func-

tion at all. For example, in what ways can the immigrants begin organising their religious activity? Third, migrants' religious community life—next to family life—is one of the most central arenas in which the changes actually take place. For example, what forms do the activities take and what does that tell us about the organisation in question? Fourth, the significance of transnational connections has been pointed out as an increasingly important element of contemporary immigrant organisations. How, therefore, are the local actions embedded in broader transnational connections, and what resources do they provide for the organisation? These four arenas also provide the map of how this study is ordered in the central analytical section, Chapter 5, which is concerned with immigrant religious organisations in Turku.

### **2.3.3.1 Environment**

The social environment in which immigrant religious organisations function is largely something beyond their control. It is a situation in which they need to find their own place and come to terms with the opportunities and constraints it provides. There are many, often interrelated, factors, important in the environment, which also play a role in other aspects of immigrants' adaptation to the local society. Many of them include elements touching both the immigrant community and other local residents and institutions. Immigrants' adaptation is a two-way process, affecting both the immigrants as well as the local population (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2000: 325). Let us take a closer look at some key-factors.

The local economic situation affects the immigrants' opportunities to integrate with the local society, as they need to find ways to support themselves. This also reflects to some extent the demographic features of both the local and the immigrant community. For example, the age structure, gender and educational levels of the immigrant population condition the available opportunities. Even immigrants' language skills play a major role, because in late modern societies the demand for jobs with few language skills is becoming



less all the time. The immigrants may find a niche in the labour market, they may integrate with it or stay outside it on welfare benefits. In practice, it is some kind of combination of all these things. In some cases, they become forced to migrate further as the local economy remains closed to them (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2000: 337-339). In Finland, entering the labour market is the main channel for integrating into society, but as refugees in particular have been accepted without foresight in these matters, this has presented them with difficulties in finding work (Forsander and Ekholm, 2001: 59-60).

In cases of larger immigrant flows, residential patterns in the local society often reflect the immigrants' position in society. The creation of immigrants' districts is a common feature in all larger European cities with substantial immigrant populations (e.g., Eade 1997b). This has both negative and positive sides. On the one hand, the districts provide close social ties with fellow migrants and lead to the creation of small ethnic markets, where labour opportunities also rise. On the other hand, they can also severely damage the immigrants' possibilities of integrating with the local society and the districts far too often became arenas of social and material decay, where many disadvantaged people live. The residential patterns are a feature to note, because that is a part of the local immigrant milieu (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2000: 339-344; Wahlbeck, 1999).

Attitudes towards, and opinions about, immigrants play a significant role in the migrants' lives. They affect immigrants' opportunities for obtaining work, their enjoyment of life and even their possibilities for living in some regions. Negative attitudes can strengthen the natural tendency that draws immigrants to live close to each other and thus promote the creation of immigrant districts. Studies of views and opinions of immigrants have thus become a central monitoring device for following the social position of immigrants in many societies. They are valuable in following the changes in this respect (Liebkind, 2000: 19-27). In Finland, the degree of suspicion and racism varies significantly between immigrant and religious groups. People who are from non-European societies experience this more

than others (Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind and Vesala, 2002: 134-137). With regard to religious prejudice, most non-Christian groups experience more intolerance, but also some actively missionising Christian groups, such as Pentecostals and Jehovah's Witnesses are considered with suspicion (Niemelä, 2003a: 145).

The status of the immigrants' religion is also worth noting. Are they in a minority or majority position and how does this differ from the situation in their homeland? If they were a persecuted minority in their homeland, they are probably satisfied if the new environment supports religious freedom; if the opposite is the case, their feelings may also be quite different. Furthermore, coming from a religious majority to a minority position can also lead to a closer interest in one's religion, because it is the first time that it has been questioned. The majority's religious identity is often more unconscious and less established than the minority's identity, because it has not been contested (Baumann, 2002). Ebaugh and Chafetz (2000: 325-336) found this aspect to be among the most central features with regard to immigrants' religious organisations and how they develop. Most immigrants that come to Finland end in a religious minority position, because the Lutheran Church is so dominant and only a portion of immigrants have a Lutheran background.

Taken together, these and other often interrelated, environmental factors provide the ground from which the immigrants then start to organise their activity. While these factors are mostly beyond the control of the immigrants, they are not everlasting and may change over time. In some cases they can be challenged and changed, for example in the case of general attitudes towards immigrants. The environmental constraints and possibilities are, however, essential for understanding the position of immigrants in the local society and, without acknowledging them, it is not possible to understand their social position. These issues, with regard to the local immigrant population of Turku, will be presented in section 5.1.

### 2.3.3.2 Structural adaptation

Structural adaptation refers to the process and strategies by which immigrants and their organisations adapt to the new social, cultural and organisational structures that differ in varying degrees from those of their societies of origin. Structural adaptation is a slow process that does not take place overnight. It is also one that is difficult to perceive directly, but one that is of central importance in understanding the immigrants' religious lives. In practice, from the host society's perspective it is a matter of to what extent the immigrants start to follow its rules, norms and values, and from the immigrants' point of view it is a question of how they can function well and acceptably in a new environment (Warner, 1998: 20-23).

Structural adaptation occurs on several levels, of which the individual and organisational levels are the most important. Individual adaptation takes place when the immigrant starts to perceive and reflect upon the position that religious matters have earlier had in his or her life. The process can be both conscious and unconscious. In a European context, this would mean that religion becomes more of a private matter and its role in other spheres of life will diminish as suggested by the traditional secularisation thesis (Wilson, 1988). However, this is only one possibility. Recent research has continuously indicated the opposite, where the immigrant experience has actually made religion a more central matter in many people's lives (e.g., Baumann, 2002; Dassetto, 1999; Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2000: 330; Hamberg, 1999). This has been explained by referring to a response to western modernity, where basically two options exist. The first is to embrace the differentiated mode of life and the other to reject it and let religious norms guide one's life. The options are the two sides of the same coin, and both are essentially related to western modernity (Beyer, 1994).

Organisational adaptation is about the relationship of the immigrants' religious organisations to the host society, which then indirectly affects the immigrants' views on religion. When the immigrants start to organise themselves officially, they become subjects for the local authorities and for the national legislation. Stephen

Warner (1998) has argued that in the United States immigrant religious organisations start to adopt a congregational form that is predominant in American religious culture. While North American religious organisation is somewhat different from its European counterpart, it is not actually so distinct with regard to religious institutions other than the traditional ones, such as the Lutheran and Orthodox Churches in Finland. Actually, there seem to be many more similarities than differences in the form of immigrant religious organisations when the European and American cases are compared, if we leave out certain organisational forms that are required by specific national legislation. In general the organisations in both cases have a high-degree of lay-involvement and are usually organised voluntarily in a manner resembling the organisational structure of Christian congregations. In this respect, I think it is justifiable to take the American experience as one starting point.

Ebaugh and Chafetz (2000: 347-358) have studied immigrant religious organisations in the United States and created an ideal typical model, which consists of *congregational* and *community-centre* types. To simplify their original model, the major traits of the congregational and community centre are as follows: the congregational form concentrates mostly on producing religious services, including worship, rituals and religious education, while the community centre model also provides, in addition to religious services, other cultural and social services, including help for the disadvantaged, cultural celebrations and a community hall in which these take place. In practice these activities usually exist in one way or another together, but there are noticeable differences in emphasis. In the case of larger organisations they may lead to the creation of smaller, cell-like units through which individual members can feel a close affinity to the organisation. Both of the ideal typical organisations are run mostly by lay-members, even though we can expect that in time a professional clergy may be appointed, if the minority in question has the required financial base (cf. Baumann, 2002). This, however, will not change the ultimate lay-nature of the organisation, which is understandable as many of the communities in question have been

raised from scratch by lay-members themselves (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2000: 347-362).

In comparison to the American case, the Finnish welfare state actually provides many of the social, educational and counselling services that could be part of the community centre model. Furthermore, it also seems that the Finnish situation and organisational culture favours the creation of many voluntary associations with specific causes—such as designated cultural, sports and educational associations—that might otherwise fall under the community centre model. Finnish authorities have played a key-role in the establishment of immigrants' associations partly as counsellors, but more so since financial support is directed only to organised communities, not individual persons. Thus, it is to be expected that in Finland the community-centre model will not be as strong in the United States, and instead we will find a multiplicity of voluntary associations dedicated to different causes, as well as specialised religious ones.

The immigrants are in vastly different positions when it comes to structural adaptation. In the case of Finland—where the social position of religion is best described as secularised and privatised, together with a strong majority church with civil religious characteristics—the adaptation is probably easiest for people from other North European countries as well as from the West in general (Heino, 1997: 15-41). When this is combined with a relatively late, visible religious pluralism and multiculturalism, it should come as no surprise that people from non-Protestant and non-Christian cultures can be assumed to have greater challenges in structural adaptation. With regard to religious organisations, the congregational and community-centre models are the basic possibilities that the minorities may adapt, if they are to organise themselves and not become members of any pre-existing organisations. The congregational model will, however, be the most likely choice due to national organisational culture. To what extent these presuppositions are valid will be discussed in section 5.2.

### 2.3.3.3 Community life

Religious organisations are a common form of organisation for migrants in a new environment and civil society, although by no means the only one (Baumann, 2002). Examples of other forms include cultural associations and political parties (e.g., Wahlbeck, 1999). For some reason, religious organisations have been neglected in mainstream, post-war immigration research and largely in social research in general. Churches, mosques and other temples have become the central meeting points for many local migrant communities, which in cases of larger religious minorities have then tended to become divided along cultural, ethnic, national or sectarian lines (Baumann, 2002; Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2000: 13-20, 401-407). This means that the usual basic unit is, for example, the local Russian Orthodox or the Iraqi Shiite Muslim congregation in Turku, rather than a national Orthodox or Muslim assembly.

Migrants can also join already existing religious organisations and unite with other co-religionists or join an altogether new religion. In the first case, they often try to keep their specific characteristics, even if the organisation as such attempts to emphasise pan-religious and pan-cultural interpretations of the tradition. Sometimes they also become targets of missionary activity either from their fellow migrants or from other religious groups, and join their congregations (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2000: 330-331, 401-407; Hamberg, 1999). In some cases a common religious background is not enough. For instance, the Tatar Muslims in Finland have not been willing to accept new members who do not have a Tatar background, even though they belong to the Sunni tradition (Martikainen, 2000c: 207). However, even though religions are often an uniting factor, there are also further possible identifications, which may be based on political or other identities. The Kurds are a good example of a people for whom the political struggle for Kurdistan is a major unifying—but also differentiating—factor (Wahlbeck, 1999). A further possibility is to take one's distance from organised religion altogether. Still, religion seems to be among the most prominent community-creating forces among migrants, even though it is not the only one.

The pervasive function of religion for immigrants does not lie solely in its nature as the provider of meaning, but comes rather from a combination of various aspects. As religion is usually closely tied to a particular local, regional or national culture, and is often seen as its ultimate legitimisation, the religious community provides, alongside family and home, a base for the practice of that particular tradition. In immigrant religious organisations—in addition to religious activities—a vast array of other, more or less, secular activities take place that are related to the culture of origin (Baumann, 2002). Ebaugh and Chafetz (2000: 385-396) have identified three major ways in which traditional culture, or ethnicity, is reproduced in the organisations. First, by physically reproducing aspects of home-country religious institutions: these include church architecture, interior design and other visual representations, but dress, sounds and smells are also examples of this kind. Second, by incorporating ethnic practices and holidays into formal religious ceremonies, such as national independence and New Year's days. Third, congregationally related social activities are also important, including language-based fellowship groups and other activities, which often centre on the use of native vernaculars and the consumption of traditional food. In addition to these, there is the domestic practice of religion. The immigrant religious organisation is often a more general cultural centre or base, a reminder of the homeland and an arena of sociability, rather than a purely faith-based community. This also makes it less attractive for potential converts, although some converts are especially interested in the exoticism related to the congregation. If it is a question of a multi-ethnic organisation, then the reproduction of ethnicity occurs in smaller groups within the community.

The organisations are also forums where social networks and capital are created, which help both the old members and newcomers to find information, encouragement and advice on how to function meaningfully in the new environment (Ammerman, 1997: 362-367). These, often informal, networks are highly efficient structures that are regularly based on ethnic solidarity. They may even function as a conscious missionary strategy by the organisation in order

to recruit new members, as newcomers usually actively seek places to enter the local society and its social networks to find friends, employment and the like (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2000: 371-382). The use of the native vernacular in the community is a unifying as well as a possible source of conflict. Ebaugh and Chafetz (2000: 409) summarise as follows:

Immigrant congregations self-consciously select languages for formal services and religious education classes in pursuit of institutional goals, while their members unconsciously employ languages in informal contexts that can both enhance solidarity and promote disunity. Differences in native language, and in dialects of the same language, often constitute the bases for segregation among immigrant members, and not infrequently for intergenerational strains and tensions. Nonetheless, the use of an old-country language also provides a comfort zone for immigrants that enhances their sense of well-being and congregational commitment.

Thus, matters related to language are highly central for the immigrant members. They form a central part of the identity of, at least, the first generation. While the organisations need to be functional and choose one or two languages as the main channel of communication, they might be neglecting others in the process.

The socialisation of the second generation to the religious tradition is one of main tasks that immigrant religious organisations face and, almost universally, this plays an important role in their activities. The education usually consists of religious, cultural and linguistic elements regarded as necessary skills for the youth. The young people are, however, in between cultures and striving to come to terms with the demands of the host society with regard to education, hobbies and the like. They might even find it embarrassing that their elders have such a keen interest in their cultural tradition (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2000: 431-445). However, there are many signs that



the second generation does not leave the religious tradition in question (Baumann, 2002).

Immigrant religious organisations often become embedded in local, national and transnational religious networks in various ways. Local inter-faith or ecumenical councils and groups are often interested in the newcomers and try to incorporate them into discussions with the other organisations. These further guide immigrant organisations to the existing and ‘correct’ patterns of behaving with regard to religious activity in that particular society. National and international connections further incorporate local organisations within the religious realm. They give the immigrants tools for finding their place in a new environment (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2000: 380-382).

Religious organisations thus play a major role for immigrants in the adaptation process to the new environment, at the same as they are structured to insure the continuity of their cultural practices. They provide means for the members to express their religiosity, sociability and culture, as well as being forums of negotiation in how to adapt to society at large, for example with regard to gender and ethnic issues. Organised religious communities are also significant for individual members in that they provide social networks which can help them to obtain advice and find opportunities in the new environment. Through them the immigrants also position themselves with regard to the specific religious culture in that society, as well as perhaps challenging it.

#### **2.3.3.4 Transnational connections**

Local religious organisations are embedded in a variety of relationships with their environment. Obviously the local plane is the most important one, as the members live and face their lives within this, but alongside this there usually exist a host of other non-local relationships. The organisations are also involved with other institutions and actors—both religious and secular—at the local, regional, national and transnational levels. These relationships guide, provide resources and are meaningful to the local activities to a varying de-

gree (Ammerman, 1997: 360-362). Local community life can also be affected by events and developments taking place far away from the locality. 'Transnational connections' has become the catchphrase for describing migrants' relations to the world outside the nation-state. This refers to the growing cross-border and cross-cultural mobility of people, ideas and resources under global conditions which has become easier mainly due to advances in travel and communication technologies, but also because of international agreements and more widespread economic prosperity. The technological advances have also opened new possibilities for travel and communication, including low-price air travel, satellite television broadcasting and the Internet.

Transnational connections look different in different contexts, depending on whether they are those of the society, the organisation or the individual. The societal level sets the general environment for the connections in which organisations and individuals function, but their activity cannot be reduced simply from the transnationality of society. The religious organisations are one of several mediating mechanisms between the different levels, and they provide resources for individual members as well as helping migrants maintain their loyalties to the home country in an organised manner. This is important, because an organisation's resources are much larger than an individual's or family's ability for upholding traditional activities. It also seems that the more multifaceted and institutionalised the connections are, the more likely it is that they will persist. However, it should be noted that between and within the organisations we will find different levels of attachment to transnational loyalties, identities and resources (Levitt, 2001: 6-9).

Immigrant religious organisations have been often described as diasporic communities. According to Wahlbeck (1999, 2002), the concept has been used somewhat carelessly on many occasions, and the term should be limited to those communities for whom the experience of exile and the relationship to the old home country are vital characteristics (for a closer discussion, see Wahlbeck, 2002). Levitt (2001: 15) also notes that: "[t]ransnational communities are

the building blocks of diasporas that may or may not take shape". Taking into account this criticism of the usage of 'diasporic communities' and restricting its use, an alternative would be to find different levels of transnational attachment, of which the diaspora in one possibility (see Levitt, 2001: 213-216).

The local organisations keep their transnational contacts in many different ways. The movement of people includes travel either to or from the local society. For instance, immigrants often visit their home countries and relatives abroad, they send people to be educated in other countries and invite religious teachers to visit them. The other option for staying connected with other countries and organisations is to use various kinds of media. Letters, e-mails, telephone and faxes are fast and low-cost communication, but the circulation of foreign cassettes, videos and magazines is also customary in many congregations. Their significance varies remarkably between organisations.

The role of global media is different from the above-mentioned factors, and even more indirect and difficult to estimate. With satellite television, the immigrants may be able to follow their national television channels, whilst nationally broadcast coverage of global events is also significant. Many cases have shown the potential inherent in global news coverage (Croteau and Hoynes, 2000: 329-332). For instance, the Salman Rushdie affair created instability and riots in many countries in a remarkably short period of time (Beyer, 1994: 1-2). Also, the live coverage related to the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, in New York revealed a similar potential. Several cases have suggested that these are important and their significance is also likely to grow in the future, as communication media are in a highly evolving stage at the moment. With regard to immigrants' religious lives in the new countries, the media's potential to create sometimes unintended results is exemplified in the many debates about the media image of Islam in the West, affecting how local and national Muslim minorities are treated (e.g., Eck, 2001: 223; Karlsson, 2000; Karlsson and Svanberg, 1995). All these as well as other before mentioned issues indicate that the local immi-

grant religious organisations are functioning in a complex web of relations that transcend the local plane in many different ways. Understanding how all this happens in the North European city of Turku, both in contemporary times, as well as in historical hindsight, is a topic discussed in the coming pages.

The present and the previous chapter outlined the background of this study, as well as its aim, source materials, methods and theoretical reasoning. The following chapters will present the history of religions in Finland and Turku from a globalisation perspective, as well as the contemporary local religious field in the city of Turku and a number of issues related to local immigrant religious organisations. And, as a reminder for the reader, the aim of this study is to describe and analyse, from a globalisation perspective, the processes of immigrant religious organisation in the local religious field in the city of Turku. These contemporary processes are placed from the beginning into a historical framework of global interconnectedness, where international migration and transnational connections function as the key components. The study has two sets of main questions. *First, do immigrants' contemporary processes of religious organisation, and issues related to it, present a novel situation, or to what extent do they have historical predecessors in Turku and Finland? Second, in which ways have the contemporary immigrants organised themselves religiously and become part of the local religious field, and what does this tell us about the contemporary form of globalisation in Turku?*

### 3

## The History of Religions in Finland from a Globalisation Perspective

The history of religions in Finland is the main context of which religious life in Turku, both historically and in contemporary times, has formed part. In order to search for continuities and disruptions in issues related to immigration and religion, I consider it necessary to start with a presentation of national religious history. Furthermore, as transnational connections and international migration certainly have a long history in the country, a historical understanding is essential for evaluating the current situation. Many researchers have written extensively on the history of religions in Finland and the general picture of the national development seems to be more or less clear. A recently published, four-volume church history of Finland—*Suomen kirkon historia* (Laasonen, 1991; Murtorinne, 1992, 1995; Pirinen, 1991)—serves as an authoritative platform for my current account of this historical development.

The following presentation considers to what extent transnational connections and international migration have historically shaped the religious situation in Turku and Finland (see section 2.1.4 for the theoretical framework). The chapter shows how Finland has moved from a peripheral position in Northern Europe to a recognised actor in the late modern world. Transcultural networks through trade, mi-

gration, politics, etc. have increased and broadened over the centuries, so that Finland today no longer remains on the periphery, but holds a position much more significant than that. Turku was the central locality in the country until a century and half ago and thus at the centre of many developments related to transcultural contacts. At the end of the chapter, this will be summarised and there will also be discussion of how the historical developments are mirrored in the current religious situation. The chapter is mainly based on secondary sources. It will now present the historical framework that forms the structure of this chapter.

### 3.1 The historical framework

The presentation distinguishes four historical periods: the premodern, early modern, modern and late modern eras. This division is based on an interpretative scheme emphasising institutional differentiation, individuation and religious pluralism. All of these features are seen as important factors in many theories concerning the emergence of modern religious forms as a part of the modernisation process (for example, Bruce, 1997; Luckmann, 1967). Even though the periodisation simplifies historical developments, which do not usually fall into neat categories and overlap with each other, it is necessary in order to track down continuities and changes in the social position of religion. It also allows us to examine whether the scope of transnational connections and international migration bears any relation to these periods. Let us now take a closer look at the historical scheme.

The *premodern period* can be divided into *pre-Christian* and *medieval Christian* times. During the pre-Christian period, religion was an integrated part of the collective way of life. Religious institutionalisation was non-existent or at a very low level and religious specialists were not full-time professionals. This period refers to the time before, and soon after, the arrival of Christian influences at the turn of the first millennium. The medieval Christian period starts during the twelfth century, when the Swedish Crown, together with

the Catholic Church, took a firm foothold in the region. Christianity gained a hegemonic position in the more populated areas of the country and brought along with it a church organisation and full-time religious professionals. In practice, Christian ideas co-existed, combined and mixed with indigenous beliefs, but the existence of a specific church institution was a novelty. Religion was collective in its nature. The premodern period comes gradually to an end during the sixteenth century.

The *early modern period* starts from the Reformation in the first half of the sixteenth century and ends in the mid-nineteenth century before the first major wave of industrialisation in Finland.<sup>12</sup> The period was characterised by an emerging rift between a collective and individualistic understanding of religion, which originated with the Protestant Reformation. Despite the fact that most of the period was characterised by a church hostile to change, backed up by effective legislation, large-scale lay-led revivals at the end of the period took place, initiating public religious spaces beyond the reach of the church. This period refers to the final period of Swedish rule and the early period of Russian rule, which started in 1808.

The *modern period* began in the latter half of the nineteenth century and lasted until the post-World War II period. During this time, Finnish society modernised from a mainly rural to a partially industrialised country, a later phenomenon here than in the rest of Western Europe. Modern institutions were founded and state and church were officially separated. Religious pluralism grew in the form of different Christian free churches and individualistic religious conceptions became more commonplace. The last elements of pre-Christian religion disappeared. Finland became more closely integrated with international society. During the first half of the period Finland was a part of Russia, but it gained its independence in 1917.

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<sup>12</sup> The Reformation marks a major change in church-state relations. However, other indicators of early modernity, including proto-industries and emerging individualism did not take place in Finland until the latter half of the seventeenth century (Joronen, Pajarinen and Ylä-Anttila, 2000: 118-119; Joutsivuo, 2002a; Kerkelä, 1996).

In the current *late modern period* institutionalised religion has become contested and to some extent marginalised, and religion in general has become more privatised. Religious pluralism is rapidly increasing in both its institutionalised and non-institutionalised forms. Collective religiosity has lost its hegemonic position. However, the Lutheran Church still plays a role in society in a way that resembles civil religion. Transnational flows of ideas and people affect religion in the country more than ever, and Finland has become increasingly integrated within a global economy and politics. The period started gradually in the post World War II period and gained momentum due to the rapid, second wave of urbanisation of the country from the 1960s onwards.

The following presentation follows a chronological order, starting from prehistory and ending with the present day. The chapter is structured around the periods described above. More emphasis is given to developments from the nineteenth century onwards, as it is during that period that foundations are more firmly laid for contemporary religious pluralism. The text concentrates on the institutionalised form of religion. Local developments in Turku are highlighted when necessary. The chapter ends with reflections on what have been the roles of transnational connections and international migration, through history, in forming the current religious situation.

### **3.2 The premodern period**

The premodern period is an era of more than 9000 years. It starts with the arrival of the first, post-Ice Age inhabitants around 8000 B.C. and comes gradually to an end in the Reformation. During the twelfth century A.D. Finland emerged as a recognised area and became a province of the kingdom of Sweden. Around the same time, too, Catholic and Orthodox Christianity were established in the country. The town of Turku was founded around the year 1300 and became the central locality in Finland. In the 1520s Swedes and Finns broke their ties with the Catholic tradition in the aftermath of the Protestant Reformation, to follow the Lutheran path. The last half



millennium of the premodern era witnesses the political, economic, cultural and religious incorporation of what is today called 'Finland' into West European civilisation.

### **3.2.1 From prehistory to emerging Christianity**

Even though the current view of Finland's prehistory is not coherent, and rivalling theories exist (Fogelberg (ed.), 1999), the picture is still clear enough for the present purpose. Archaeological research indicates that groups of people have been living in the territory of contemporary Finland since fairly soon after the last Ice Age, from circa 8500 B.C. onwards (Hiekkänen, 2002a: 44-45; Nunez, 1999: 134). Various cultures emerged and vanished through the millennia, but who they were and what languages they spoke is uncertain, even though research indicates that they came mainly from the south and the east, and later from the west<sup>13</sup>. It has been suggested that some of the oldest cultures were the ancestors of the indigenous Saami people, who were gradually 'pushed aside' northwards by the Finnish expansion, especially, in the early historical period. Unlike the Finns, the Saami continued their nomadic way of life. Until recently, most of the Saami have been living in Lapland, some as reindeer herders (Vahtola, 1999).

During the first millennium A.D., that is the Iron Age in Finland, permanent agriculture<sup>14</sup> gained importance in south-western parts of the country, but did not totally replace other means of livelihood. Religious ideas were closely bound to means of livelihood and a

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<sup>13</sup> The question of the origin of the Finns has been a research issue since the eighteenth century. Early theories were mostly developed in linguistics and archaeology (Häkkinen, 1996). Contemporary research has taken additional steps starting from the 1970s, when results from genetics were added to the debate. The outcome of this discussion still remains to be seen, but it is certain that many old theories will have to be abandoned or modified (see Fogelberg (ed.), 1999; Norio, 2000).

<sup>14</sup> The first sure signs of primitive agriculture can be dated back to the third millennium B.C. (Nunez 1999).

major distinction has been made between eastern and western Finland.<sup>15</sup> The western conceptions show the importance of agricultural spirits and deities, whereas in the east nature spirits and deities were more dominant. A common feature seems to have been the importance given to ancestor spirits and worship. The core community was the family and the kin. Traditional Finnish and Saami religion has often been interpreted as a form of Shamanism that shares similarities with, among other phenomena, Siberian archaic religions. Traditional religion did not have an explicitly formulated theology and was by nature practical and ritualistic, related to everyday life and critical occurrences in individual and group lives. It incorporated new ideas relatively easily, especially if they did not mean changes in traditional practices. This trait in traditional religion made the later diffusion of Christian ideas significantly easier (Anttonen, 2002; Pirinen, 1991: 25-28, 58-59; Siikala, 1992).

The Baltic Sea and other waterways united the Finns with neighbouring cultures. In South-western Finland, the majority of the inhabitants lived close to water, by the sea or the rivers, as waterways were the most important means of transport until a few centuries ago. During the Viking Age (800-1050), Swedes and Russians had intensive trade contacts that touched Southern Finland. Trade, but also aggression in the form of raids seems to have been commonplace. Even though there is no evidence to suggest that Finns travelled, some individuals perhaps did and groups of foreigners occasionally settled in Finland<sup>16</sup>. The mouth of the Aura River, where the town of Turku was later founded, was one of the market places in

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<sup>15</sup> The border was actually more from the Northwest to the Southeast. Norio (2000: 166-173) discusses this factor combining different scholarly traditions giving a broader view to the question. The Ahvenanmaa/Åland Islands are in many ways an exceptional case and have more in common with Sweden than Finland (Huurre, 2000: 164-166).

<sup>16</sup> The role of migrant groups in bringing new cultures and cultural innovations is one of the most central issues in Finnish archaeological debate. Even though migration at times seems to have been of major importance, only little is known exactly and various theories exist. However, it is most

Finland. For instance, some linguists and historians presume that *Kupittaa*, which is a place name in modern-day Turku, relates to the Russian word *kupets* – tradesman. Even the name Turku has been interpreted as a loan from Russian meaning a market place. Thus, the origin of the name would be prehistoric, as Russian contacts finished with the establishment of Swedish rule (Pirinen, 1991: 32; Salo, 1985).

Commercial contacts between Swedes, Russians and settlers were the most likely way for the first Christian influences to have come to Finland. Linguistic evidence suggests that some central Christian words in the Finnish language, such as priest (*pappi*), cross (*risti*) and Bible (*raamattu*), are of Russian origin. Thus, the first major Christian influences on Finland presumably came during the Viking Age from the East. Further, archaeological excavations and finds reveal that in the Åland Islands and in parts of South Western Finland burial traditions changed at the beginning of the eleventh century. The changes in the burial traditions have been understood as an indication of living Christian communities. The first material signs of contacts with Christianity and, perhaps, Christian ideas can be dated back as far as the sixth century. Early Christian influences supposedly came through merchants and sailors, who were in more intimate contact with other cultures. The role of migrant communities has to be left open, but it is quite likely that they were also important. Gradually, some kinds of congregations were formed and, maybe, missionaries sent and priests invited (Hiekkanen, 2002b: 76-79; Pirinen, 1991: 29-32, 43-46).

In the easternmost parts of the country (the Karelian peninsula) Christianity established itself through the Eastern Church.<sup>17</sup> The process seems to have been slower than in western Finland. Heikki

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likely that migrants played a major role also in Iron Age Finland (Huurre, 2000; Fogelberg (ed.), 1999).

<sup>17</sup> The official split between the Catholic and Orthodox traditions occurred in 1054, but the churches had even before then, and later to a growing degree, developed in distinct directions (Pirinen, 1991: 15-17).

Kirkinen (1995: 36-37) notes that Christian influences had become stronger by the thirteenth century, and that by the fourteenth century there already existed a network of congregations. The role of Orthodox monks and missionaries was probably quite strong in the establishment of early Christianity, but common beliefs stayed highly syncretistic. A possible reason for the archeologically vague evidence of deeper Christian influence might have to do with the more tolerant policy of the church towards traditional religiosity (Pirinen, 1991: 388). In sum, the early spread of Christian influences was essentially linked with trade, migration and other intercultural contacts.

### **3.2.2 The Catholic Middle Ages**

The Swedes had already had commercial contacts with Finns since prehistoric times, but the Swedish Crown became increasingly worried about the rising power of Russia in the twelfth century and therefore started to establish stronger ties with Finland. As a result, the Swedish Crown was established in South-western Finland during the latter part of the twelfth century, also with some resort to military force. Finland became now a province of Sweden and its destiny was closely bound to political, economic and cultural developments in Sweden, as well as to a broader European context through the Catholic Church. During early medieval<sup>18</sup> times, large numbers of Swedes moved to the coastal areas in Finland. The migrants were mainly peasants and fishermen, but they included some noblemen as well. These people spoke Swedish and they form the historical core of the current Swedish-speaking population of Finland (Westerholm, 1999: 283). The migrants were already Christians (Hiekkänen 2002a: 49-52; Pirinen, 1991: 64).<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> The Middle Ages in Finland are the period of the Catholic Church, starting in the twelfth century and lasting until the Reformation in the 1520s.

<sup>19</sup> It is obvious that people migrated from Sweden even earlier, but this was major migration period and was likely larger as well as geographically more spread than the earlier ones.

The Catholic Church took the initiative together with the secular authorities. In national church history these transitory years are called the time of the crusades<sup>20</sup>. Only a little is known about the earliest actions of the church, because of the lack of sources, but some individual developments are known. For example in Turku, the Dominican order started its activity in 1249 and a cathedral chapter was founded in 1276. Both indicate stability and continuity in the church's activities. The institutions were accompanied by a school that provided educational possibilities for Finns. Finland functioned as one diocese until the 1550s (Pirinen, 1991: 53-58, 73, 297).

Finnish society started to take shape. First, Finland became a clearly identified territory as a part of Sweden, although in the beginning the concept of 'Finland' only related to the south-western parts of the country, but it later expanded to cover other areas under Swedish rule. This also implied identification as being a subject of the crown, with a larger unit replacing the kin as the top-level identity. Second, the whole culture received new features, such as the emergence of new social groups and small urban centres. These changes were obviously strongest in areas where the new rulers had the closest contact with the common people, but it directly affected almost everybody, for example, through church and taxation. Third, new technology, organisations and ideas spread more quickly and more comprehensively than before and the number of international contacts, and people affected by them, rose in number (Kallioinen, 2002; Lehtonen, 2002a).

The church and state worked hand in hand throughout the Catholic period. The church, beside religious matters, took care of education and emerging public health care, as well as providing an information medium for the rulers (Lehtonen, 2002a). The Catholic Church brought literary culture and education to Finland. The initial purpose of the establishment of schools was to educate churchmen

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<sup>20</sup> It remains an open question to what extent the establishment of Christianity in Finland was a slow process of cultural diffusion or was based on more coercive methods, including the crusades, see Hiekkänen, 2002b.

for the needs of the church, but as a side effect, literacy started slowly spreading to higher circles of society. There was also a demand on the state's side for men with literacy skills. Several Finns also studied in European universities and brought new ideas to Finland. Some pious Christians made long pilgrimages to European holy places. All in all, even though it was positioned on the periphery, Finland was not totally isolated from European intellectual trends, and the transcultural nature of the Catholic Church was above all a major reason for this (Pirinen, 1991: 202-213).

In the twelfth century a bishop's seat was founded at Nousiainen, twenty kilometres north of present-day Turku. It was moved from Nousiainen to Koroinen in 1229/1230, where a church and a place of residence for the bishop were built. In the 1290s, the bishop's church was again moved, from Koroinen two kilometres downstream to the emerging new town of Turku. A new cathedral was consecrated in 1300 and devoted to St. Mary and St. Henry, the legendary first bishop of Finland. *Episcopus Aboensis* was one of the most powerful men in Finland and, as a matter of fact, in the whole of Sweden (Gardberg, 1985; Pirinen, 1991: 53-58, 74).

The valley of the Aura River became the main administrative centre for Swedish authorities and the church, and it maintained that position until the early nineteenth century. The river valley was originally protected by a fortified hill in Lieto, but later on, the Turku Castle was built closer to the sea. It became the headquarters of the representative of the Swedish Crown—*prefectus Finlandiae*. The exact date of the foundation of the City of Turku is unknown, but it happened around the turn of the fourteenth century. Turku has been a commercial centre since its foundation, and it is supposed that German merchants played a considerable role in establishing the local market. In any case, the Germans played a central role in the local economy and society in the Middle Ages (Gardberg, 1985; Hiekkänen, 2002c; Pirinen, 1991: 48). During the medieval period, Turku was a relatively small centre of trade in a larger perspective, but it still had extensive commercial, administrative and religious connections with Sweden, the Baltic Region and Central Europe.

Finns, Swedes and Germans made up the local population of circa 1,500 at the end of the medieval period (Gardberg, 1973: 216-219, 1985; Kuujo, 1985: 94; Niitemaa, 1985).

Eastern Finland followed an alternative path during the Catholic period. Russian influence intensified gradually with the rise of the Moscow State. Parishes and monasteries were founded, and even if the church tolerated traditional beliefs more than in the west, action was taken against certain practices. Slowly but surely, Orthodox beliefs spread in popularity, especially in larger settlements. A permanent line of division had been established between the churches of East and West. The main part of Finland was to follow the western path and Turku was at the centre of this process (Kirkinen, 1995: 85-91).

During the Middle Ages, Finland, as a part of Sweden, became tied to a North European network of economic, political, cultural and religious connections. In this network the city of Turku was the



**Photo 3.1** The Cathedral of Turku. Photo: Ollipekka Kangas.

main local centre in Finland. Through the Catholic Church, the network reached even further and made the circulation and spread of religious innovations more intensive than it had earlier been. With the establishment of literacy, ideas could now move without direct human contact. However, Finland and Turku were still, to a large extent, on the periphery of Europe.

### **3.3 The early modern period**

The early modern period begins from the Reformation and lasts until the mid-nineteenth century, consisting of the latter half of Swedish rule and over half-a-century of the Russian regime. While still a mainly agricultural economy, proto-industries emerged in different parts of the country, the educational level rose and the political system took an early shape. The period is characterised by restrictive religious policies, but also by an emerging individualistic view of religious practice and belief. The growth of literacy and a rising number of widely available religious texts opened up new channels of religious influence that became manifest in the spread of Pietism. The Lutheran revival movements challenged the church's right to interpret religious truths. Immigration began to increase towards the end of the period. Turku remained the main urban centre in Finland all through the early modern period.

#### **3.3.1 From the Reformation to the Lutheran state church**

The sixteenth century was a period of cultural and political transition in Northern Europe. The collapse of the all-Nordic Kalmar Union between Sweden and Denmark was followed by the formation of a hereditary kingship in Sweden. The leader of the anti-unionists, Gustav Vasa, was elected the new king of Sweden in 1523. During his reign, the relationship between state and church was dramatically altered. The Swedish state became Lutheran, although there was a short Catholic counter-movement in the late sixteenth century



(Pirinen, 1991: 322-329). The Reformation marked an end to close contacts with European Catholic countries for several centuries and created a permanent cultural schism with South European Catholic countries. Trade was still continued with other countries, but, in general, there was a tendency to concentrate more on national affairs than before (Lehtonen, 2002b; Sundback, 2003a: 86-87).

In Central Europe the Reformation was already on its way after Martin Luther had published his thesis in Wittenberg in 1517. The Reformation included the idea of a division of labour between state and church, where the church was concerned mainly with religious matters and supported the secular regime. The Reformation was not a grassroots movement in Finland and Sweden as it was in Germany, but implemented from above. Gustav Vasa was indebted to German merchants during his rebellion against the union and saw the Church's property as an attractive possibility to solve the Crown's financial problems. The king was also interested in reducing the political power of the Catholic bishops and the diet of Västerås in 1527 was the official beginning of the Reformation in Sweden. The process led to a decline in the church's influence and authority and King Gustav Vasa was able both to reduce the church's political power and to make it more dependent on the state. However, the church still had a relatively large amount of freedom in doctrinal matters. The Lutheran faith was finally declared to be the state's official religion in 1544 (Pirinen, 1991: 274-281, 306).

The Reformation had long-lasting effects on Finnish culture, for even if it did not cause all too abrupt a change in religious practices at first, it made a great difference in the long run. The Swedish and Finnish languages started to replace Latin in services and, above all, the sermon acquired an important role. The Reformation's idea of praising the Lord in the vernacular also created an organisational change in the structure of the local congregation in Turku. Separate Swedish and Finnish activities were formed that were to become the basis for local religious activity for the following 400 years<sup>21</sup> (Nikula,

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<sup>21</sup> In organisational terms the two groups were sometimes together and sometimes separate, but the basic structure of providing religious services in

1987b: 558; Ranta, 1977b, 773-774, 803). The flow of students to European universities became smaller and then only to German Protestant universities. Especially the University of Wittenberg became an important educator of Finnish scholars (Pirinen, 1991: 282-284, 352-358). The founding of Åbo Academy, the first university in Finland, in Turku in 1640 further lessened the need to travel abroad for higher education.

Sweden became a major political and military power during the seventeenth century in Northern Europe. The country expanded its territory, especially to the east and south. The almost constant warfare with Russia ended in the Treaty of Stolbova in 1617, when Sweden gained large areas of new territory in West-Russia, in what is today Karelia and the St. Petersburg region. Among the native inhabitants were some 30,000 Russian Orthodox Christians, which provided a religious-political problem for the Swedes and the policy of religious uniformity. The Orthodox population were allowed to carry on with their religious practises to some extent, but eventually the authorities' pressure led to a mass emigration to Russia. During this century, significant numbers of Finns settled in the St. Petersburg region and we will meet their ancestors again later in the twentieth century, then called *Ingrians* (Laasonen, 1991: 191-195). Sweden also had considerable holdings in the Baltic. Sweden's period as a Nordic superpower ended in the battles of the Great Northern War (1700-1721), when King Carl XII (1697-1718) fought the country into ruin.

The seventeenth century was characterised by strict social divisions of class and a trend towards cultural uniformity in the cultural and religious spheres. The kingdom of Sweden was to be a uniform nation. With regard to religion, the term Lutheran orthodoxy refers to the tight policy of uniformity, which was at its peak in the latter part of the century. The state and church were mutually dependent institutions. The state was in theory a theocracy, with the autocratic king as the earthly representative of God and its practical head. The

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two languages did not change, and exists even today.

social order was based on distinguishing the church, the political institutions and the family as its core pillars, all with their distinct duties and responsibilities. The Lutheran faith was declared the only permitted religion in Sweden-Finland in 1617 and, after that, people were not officially allowed to practice any other religion in the country. The Lutheran orthodoxy was strengthened by the Church Law of 1686. By the seventeenth century, church and state already had most of Finland under their control. The Saami in Lapland were mostly christianised during this century and parish activity was now fairly effective even in the more remote areas of the country (Laasonen, 1991: 97, 100-101, 196-207).

Even though the seventeenth century is generally regarded as religiously uniform, in the last decades we can already meet the first seeds of difference. Some occasional upper-class Finns were knowledgeable about the ideas of Philipp Jakob Spener, and the religious movement known as Pietism. For instance, Johannes Gezelius Junior—Bishop of Turku from 1690-1718—knew Spener personally and was also in correspondence with him, thus providing a good example of how ideas could now travel long distances with the help of the postal service (Laasonen, 1991: 203, 220, 246-260).

The importance of Pietism is that it provided a new model for individual piety. It was based on the idea of *ecclesiola in ecclesia*—a congregation of true believers within a congregation—that was related to the idea of general priesthood. *Seurat*—laymen's spiritual meetings at private homes or in the church—were the cornerstone of Finnish Pietism. This meant an immense change; even the unlearned could be an authority in religious matters (Laasonen, 1991: 247). Pietism brought individual spirituality instead of collective responsibility into focus. The main sources for this influence came from Sweden and expatriates from the Baltic, which was known for a large pietistic population.

After the Reformation the main literature in Swedish and Finnish educated circles came from Germany and later from Britain, creating openings for the above-mentioned German Pietistic and, to a smaller extent, English reformed ideas. Devotional books, such as

Arthur Dent's *A Sermon on Repentance* (original 1582, Swedish 1702, Finnish 1732), were translated and had gained wide popularity by the end of the eighteenth century. The translations were censored so that their distinctly reformed ideas were erased, but nevertheless they provided new models of thought (Laine, 2000: 123-129). During the seventeenth century there emerged some occasional local revivals, often with an ecstatic flavour. Tuija Laine (2000: 323-325) notes that there seems to have been a relation between the popularity of devotional books of English origin and the revivals, confirming the observations of earlier research.

The eighteenth century was the *grande finale* of Swedish hegemony in Finland. The Great Northern War had been a catastrophe for the country and in the Treaty of Uusikaupunki in 1721 Sweden lost its eastern parts to the now rising Russia of Tsar Peter I (the Great). The ideas of Lutheran orthodoxy were still strong during this period, but gradually some elements of liberal thinking began to spread. In principle, all citizens had to belong to the Lutheran Church, but the legislation was slightly liberalised regarding foreigners, such as Anglican Englishmen, Reformed Scots and Catholics. They were tolerated even before, but now the policy was officially sealed regarding Christians in 1781 and Jews in 1782. The reason for the policy was the economic prosperity foreigners brought with them, as many of them were merchants and entrepreneurs. Foreigners were allowed to practice their religion at home, but not publicly (Laasonen, 1991: 382-384). The problem of the Russian Orthodox population had practically ceased, when Sweden lost its eastern parts to Russia.

The symbiosis of Sweden and Finland ended abruptly in 1808, when Russia attacked and invaded Finland. Tsar Alexander I's attack was connected with Napoleon's attempt to blockade England. Finland was declared an autonomous Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire in 1809, but the religious situation did not change significantly under the new regime. The main religion in Russia was Russian Orthodox Christianity, but the Russian regime generally tolerated religious minorities, which were numerous in the vast empire.

In Finland, the Lutheran Church was allowed to keep its monopoly status and the relationship between state and church stayed practically unchanged. Karelia was incorporated into Finland in 1811 and the Russian Orthodox became once again a large religious minority in Eastern Finland. At the time, one still had to belong to the Lutheran Church in order to hold a post in the public sector. The policy was changed in 1827, however, so that those of Orthodox faith could also hold public posts (Murtorinne, 1992: 11, 14-19, 80).

Religiosity was still public and collective by nature. Church attendance was obligatory as well as customary during the first half of the nineteenth century, although the upper-class and people living in remote areas were not very active participants. However, new forms of individual religiosity were slowly making their appearance. This was especially expressed in the pietistic revival movements and in the new Christian associations. Both were expressions of rising individuality, and ideologically based on imported German and English ideas, spread mainly through literature. The movements were based on voluntary lay activity, which reduced the role of educated churchmen and created new, initially unofficial religious practices. Not surprisingly, neither the Church nor the government were initially pleased with competing understandings of religiosity. The role of religion in society had begun to change (Murtorinne, 1992: 80, 90, 280).

Several revivals and revival movements occurred in different parts of Finland during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Many of these revivals gained a large following and spread to other regions either by migration or mission. Even though all the revivals had distinct features, they also shared some common ones. Socially they are seen as an expression of ordinary people's rising self-confidence in a period when hierarchical social structures were breaking down. Most of the revivals started in remote areas and in the countryside, and were partially based on older, local revivals. Individual awakening was needed for a true Christianity. The division between believers and the worldly-minded was strong. The church was criticised for an outward religiosity and laymen guided most of the move-

ments, but even though all the movements criticised the church, they nevertheless remained within it. The revivals were the first large-scale social movements in Finland (Murtorinne, 1992: 99-188). There were parallel developments in other European countries, and one specific characteristic of the Finnish movements is that they, almost without exception, remained within the Lutheran Church, despite criticism and several controversies (Murtorinne, 2002: 290; Sundback, 2003a: 92-94). In sociological terms, the movements can also be seen as a reaction to the rationalisation and differentiation of early modernity, as all the movements make a strong distinction between the religious and secular spheres of life (cf. Murtorinne, 2002).

While the revival movements were mainly a rural phenomenon, the Christian voluntary associations were mostly urban in character. The earliest associations were inspired by contacts with the English Evangelical movement, which at the time concentrated on revival and missionary activity. These contacts led to the foundation of The Finnish Bible Society (1812) and the Finnish Evangelical Society (1817). The Bible Society concentrated on producing inexpensive Bibles and the Evangelical Society on religious tracts. These literary works were to have a large impact on popular religiosity in the nineteenth century. The government reacted with a stricter censorship statute issued in 1829, which forbade all non-Lutheran publications, but the associations were still able to continue their work (Murtorinne, 1992: 18, 62-65, 89-90). The earliest associations were elitist in nature, but after the mid-century many more were founded and in these, lay interests also found an important place.

Until now, Turku had been at the centre of national developments. Over the centuries it had also gradually grown. The expansion expressed in figures is as follows: around 3,000 in the late sixteenth century, circa 6,000 in the late seventeenth century and some 9,000 in the late eighteenth century (Nikula, 1972a: 264, 1987a: 125; Ranta, 1977a: 148). However, from the viewpoint of the Russian authorities, Turku was too close to Stockholm and, thus, the nation's capital was moved to Helsinki in the 1810s. After a severe city fire in Turku

1827, even the university was moved to Helsinki, further strengthening its status as the new capital. Turku still remained the largest urban centre of the Grand Duchy until the latter half of the nineteenth century, but gradually became more clearly a regional centre in South-western Finland and less dominant in the national context. With regard to local religious changes, the above-described developments also happened in Turku. For the Lutheran Church the city still remained a central locality, as the archbishop had his seat there.

Since the Reformation, new religious impulses to Finland came mainly via religious literature and through the studies of Finns in European universities. Legislation had quite effectively blocked other forms of religious developments, including those related to migration. However, as Finland had become a part of the Russian Empire issues related religious pluralism due to growing immigration grew in importance. Until the Russian period, most of the intercultural relations were conducted in a North European context.

### **3.3.2 Immigration**

During medieval times, most of Finland had been rooted in the West European cultural sphere. Influences came mainly through Sweden, even though there were significant foreign settlements at times, mostly Germans in the cities, but also entrepreneurs from England and Scotland. Since Finland had become a part of the multiethnic and multireligious Russian Empire, which ruled most of Northeast Europe as well as Northern and Central Asia, and was situated close to the empire's capital St. Petersburg, the situation would change and immigration intensify (Joronen, Pajarinen and Ylä-Anttila, 2000: 118-119). St. Petersburg was among the grandest European economic, political and cultural centres of the time, providing possibilities for education, work and trade. The other side of the coin was that Finland would naturally become a destination for migration from the rest of the Russian State. Although immigration was legally restricted, it was not completely blocked, and civil servants, military personnel, as well as merchants with their families were among those

who were allowed to migrate to, or could be assigned to, Finland (Engman, 2002; Knapas and Forsgård, 2002).

Russians established Orthodox congregations in those Finnish local societies where they settled, including the cities of Turku and Helsinki. These were ethnic congregations in the sense that they were directed at the local Russians and did not have any missionary activity or wish to serve the rest of the community. For instance, intermarriage between the Orthodox and Lutherans was highly uncommon (Repo-Lehikoinen, 2002: 44). It is worth noting that these city congregations were vastly different from the Orthodox parishes in Karelia. The immigrant parishes were urban and Russian speaking, while the Karelian parishes were mainly rural and Finnish-speakers formed the majority of the members. The early part of the eighteenth century witnessed the building of a number of Russian Orthodox churches in cities, thus producing the first non-Lutheran church buildings since the Middle Ages (Koukkunen, 1982: 121; Raivo, 1996: 64-68).

Among the migrants and military there were also small numbers of Catholics, Jews and Muslims. The Catholic community was composed mainly of soldiers, merchants and representatives of certain specific professions, many of whom were Poles (Vuorela, 1989: 22-26). The Jews were, almost without exception, retired soldiers from the Russian military and their families (Harviainen, 1995; 1999). Muslims at this stage were individual soldiers in various garrisons (Leitzinger, 1996: 103). The number of people in these groups varied over time, but altogether they numbered a few thousand at most during this period. Their legal status varied to some extent, but generally speaking we might see them as tolerated ethno-religious minorities, who were allowed to provide religious services for their own group, but not for outsiders.

In modern times it is fashionable to point out that Finland has had non-Christian minorities, especially Muslims and Jews, since the nineteenth century, but the comparison with late twentieth century Finland is problematic. The groups were strictly ethnic communities, outsiders did not have any major knowledge of them and



it was not possible to convert to other religions. The groups existed on the margin of mainstream society and did not provide any significant multiculturalism in the current sense of the word. The nature of nineteenth century ethno-religious diversity was one of co-existence, less of religious pluralism, whereas today the social and legal boundaries are less rigid. However, migration from Russia broadened significantly the geographical scope of origin of religious communities in the country.

### **3.4 The modern period**

The modern period marks one of the major transitions in the history of Finland. It started in the latter half of the nineteenth century when the country formed part of the Russian Empire. During the modern period Finland changed from an agricultural to an urban industrial society. The first wave of industrialisation in Finland started around the 1870s and it created urbanisation and increased individual mobility. The fastest changes happened in a few urban centres and in their surroundings. The city of Turku now lost its position as the central locality of the country and Helsinki took its place as the dominant national centre. Finland declared itself independent in the aftermath of the October Revolution in 1917. The two last decades before independence were a period of Russification, and during this period circa 300,000 people moved to North America, which was the largest migration in the history of the country so far. After independence a short civil war was fought, followed by a decade of intense civil organisation, so that the new republic could function. In 1939, Finland was drawn into war with the Soviet Union, with hostilities lasting until 1945. The modern period saw the end of a static society and the emergence of a more dynamic and institutionally differentiated one (Murtorinne, 1992: 195, 297-304, 384-387). However, it is necessary to keep in mind that Finland was still mainly an agrarian society until the 1950s.

### 3.4.1 Changes in religious legislation

The modern period witnesses major changes in the legal position of religion. A new church law acquired legal force in 1870, confirming the future role of the Lutheran Church as a body dedicated solely to religious matters. The principle of religious freedom was included in the new law, but was not put into practice before independence. The new law replaced the law of 1686, which had been passed in the age of Lutheran orthodoxy. The Dissenter Act (1889) allowed the founding of new Protestant churches. One was able to leave the Lutheran Church, if one joined another registered Protestant church. After independence, religious legislation changed considerably again. The Religious Liberty Act of 1922 made it a personal matter whether or not one belonged to a religious organisation and religious freedom was established.<sup>22</sup> Soon after the law acquired force, a number of religious groups sought official approval and were granted it. For instance, the Catholic Church established its activity officially again in the country, after almost 400 years of legal restrictions and prohibition. A civil register was established for those who did not want to belong to any religious organisation. The Lutheran and Orthodox Churches received special legislation and were considered to be ‘national churches’ (Sundback, 1991: 127-129, 180-183). The new position was more dramatic for the Orthodox Church as its membership was only a fraction of that of the Lutheran Church, being at the time 63.000—circa 2% of the population (Murtorinne, 1995: 220).

During the modern period the Lutheran Church lost, at least in legal terms, its hegemonic position as the preferred religious organisation in the country. Together with increasing international contacts this made it significantly easier for new religions to start their activity in Finland. Even though the church remained by far the largest religious organisation in the country, a growing number of other

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<sup>22</sup> The Religious Liberty Act was replaced by a new act in August 2003. There were certain important changes in the new act, but they fall outside the scope of this study.

religious organisations began their activity. Religious literature, missionaries, immigrants and returning migrants now had free access to introduce new religious ideas in Finland. Religious pluralism grew on the margins of society, but did not seriously challenge the position of the Lutheran Church at this time.

### **3.4.2 The national churches**

If the first half of the nineteenth century was to some extent a relatively stable period and, in spite of Finland being a part of the Russian Empire, a continuation of Lutheran orthodoxy, the latter half of the century laid the foundation for the breakthrough of modernity. The church had taken care of most secular issues on the level of local societies, especially in the countryside, but over the course of two decades a secular municipality division was established and the church surrendered its educational and social security responsibilities, which it had maintained since medieval times. Further, the increasing complexity of society needed new types of expertise to handle the growing amount of secular matters and the school curriculum was changed to suit the needs of secular society (Murtorinne, 1992: 195-220).

The emergence and large-scale distribution of newspapers also diminished the Church's role as a mediator of information. The amount of religious literature increased, spreading new ideas and promoting individual religiosity. The Christian associations promoted lay activity in religious matters. The revival movements influenced them, but even more important influence came from Anglo-American models. The first associations of this period were motivated by missionary interest, as when, for instance the Finnish Missionary Society (1859) sent its first missionaries to Ovamboland (present-day Namibia) in 1868. To collect the necessary funds the society founded mission groups in local congregations, in addition to which local mission societies were formed. In Turku, a local missionary society was founded that eventually led to a local revival movement. It was the so-called Hannula revival—named after the former

Ovamboland missionary Frans Hannula—which grew to a major religious movement in the 1910s and the 1920s, but declined after that (Junkkaala, 1986). Later, other associations were founded around different ideas, such as home and seamen’s missions.

The Orthodox Church had enjoyed a more favourable position during the latter part of the nineteenth century. It had become a diocese of its own, thus strengthening its identity as a separate entity. However, during the Russification period in the early part of the twentieth century it became subject to more hostile policies from the authorities, combined with attempts to Russify its members. Especially the schools became targets of these policies. By and large, however, the policies did not produce anything more than irritation and a small movement towards the Lutheran Church among some of its members (Murtorinne, 1995: 100-103).

The position of both the Lutheran and the Orthodox Churches changed after independence, as explained earlier. The churches were now regarded as ‘*national churches*’. The Lutheran Church still remained the majority’s church as the number leaving the church remained low, with some local exceptions. The right to taxation via state taxation has stayed until this day, thus securing the financial base. Religious education remained part of the school curriculum and the church had its independence, now perhaps more than earlier (Seppo, 1999: 11-16). The Lutheran Church was politically conservative and many priests were members of parliament. Being on the side of the Whites in the civil war of 1918—if not officially then in practice—had nevertheless created tensions between a large part of the population and the bourgeois church. The Christian associations that had blossomed since the late 1880s became closer to the church and started to organise on the national level, often in close co-operation with the church. They still provided a major channel of influence, but many of their original ideas became gradually adapted by local congregations. Lutheran revival movements experienced a sudden rise in profile during the pre-war period, when nationalistic thinkers saw them as presenting a kind of true Finnishness. This was particularly the case with the Pietistic Movement. Congregational

life and attendance of services stayed fairly constant until the 1950s, with some peaks during times of national crises. The main long-term trend was a declining one, however. Elsewhere on the international front, the Lutheran Church started to become involved with the ecumenical movement, although rather cautiously (Murtorinne, 1995: 191-194).

Darwinism and modern science were the basis of a transition in people's worldview. Ideologically, national romanticism and liberalism were guiding lines in the thought of the time. The change in worldviews started among the Swedish-speaking educated circles in the 1880s and later moved to the Finnish-speaking educated population and, via newspapers, to the common man. On a different front, the Swedish language maintained its higher status until Finland's independence, but that was to be changed. Since the nineteenth century, the national-romantic movement had been preoccupied with the construction of Finnish identity and the establishment of the Finnish language as a language of culture was an important part of this. Relations between the two language groups were severely damaged in the 1920s, leaving permanent marks, for example at the organisational level, so that parallel organisations based on language were formed (Westerholm, 1999: 280-283).

The now Finnish, rather than Russian, Orthodox Church experienced a period of turmoil in the 1920s, when it had to reorganise its activities. Previously, most of its leading personnel had been Russians, but the church now underwent an intensive period of Fennicisation. It left the Russian Church and established connections with the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople, as well as with Baltic Orthodox Churches. This caused restlessness among some members, mostly Russian speakers, who formed their own congregations which stayed under the Russian Church. The turmoil took some time to settle, but before the 1940s the church was *de facto* a Finnish Orthodox Church (Murtorinne, 1995: 218-222). After the Second World War, some 450,000 Karelians had to be resettled in new areas, as Finland lost its most eastern part to the Soviet Union. Among the Karelians were circa 50,000 Orthodox, thus providing

the greatest Orthodox exodus in the history of the country as this geographical minority was resettled around Finland. At first the Karelians were mostly situated in remote areas, where free land could be found, but due to growing industrialisation they were often the first move to the urban centres in pursuit of work. This means that the contemporary Karelian Orthodox have often experienced migration twice over a short period of time (Raivo, 1996: 163-188).

The city of Turku became an industrial centre in South-western Finland during the modern period, and as a part of that process its population grew from 20,000 in the 1870s to some 100,000 in the 1950s. This created major challenges for the Lutheran Church and in the 1920s several new parishes were founded to better serve the growing population. Also a number of separate religious associations were founded that were dedicated to various issues, often to help those in a socially less well-off position. These associations supplemented the work done by the church, which had hitherto concentrated mostly on providing religious services and rituals (Juva, 1985: 767, 791-798).

### **3.4.3 Contenders of traditional religious institutions**

In the latter half of the nineteenth century two Anglo-American Protestant churches established their activity in Finland. These were the Baptists and the Methodists, which were also officially organised and received state recognition. At the same time, the Finnish Free Church movement started. Later, several new Christian communities were established: including, Adventism (1890s), the Salvation Army (1899), Pentecostalism (1908) and the Jehovah's Witnesses (1910). The most common route of introduction was through the Swedish-speaking population and among inhabitants of larger cities. Increasing mobility, natural contacts with Sweden and, later, migration to the United States provided opportunities to learn about faiths previously unknown in Finland (Holm, 1978: 21; Murtorinne: 1995, 104-107; Seppo, 1983: 15-37).

The Religious Liberty Act in 1922 settled the decades-long battle for freedom of religious expression, allowing all religious groups to organise officially and receive state recognition by registering as religious communities. Also the Christian associations spread similar ideas, which eventually became established within the Lutheran Church, or at least they found a niche to operate there. Membership in the new organisations remained relatively marginal and locally bound, but Turku was one of the localities where they flourished (see table 3.1). Murtorinne (1995: 106-107) suggests that the general difficulties in finding support for the new organisations might have to do partly with language questions and partly because of the strong role of the Lutheran revival movements. As Turku had a strong Swedish-speaking community, it was natural that it became one of the national centres for the new organisations. A careful estimate of the number of people involved in the different communities in Finland is 10.000-20.000 in the 1910s and 40.000-50.000 in the 1950s. The growth in memberships has been largest in respect of the Pentecostal Movement and the Jehovah's Witnesses. Especially the Pentecostals were successful in recruiting members from other Protestant communities (Murtorinne, 1995: 223-228).

All the new movements emphasised personal faith and lay activity. They represented another version of post-Reformation Christianity, much less bound to official state structures than the Lutheran and Anglican Churches in Northern Europe, which lived in actual symbiosis with mainstream society. At first they were considered a threat to public morality and religious uniformity, but in time they were accepted as a necessary evil by the mainstream churches. Often the communities also criticised the church for not representing a true version of the Christian faith. Sometimes they even collaborated with secularists in their effort to fight for larger religious freedom (Murtorinne, 1995: 104).

Beside the Protestant churches, the modern period saw the birth of two seemingly opposite trends with regard to religious matters. The first was the emergence of an atheist or secular form of thought that often took a hostile attitude towards religion in general, basing

its message on rational, scientific thought. Pressure against compulsory membership of the Lutheran Church had started among educated circles, but later expanded to other groups. The Socialists, or some of them, included the separation of church and state in their political programme. The political left promulgated the idea of religious freedom and was strongly present in the atheistic or secularist movement. It seems, though, that the majority of the Socialist movement was not against religion, but only against the bourgeois church. The church still represented the upper level of the society to the common people. The issue was solved in practice in the Religious Freedom Act, which made it possible to leave the church. At this time, too, a number of associations for atheists and secularists were formed, also in Turku (Murtorinne, 1995: 140-145; Sundback, 1991: 120-137).

The other trend was the emergence of esoteric religion combined with an interest in oriental religiosity, for example the Theosophical Society. The Theosophical Society represented a new form of alternative spiritual activity. It became known in Finland in the 1890s. The movement had established itself in the previous decade in Sweden, from where the contacts also came in the form of Swedish-language literature (Ahlbäck, 1995: 74-75). Again, the Swedish connection was important. While the Finnish Theosophical Society itself has never had a significant number of members, it has however been important for national religious development. It was the first organised movement to spread Asian religious ideas, such as the law of karma and reincarnation, in Finland. Its widely disseminated publishing activity paved the way for later movements, as well as making many religious texts available. The Theosophical Society in Finland was officially founded in 1907 and that year the movement also started its activity in Turku. Later, other similar organisations were founded.

All the above mentioned, as well as a number of other, representatives of traditional institutionalised religion had local groups and congregations functioning in Turku (see table 3.1). They represented a grassroots religious pluralism that attempted to challenge,



as well as to provide alternatives, to Lutheran religious activity. The diverse organisations remained to a large extent on the margins of local society, but nevertheless created openings for new religious impulses that had their origins far away from Finland, often in the United States. Through these organisations active connections to other countries emerged, broadening local networks to a transnational plane. The local religious field had now broadened its horizons across the Atlantic.

	<b>First decade of activity</b>	<b>Name of the movement</b>
<b>Lutheran</b>	1830s	Pietism (herännäisyys)
	1840s	Evangelical Movement
	1870s	Lestadianism
	1900s	Hannula revival
	1920s	Independent Lutheran congregations
<b>Independent Protestantism-based churches</b>	1870s	The Free Church Movement
	1880s	Methodism
	1880s	Baptism
	1890s	Adventism
	1890s	The Salvation Army
<b>Outside the Christian mainstream</b>	1900s	Jehovah's Witnesses
	1940s	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons)
<b>Immigrant religious communities</b>	1800s	Russian Orthodox Church
	1810s	Catholic Church
	mid 19th century	Jews
	late 19th century	Tatar Muslims
	1890s	German Lutherans
<b>Other communities</b>	1900s	Theosophical Society
	1920s	Liberal Catholic Church
	1930s	Anthroposophical Society
	1940s	Christosophy

**Table 3.1** New religious communities in Turku from 1800 to the 1940s (Martikainen, 1996).

### 3.4.4 Immigrant religions

The modern period witnessed two highly different phases of immigration. During Russian rule, Finland was fairly open to migration from the empire, and the situation remained so until the late 1920s. From the 1930s till the 1960s the country remained more or less closed for immigration and those who had migrated earlier gradually integrated into Finnish society and were granted citizenship. The number of foreign citizens<sup>23</sup> hovered around 10,000 during the whole period with a slight decline towards the end (Statistics Finland, 2002: 114). The major exception was a sudden peak after the Russian Revolution and the establishment of the Soviet regime. Then some 30,000 people emigrated from the newly founded Soviet Union, but most of them travelled further on in the following years. Furthermore, before and during the Second World War large numbers of refugees and evacuees entered the country, but most of these left Finland later for other destinations (Lepola, 2000: 39-41).

The major immigrant religions were the Russian Orthodox Church, the Catholic Church, Judaism and Tatar Islam, all of which originated in imperial Russia. All of these groups also organised their activity during the Russian period, but officially only after independence, with the exception of the Russian Orthodox, which had special statutes regarding their activity even before. For the rest, however, it was the Religious Liberty Act in 1922 that would set the official guidelines for organisation.

The Russian Orthodox were by far the largest immigrant group. They numbered several thousands (excluding soldiers) and in the 1920s there were circa 8,000 Russian-speaking Orthodox left in the newly found republic (Murtorinne, 1995: 221). Due to the internal struggles in the Finnish Orthodox Church, a minority of the Russian-speakers left the church to found new congregations under the

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<sup>23</sup> The number of 'foreign citizens' refers, prior to 1917, to people whose mother tongue was not Finnish, Swedish or Saami. The figure does not take into account the sometimes larger numbers of people involved in military operations, or temporary refugees.

Moscow Patriarchate. These parishes still exist today. The rest of the Russian-speakers remained within the Finnish Orthodox Church forming the core in most of the city parishes, which was also the case in Turku. Most of the congregations stayed more or less Russian-speaking until the Karelian resettlement after the Second World War, which eventually led to the dominance of Finnish in all Orthodox parishes in the country (Heino, 1997: 67-68; Repo, 1999).

Jews, Tatar Muslims and Catholics all have slightly different histories in the country. Jews were mostly retired soldiers, Tatar Muslims tradesmen and Catholics of more diverse origin. However, all of them lived in urban areas and were first-generation migrants. Their religious activity was tolerated, but only after independence could they organise themselves officially and obtain formal state recognition. Their total number was a few thousand. These groups also invited priests, rabbis and imams from other countries, as there was only elementary religious education in Finland. They were thus dependent on transnational contacts. Beside these groups, there were also Swedish and German Lutherans, as well as Anglicans, that had some activity in Finland (Heino, 1997: 70-74, 212-215).

Turku was one of the immigrant centres of Finland during the Russian period. It had a Russian garrison and, thus, a larger presence of foreigners than many other Finnish localities. The local Russian Orthodox congregation was the centre of local Orthodox life. Furthermore, small Jewish, Catholic and Tatar Muslim communities were founded in the latter part of the Russian period (Jutikkala, 1985a: 404-405; Juva, 1985: 795-798; Uusitalo, 1982: 387-390). Among the migrants there were also German Lutherans, who had some activity in their own language (Uusitalo, 1982: 365-366). The religious activities in these groups remained within ethnic boundaries.

By the end of the modern period, the immigrant religious communities had found their place in Finnish society and could not be distinguished from the rest of it. Some tensions still existed as, for example, the Orthodox Church still had the reputation of being *ryssän kirkko* (“The Russian Church”, pejorative) (Repo, 1999: 296). The

experience of the Second World War was especially significant for the Jews and the Tatars, who had also had problems in showing their value in the new society (Harviainen, 1999: 339-341; Sakaranaho, 2002: 145-147). The congregations and other institutions related to them—associations and a few schools—had become ethnic havens, where the members could practise their religion, language and culture. None of the communities mentioned played a major role in public, but had rather chosen a quiet life on the margins of society, even though the members themselves were upwardly mobile on the social ladder. If the Russian period, at least in some cities like Turku, Helsinki and Viipuri, could at times be described as multicultural, the post-independence period until the 1960s could not. It was a time of ethnic enclaves.

### **3.5 The late modern period**

The post-war time was a period of great structural changes in Finland. Rapid urbanisation and industrialisation changed the land from a mainly agricultural economy to an industrial one from the 1950s to the 1970s. During the late modern period almost 500,000 Finns emigrated to Sweden to find work and a significant number of these have stayed in there. Massive flows of people moved from the countryside to Finnish cities and a new form of suburban life emerged, with the city of Turku, for example, almost doubling its population. It has also been a time of peace and economic growth, and the level of welfare is higher than ever. Transnational connections have also grown remarkably at all levels of society and the electronic media have become a major vector of cultural impulses. Immigration to Finland has increased since the mid-1980s. Previously, Finland was a fairly closed country, but the immigration policy is more liberal today. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990 and membership of the European Union in 1995 have been significant factors in this development. In the post-war era, Finland has become a western-style urban, service-oriented society.

### 3.5.1 Transforming churches

The first four decades of independent Finland were a time of isolation and nationalism, which came to an end in the post-war period and were replaced by growing international consciousness and the building of an industrialised country. The Lutheran Church had until now been part of the building block of Finnish identity and a strong element in local societies. As the country urbanised over a few decades, the church lost the ‘legs’ on which it had stood for centuries as traditional local communities broke down (Kortekangas, 2003). The challenges for local parishes in Turku were also large as the population continued to grow. More personnel was recruited, new forms of activity were established, while parish halls and churches were built (Uusitalo, 1982: 383-387). During the post-war decades the church in general underwent major changes and, for instance, the role of distinctly religious activities has become less important and some other forms of religiously motivated activity have grown extensively (Kortekangas, 2003). Over the last decades, for instance, the position of musical and artistic activities has grown, showing the importance of expressive religiosity in today’s world (Ketola, 2003b: 72-81). Transnational activity in mission, development aid and ecumenical contacts have become major functions of the church. The Lutheran Church has been active in various transnational Christian organisations and continuously takes steps to increase them. For instance, it is one of the founding members of the World Council of Churches, as well as a member of the Lutheran World Federation and the Conference of European Churches (Murtorinne, 1995: 422-423).

The adaptation to a changed social reality has not been without its challenges. For instance, church membership has been on the decline throughout the whole period and traditional religious services have consistently attracted less and less participants (Niemelä, 2003a, b). This has also been one motivation for the introduction of new activities which try to reach people through non-customary methods, such as concerts. Also, the liberalisation of traditional

church values, including the introduction of female priests in the 1980s, has led to protest movements within the church. The church has been accused of losing its essential features and making unnecessary compromises with secular society (Ketola, 2003a: 50-51). As the voices are those of the most active segment of church members, it is understandable that the church has been rather cautious about these changes.

The situation could perhaps be described as the *internal pluralisation* of the church. The majority of church members are satisfied with the possibility of benefiting from life rituals and do not seriously consider leaving it (Niemelä, 2003b). However, since the 1960s, voices representing traditionalist sentiments have risen to oppose the trend of adaptation to mainstream values. The Evangelical Movement (in Finland the so-called Fifth Revival), represented by a number of competing organisations, has been its main proponent. Traditional revivalist movements have to some extent supported it, especially the Evangelical Revival of the nineteenth century, but so far they have lost just about every battle for defining the church's direction. The other highly visible proponent of similar sentiments is the Charismatic Movement, which is also strong within the church (Ketola, 2003a: 50-51). However, that the Lutheran Church has been able to accommodate the various groups may be considered a remarkable achievement, as all splinter groups have received only marginal support. A likely reason for this state of affairs has been the high tolerance of different views, but also the central position of belonging to the Lutheran tradition. The situation has also created new networks between traditionalists in the church and Protestant free churches, which are mainly manifested in interfaith associations. However, not all groups consider the church's current orientation problematic, but rather take advantage of it. The church allows a vivid presence of competing, or at least opposing, orientations even among its clergy, which appears in different forms. Retreats, pilgrimages and ecumenical groups are all activities that break boundaries between Lutheran and other churches in a way that is unacceptable for the more conservative wing. All in all, the

Lutheran Church is internally fairly diffuse in its religious orientation and its continuous adoption of new forms of activity. This diversity can be found on the local plane in all larger Finnish cities. How it manifests itself in Turku is presented in detail in section 4.2.1.1.

The Finnish Orthodox Church also experienced an immense change in the post-war period. It lost most of its property in the aftermath of the Second World War and the majority of its members had to resettle in different parts of the country. The change in Turku was not as dramatic as elsewhere, because the local parish did not suffer major war losses, but rather gained new members through migration. The decades following the war were a period of reorganisation and creation of a new infrastructure. Simultaneously, the church experienced a trend of diminishing participation similar to that of the Lutheran Church and, to some extent, a decrease in membership. However, the official position as a state-supported ‘national church’ has given it a financial base on which it has been able to function. The church’s image as a ‘Russian Church’ gradually lost its significance and the public image became distinctly Finnish. Over the last decades the Orthodox faith has received increasing attention in the media, whilst some media personalities have also converted to the faith. The church’s rich liturgical life has become of great interest simultaneously with the rise of expressive religion in general. Recently, the church has benefited from the rise in immigration from Eastern Europe, which is also the case in Turku and will be discussed further in section 4.2.1.3 and in Chapter 5 (Repo, 1999).

### **3.5.2 Increasing religious pluralism**

The Finnish religious field has been greatly broadened during the post-war period. Many of the new groups are Protestant Christian, but other religious traditions have also found their way into the country. The following larger groupings have been the most significant: Christians from the Evangelical, Charismatic and Faith Movements, as well as a number of New Religious Movements representing non-

Christian traditions. In addition to these, a plethora of other communities have been founded (Ketola, 2003b: 81-85). Furthermore, the alternative spiritual scene has exploded and new immigrant religions have been established (Heino, 1997). It is not necessary to go into detail here with regard to this immensely varied scene, but the focus will be pointed instead at some elementary traits of this religious pluralism.

First, most of the new groups have a connection with the North American religious scene (Ketola, 2003b: 83). The role of English as the lingua franca in the western world is certainly a key-factor in the process, and many Finns have also studied in American religious colleges. Whereas contacts to Germany played an important role earlier, that now seems to have ceased almost completely. However, Sweden still continues to be, just as it was historically, an important mediator of new religious impulses. For instance, the Faith Movement (Word of Life, *Livets Ord*) and ISCKON (Hare Krishna) have come to the country via Sweden, just to name two different religious movements (Heino, 1997: 241; Martikainen, 1996: 64).

Second, new organisations are formed continuously. Every year several new religious groups start their activity in the country. The matter has not been studied systematically in Finland, but there seem to be some major reasons for this development. First, people who have already been active in congregational life for one reason or another want to start a new group: the charismatic City Church in Turku, for example, represents one such case (IF 2002/8: 5; Martikainen, 1996: 74). Second, missionaries of hitherto unknown communities attempt to start new activity. This might take some time, but they may eventually succeed. For instance, the Chinese Falun Gong needed two visits to the major annual event of alternative spirituality in Finland—The Mind and Knowledge Fairs (*Hengen ja Tiedon Messut*) in Helsinki—before an interested group was formed. Third, immigrants bring with them religious traditions which in some cases succeed in overcoming linguistic and ethnic boundaries, as exemplified by the New Apostolic Church and Diamond Way Buddhism (IF 2002/8: 21; IF 2003/1: 10). These three developments can all be



seen as illustrations of the growing transnational contacts between Finland and the rest of the world, but they also indicate that the threshold for forming new communities is quite low. There is religious freedom in the country, which makes the establishment of new organisations possible. Moreover, there is also a body of religious seekers forming a recruitment potential for the new communities.

Third, many of the movements do not emphasise traditional forms of belonging. Even though some movements have a relatively traditional idea of membership, the majority do not; for example, the Charismatic Movement in general appears to play down this aspect and emphasises the inner experience and importance of being a believer (Ketola, 2003b: 83-84). By way of illustration, an increasing type of Protestant Christianity is interfaith activity on a loosely defined base, taking the form of supplementary associations. These associations, including Women's Aglow and the Nokia revival provide services for those who share the same religious vision (Heino, 1997: 26, 130-131; Helander, 2001). Obviously, most participants are already members of local Christian congregations, but the structure makes possible the growth in numbers of people who are not members of any congregation, but take part only in these 'supplementary activities'. It remains to be seen how the recently established, new law on religious freedom (2003) will change the situation, as it allows overlapping membership, if the organisation in question accepts it.

Fourth, the organisations are significant carriers of cultural innovations. As traditional churches already have their established activities, they are usually more conservative in adopting new working methods. Since the late nineteenth century the new congregations and associations have been central carriers of religious innovations to Finland. For example, the People's Bible Society (*Kansan Raamattuseura*) introduced confirmation camps in Finland, which were later adapted by the Lutheran Church and have become one of its most popular working methods (Heino, 1997: 56). Similar developments are numerous. The flexible nature of the new religious field encourages the search for novel ways of recruitment and other

working methods, some of which later become adapted by other religious organisations.

	<b>First decade of activity</b>	<b>Name of the movement</b>
<b>Lutheran</b>	1960s	The fifth revival / Evangelicalism
	1980s	International Congregation
<b>Independent</b>	1950s	Quakers
<b>Protestantism -based churches</b>	1970s	New Apostolic Church
	1970s	God's Congregation
	1980s	Bible Speaks
	1990s	Word of Life
	1990s	Boston Church of Christ
	2000s	City Church
<b>New religious movements</b>	1970s	Divine Light Mission
	1970s	Transcendental Meditation
	1980s	Hare Krishna (ISCKON)
	1980s	Dharma Centre (Buddhist)
	2000s	Zen Buddhists
	2000s	Diamond Path (Buddhist)
<b>Immigrants' religious communities</b>	2000s	Rokpa Finland (Buddhist)
	1980s	Buddhists (Vietnamese)
	1980s	Muslims (Sunni, Shiite)
	1990s	Chaldean Catholics
	1990s	Mandaeans
	2000s	Uspenije (Russian Orthodox)
<b>Other communities</b>	1960s	Bahá'í
	1960s	Hatha Yoga
	1960s	Asian martial arts
	1960s	Paranormal Society
	1960s	UFO Research Society
	1980s	Spiritual Growth
	1980s	Spiritualists
	1990s	Alternative medicine
	1990s	Spiritual Centre
1990s	Astanga Yoga	
1990s	Pagan network	

**Table 3.2** New religious communities in Turku from the 1950s to 2000 (Martikainen, 1996, forthcoming).

Fifth, despite the ever-growing number of different religious groups, there has not been any significant rise regarding membership on a national scale (Ketola, 2003b: 84; Niemelä, 2003a: 125-126). Most of the groups remain fairly small and recruit mainly among those who are already to some extent active in other religious organisations. However, as emphasised before, this does not necessarily mean that the new organisations are insignificant in their cultural implications. They constitute a potential for the adaptation of new ideas and working methods and simultaneously function as cultural bridges between regions and continents.

Table 3.2 lists the new religious organisations that have established their activity in Turku between the years 1950-2000. It shows that a large number of the new organisations have started their activity in the city, many of which have their origin far away from Finland. The organisations named will be introduced in more detail in section 4.2.

### **3.5.3 New immigration**

The legacy of the modern period meant that Finland contained small ethnic and religious minorities of immigrant origin. A part of the Orthodox and most of the Jewish, Tatar Muslim, German Lutheran, Anglican and Catholic populations were remnants of the Russian Empire's religious diversity. Immigration during the early independence period was far less significant than the Russian legacy. The total number of people in these groups was around 10,000 in the early 1970s. The few Swedes who arrived in independent Finland could be integrated into the Swedish-speaking *Svenska Olaus Petri* congregation under the Church of Sweden or into the Swedish-speaking parishes of the Finnish Lutheran Church. The situation remained almost unchanged in this respect until the 1980s and the members of the above-mentioned congregations were already well adapted to Finnish society by that time.

There was little migration to Finland, but more from it. Finland was a country of net emigration in the post-war period until the 1980s,

but thereafter the number of immigrants rose and introduced a new type of multiculturalism and ethnic diversity. As mentioned earlier, Finnish labour migration to Sweden rose quickly after the war and continued to do so until the 1970s. In the whole post-war period about half a million Finns migrated to Sweden. Since the 1980s, net migration to Sweden has been mainly positive, with more migrants returning than leaving. The same pattern applies to net migration in general, which was negative between 1945 and 1980 with the exception of a few years in the early 1970s (Statistics Finland, 2001: 58). But this was to change.

Finland's population of immigrant origin has been rising constantly since the early 1980s and this has led to an ethnic pluralism hitherto unseen in the country. The few post-war migrants had been mainly professionals and spouses from Western Europe—especially from Sweden, Germany and England—and returning migrants, their children and spouses, some of whom did not have Finnish citizenship and appear as 'foreign citizens' in the statistics. The composition of contemporary population of immigrant origin in Finland is shown in Table 3.3. In 2002, there were 152,057 people born abroad, 117,013 speaking a foreign language and 103,682 foreign citizens (Statistics Finland, 2003a). Turku has become the second largest immigration centre of Finland and a closer look at its immigrant population is presented in section 5.1.

Finnish legislation regarding immigration in the post-war period can be best described as restrictive, where immigrants have been seen as a potential security risk. This view started changing in the 1980s and it coincided with a demand for labour on the Finnish labour market. During the last decades, immigration legislation and policies have been in constant change, but still the national policy is not as open as, for example, in Sweden (Lepola, 2000: 39-50). As immigration has risen constantly, the issue has remained topical. However, whereas immigration to the country is still relatively restricted, the contemporary integration policy is officially based on the idea of *multiculturalism*, which supports the keeping of one's cultural, religious, etc. traditions in the new social environment. This

	Country of birth		Citizenship	
<b>Finland</b>	5 054 238	97,1%	5 102 613	98,0%
<b>Abroad</b>	152 057	2,9%	103 682	2,0%
<b>European</b>	106 350	69,9%	71 259	68,7%
<i>EU countries</i>	41 829	27,5%	17 975	17,3%
Sweden	28 559	18,8%	8 037	7,8%
Germany	3 934	2,6%	2 461	2,4%
Britain	3 067	2,0%	2 535	2,4%
France	1 208	0,8%	962	0,9%
Italy	1 057	0,7%	880	0,8%
<i>Other countries</i>	64 521	42,8%	53 284	51,4%
Former Soviet Union	36 289	23,9%	2 011	1,9%
Russia	3 543	2,3%	24 336	23,5%
Estonia	9 473	6,2%	12 428	12,0%
Former Yugoslavia	5 719	3,8%	6 400	6,2%
Norway	1 047	0,7%	620	0,6%
Poland	1 265	0,8%	768	0,7%
Turkey	2 614	1,7%	2 146	2,1%
<b>Asian</b>	22 727	14,9%	17 815	17,2%
Iraq	3 803	2,5%	3 420	3,3%
Vietnam	3 020	2,0%	1 713	1,7%
China	2 706	1,8%	2 086	2,0%
Iran	2 526	1,7%	2 363	2,3%
Thailand	2 407	1,6%	1 784	1,7%
India	1 484	1,0%	1 021	1,0%
Afghanistan	939	0,6%	1 061	1,0%
<b>African</b>	10 794	7,1%	8 523	8,2%
Somalia	4 554	3,0%	4 537	4,4%
Morocco	1 133	0,7%	584	0,6%
<b>North American</b>	4 311	2,8%	2 811	2,7%
<b>South American</b>	2 509	1,7%	1 248	1,2%
<b>Oceanic</b>	776	0,4%	586	0,6%
<b>Unknown</b>	4 590	3,0%	1 440	1,4%

**Table 3.3** Population by country of birth and citizenship in Finland in 2002 (Statistics Finland, 2003a). The table includes entries for countries with over 1,000 people in either category. Data for 'former Yugoslavia' includes Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, former Yugoslavia and Yugoslavia.

also has practical consequences in that authorities attempt to support cultural and religious aspirations of particular groups, so that they can keep their traditions alive. Simultaneously, however, there are expectations that the immigrants will also integrate into the society at large (Räty, 2002: 134).

The new wave of immigration can be divided into three main parts, of which the first is an earlier development than the latter two. First, people from western societies started to move to Finland gradually after the war, mainly as professionals and spouses. Lately this group has also grown in number due to increasing international contacts and the European integration process. In 2002, people from other western countries formed more than one third of all foreign born individuals, of whom over half are born in Sweden. Other major groups are people born in Germany, Britain and the United States. Many of these people are Finnish returnees. Second, citizens of the former Soviet Union and the former Eastern block countries have moved to Finland, mainly during the 1990s. Many of them were so-called Ingrian returnees—descendants of early Finnish migrants to the St. Petersburg region. In 2002, people born in the former Socialist countries formed circa 40% of all foreign born, circa 60,000 people. The largest groups among these were born in the former Soviet Union, Estonia and the former Yugoslavia. Third, there are immigrants from non-western societies, mostly Asians and Africans. In 2002, the immigrants from these countries were 22% of all foreign born, making a total of 34,000 people. The largest groups were born in Somalia, Iraq and Vietnam. About half of these people entered the country as refugees or asylum seekers or through family reunion programmes. Finland had accepted refugees since the early 1970s, but their number did not rise significantly until the late 1980s. To date, circa 24,000 have been accepted into the country, including their children born in Finland (Statistics Finland, 2001, 2003a).

As only limited data exists about immigrants' religious affiliation prior to their arrival in Finland, statistical information only allows an estimate of their 'potential affiliation'. The three different immigrant groups serve as a useful starting point. The western and

former socialist country immigrants are mainly Christians or non-affiliated, with the exception of Turkey and people from the former Yugoslavia (circa 8,000 combined) who are mostly Muslims. The Asian and African group is more diverse in its religious background. The largest group consists of people from societies where Islam is the main religion, but among the group there are also Christians, Buddhists and Hindus as well as several smaller groups, such as Mandeans and Ahl-i-Haqq (Martikainen, 1996, 2000a, b; Sakaranaho and Pesonen, 1999: 8-13). A rough estimate based on country of birth is that about 70% are 'potential Christians' and about 15% 'potential Muslims', while other groups significantly smaller. The number of non-Christians would be higher if the figures were counted from other indicators, for instance according to citizenship. The reason for this is that among the foreign-born there are a large number of Finnish returnees, most of whom are Lutheran.

	Evangelical Lutheran Church	Orthodox Church	Catholic Church	Other religions	Population Register
Membership	4 406 594	56 689	7 643	58 604	684 408
Born abroad	44 934	4 385	3 153	2 359	96 374
Foreign citizen	13 639	3 136	2 033	3 211	82 515
Foreign language	10 595	4 404	3 304	3 397	95 313
English	1 020	33	356	241	6 108
Estonian	1 980	70	13	102	9 767
German	1 075	15	176	42	2 294
Russian	4 532	3 467	50	853	24 499

**Table 3.4** Immigrants and membership of the Lutheran, Orthodox and Catholic Churches and the Population Register in Finland in 2002 (Statistics Finland, 2003b).

With regard to formal religious affiliation in Finland, 37% (55,683) of the foreign born, 20% (21,167) of foreign citizens and 19% (21,700) of foreign-language speakers were members of registered religious organisations and the national churches. The Lutheran

Church is clearly the largest immigrant church in the country, even though people of immigrant origin represent only a fraction of its membership. If Lutheran membership is not taken into account, about 10% have some other affiliation in Finland, of which about half goes to the Orthodox and Catholic Churches. Most people of immigrant origin are not officially related to religious communities in Finland, as illustrated in Table 3.4 (Statistics Finland, 2003b).

However, there are significant variations in the extent to which different linguistic groups have a religious affiliation, as shown in Table 3.5. When compared with native Finns (Finnish, Swedish and Saami speakers), all foreign language groups have significantly lower affiliation ratios. People coming from mainly Christian societies have ratios between 15-40% with minor exceptions, while all others have fewer than 15%. The only exception is Hebrew speakers (36%), who are most probably Jews. The majority of Muslims have a very low level of affiliation, especially in the case of Albanians, Bosnians and Kurds among the larger groups. Somali, Urdu (Pakistan) and Turkish speakers are the most commonly affiliated (Statistics Finland, 2003b).

0-9%	10-19%	20-29%	30-100%
Albanian 1%	Czech 10%	English 21%	Danish 32%
Kurdish 1%	Somali 10%	Ukrainian 24%	German 36%
Punjabi 1%	Urdu 10%	Spanish 25%	Hebrew 36%
Bengali 2%	Turkish 14%	Russian 27%	Greek 37%
Bosnian 2%	Bulgarian 15%	Italian 29%	Tagalog 37%
Hindi 3%	French 15%	Amharic 29%	Polish 39%
Chinese 5%	Latvian 15%	Romanian 29%	Norwegian 41%
Lithuanian 7%	Dutch 16%		Finnish 88%
Thai 7%	Lingala 16%		Swedish 92%
Arabic 8%	Hungarian 17%		Saami 96%
Japanese 8%	Vietnamese 17%		
Persian 8%	Estonian 18%		
Serbo-Croatian 9%	Portuguese 18%		
Tamil 9%			

**Table 3.5** Religious affiliation in different linguistic groups in Finland in 2002. Groups that have over 200 speakers are included. In the table are combined the memberships in the Lutheran Church, Orthodox Church and registered religious communities in particular linguistic groups (Statistics Finland, 2003b).



Immigrants prior to their arrival that belonged to a religious organisation that was also active in Finland have usually joined these. This has been the case with Lutherans (e.g., Ingrians, Swedes), Catholics (e.g. South Europeans, Vietnamese, Chaldean Iraqis) and Orthodox (e.g. Russians, Romanians). If the group has been larger and an active one, they have had access to native or English language services. For instance, the International Evangelical Congregations in 12 cities provide services in different languages, including English, Arabic and Chinese (International Evangelical Church in Finland, 2003). The Catholic Church belongs to those that have benefited most from increased immigration, as its membership has doubled in the last fifteen years. Also other organisations have received small numbers of new members. There are no indications of major movement between religious traditions, even though individual conversions do take place. For instance, such actively missionising religions as Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons have only 1-2% immigrant membership (Statistics Finland, 2003b).

The most visible change, however, has been the establishment of new religious organisations, often of non-Christian origin. In the media this usually refers to the rapid growth of the Muslim population. During the 1990s over twenty new Muslim organisations were founded, all in urban centres. They are composed mostly of people from the Middle East, Northern Africa and Somalia, and to a lesser extent from other African countries, as well as from Southeast Asia and the former Yugoslavia. The number of religiously active Muslims is a matter of debate, but as shown above they have not so far become official members in the new organisations to any large extent (see Martikainen, 2000c). Beside the Muslim organisations, the Vietnamese Buddhists are the largest group, even though less organised. Other minor groups have also organised themselves, including Zoroastrians, Mandaeans, Ahl-i-Haqq and Thai Buddhists.

The 1990s have been an active period of immigrant religious organisation and as the field is still taking shape, it is rather difficult to state anything exact on the matter. However, the religious organisation of immigrants belongs to the more common ways in which

the new migrants adapt to the new social environment. Of course, not all immigrants are religiously active, but exactly how many are and how many are not is impossible to state at the moment, for lack of elementary data. One thing certain, however, is that the new immigration has brought about a change in the national religious field, far exceeding the numbers it directly affects.

### **3.6 The global roots of the Finnish religious field**

The presentation of the history of religions in Finland above has shown that the contemporary religious situation is a creation of a long historical process. The deep integration of the Lutheran Church within Finnish culture would not have been possible over a short period of time and the relatively small place held by other religious institutions bears a close relation to this (Sundback, 2003b: 196-199). However, the presentation also made it evident that the national religious field has many components which have their histories outside the nation. Different kinds of local, national, regional, transnational and global developments have made the existing religious pluralism possible.

The present section will discuss to what extent the historical developments can be understood as globalisation and to what extent as something else. The conclusions are subject to some reservations. As the matter is rather complex and has a long history, the analysis should be seen as tentative. Furthermore, I have relied mainly on secondary sources, which have not always explicitly centred on the questions that are of importance here. The first section discusses the matter from the viewpoint of the four periods (premodern, early modern, modern and late modern) that were the bases for the historical presentation. The framework of analysis is the spatio-temporal and organisational attributes of global interconnectedness (see section 2.1), after which there is a short separate comment on the role of international migration as an agent of globalisation.

### 3.6.1 Historical forms of globalisation

The **premodern** period came to a transition at the dawn of the second millennium, for which reason our analysis also begins here. According to Held *et al.* (1999: 415), the key agents of premodern globalisation were political and military empires, world religions, migration and, to a lesser extent, trade. With regard to Finland, these general factors are also identical. The reach of the Swedish crown, even though not an ‘empire’, and the establishment of the Catholic Church integrated Finland within West European civilisation and furthered the migration of Swedish speakers, who were to become a significant minority in the country. Turku became the foothold of the new rulers and, thus, strongly embedded in the western sphere of influence. Eastern Finland became integrated within the Russian sphere of influence. Trade linked the area to surrounding regions. Finland was among the last regions in Europe to find its place on the Catholic-Orthodox divide, and remained for a long time a contested territory between Sweden and Russia.

The extensity, intensity, velocity and impact of interconnectedness to other cultural regions is impossible to measure in this period, but it was mostly to neighbouring areas around the Baltic Sea, low in intensity and velocity and with a highly diffuse impact. Only in times of warfare and other exceptional situations were the consequences of interconnectedness felt dramatically in everyday life. The infrastructure of interconnectedness was also diffuse. With regard to the Catholic Church, it was strong in the heartland, but much weaker in more remote areas. The church provided a congregational infrastructure for local societies that lasted until the nineteenth century. Congregations also functioned as ‘news agencies’ in the local society, thus creating a base for identification with larger communities, such as the crown and the church. Full-time religious professionals and a church structure that was to some extent independent of other authorities planted the seeds for distinguishing official and non-official forms of religion. At this stage, traditional and popular Christian beliefs and practices co-existed among the people. Most prob-

ably, the difference between official dogmas and folk beliefs was only noted by a handful of religious specialists. Furthermore, the whole medieval period was one of extending the mission deeper into the country. Turku was the main centre in Finland in this process. The modes of interaction were mission and state-led coercion.

The cross-cultural interconnectedness of the premodern era was mostly regional in character. Only a small group of people seem to have had any meaningful intercultural contacts, but for most people life was locally bound and the awareness of life elsewhere was hazy at best. However, that Finland became a part of the Swedish kingdom and that Christianity established itself in the country were of central importance for later developments. Through these connections, Finland became a part of West European civilisation, even though a large part of what is today considered Finland was more or less unaffected by the whole process. It does not seem proper to call these processes ‘globalisation’, as inter-civilisational contacts are practically non-existent and there was no idea of ‘the world as a whole’. Finland was on the periphery of Europe.

The **early modern** period covers a time period of some three hundred years and lasts until the mid-nineteenth century. In European history, this was the time of exploration, colonisation and the emergence and development of the key institutions of European modernity (Held et al., 1999: 418). During the period, Finland’s political status changed from province of Sweden to autonomous Grand Duchy of Russia in 1809. Turku remained at the centre of national developments throughout the period. The Lutheran Church maintained its monopoly status, but was challenged in the nineteenth century by Lutheran revival movements that were manifestations of an emerging religious individualism. Religious pluralism continued in the form of Orthodox Christianity in eastern Finland and emerged as Russian-speaking migrant parishes in some cities. Migration, mainly from Russia, also led to the birth of small Catholic, Jewish and Muslim groups. International migration was still marginal.

The extensity, intensity, velocity and impact of interconnectedness to other cultural regions were still mostly to nearby areas, low in

intensity and velocity and with a highly diffuse impact. However, the number of connections was gradually rising, which was made possible by developments in transport and communication technologies, including mechanised printing and a postal service. These made possible the spread of new religious ideas beyond the urban heartland. From now on, the importance of various media would only grow, aided by increasing literacy. The infrastructure of interconnectedness was also diffuse. The Lutheran Church provided the structure for local societies outside the few cities. With the Reformation, the church lost some of its financial and material bases, but the change was more in the church's official than its social position. National legislation restricted the missionary potential for other religions. The Orthodox Church received a better position during the Russian era, but exponents of other religions—who were mainly foreign entrepreneurs—were tolerated because of their irreplaceable skills. The modes of religious interaction were state-led coercion and co-existence.

The cross-cultural interconnectedness of the early modern era was still sporadic and mostly north European in character. The number of people that had direct intercultural contacts was small and restricted to the elite, but more people than earlier became subject to ideas mediated through literature. There was perhaps a growing awareness of the world, but still in a limited eurocentric form. Russian rule opened new horizons and possibilities for trade and education, but the Swedish connection was still strong. As in the premodern era, it does not seem sensible to call these processes 'globalisation'. Finland was still located on the periphery of Europe.

The **modern period** started in the latter half of the nineteenth century and lasted until the post-Second World War period. According to Held *et al.* (1999: 421-423), the main cultural developments were the diffusion of Western secular ideologies (Marxism, liberalism, nationalism and science), which replaced the earlier religious discourses. Furthermore, the infrastructure of global transport and communication technology and the emerging mass media to some

extent transformed and, as a consequence, liberalised the hitherto elitist intercultural networks. The first Golden Age of globalisation came to an abrupt halt with the First World War and was followed by more nationalistic and closed policies. During this period Finland became independent, had a short civil war that polarised society, experienced the turmoil of World War II, industrialised and finally urbanised on a large scale. By the end of the period, Finland had become a modern, democratic and industrialised nation-state. Turku now lost its position as the dominant national centre to Helsinki and became a regional centre in South-western Finland. With regard to religion, the changes were in a way small but significant. Religious pluralism was accepted and the hegemonic position of the Lutheran Church came to an end, both issues also being confirmed in national legislation. The Lutheran and Orthodox Churches became ‘national churches’, and while the majority of the population still belonged to them, the number of other—mainly Protestant Christian—communities started to rise, spread and obtain a foothold. Immigrant religions were fairly marginal and by the end of the period already well integrated into the national religious system. Religious individuation was on the rise. Because of internal migration, religious movements—including Lutheran revival movements—spread around the country.

The spatio-temporal interconnectedness to other cultural regions grew in terms of extensity, intensity, velocity and impact. During the Russian period a closer encounter with Russia led to contacts with non-European religions, but only on a small scale. Finnish mass-emigration to North America created contacts with the New World. Almost complete literacy and the expansion of the print media, as well as radio, paved the way for media-based mass diffusion of religious ideas. In organisational terms, the new Protestant churches started to create their own transnational networks and the Lutheran Church took its first steps on the international ecumenical plane. State and church were separated and secular municipality division, education, etc. were created. In terms of global religious stratification, Finland started to create closer affinities with the Anglo-Ameri-

can religious sphere. Coercion as the main mode of religious interaction ended and, in its place, coexistence, co-operation and mission became the main modes, as religious freedom was confirmed by national legislation.

The cross-cultural interconnectedness of the modern era was mostly north European, but to a growing degree transcended earlier patterns. Transnational contacts were still mostly elitist, but a growing number of individuals had personal networks due to international migration. There was also a rising awareness of the world as a whole, for instance through Finnish missionaries living in distant countries and via migrants to North America, but also through school education. That Finland became an independent nation-state also changed its international position, even though it remained internationally relatively closed in the early decades. Altogether, some significant features of globalisation already touched the country directly, but in a limited form. It can be described as period of 'thin globalisation'. Finland was now striving to move from a peripheral European position to become a recognised international actor.

The **late modern** period began gradually during the post-war period, gaining momentum from the 1970s onwards, when the post-war generation came to adulthood. It has been a time of growing welfare, peace and increasingly urbanised life forms. Finland has also become increasingly connected to global, transnational and regional networks and institutions, including the United Nations (1955) and the European Union (1995). According to Held *et al.* (1999: 426-427) the main features of cultural globalisation in post-war globalisation in general have been new patterns of global migration and the lessening role of national elites in intercultural interaction. Also the ease and relatively low cost with which transnational connections can be upheld has become important. The pluralisation of cultural agents was already an element of the national religious field in the late nineteenth century, but now its scope was larger and its implications were less controllable by law and custom. As a consequence, the number of new religious organisations, movements and

ideas introduced in the post-war era are far greater than those at the turn of the century.

The extensity, intensity, velocity and impact of interconnectedness to other cultural regions have grown throughout the period. Even though European contacts still play a central role, there are increasing cultural networks and institutions with other continents, in such religious areas as missionary activity, development aid, pilgrimage and international migration to Finland. The direct impact of these connections has been the establishment of new religious organisations in the country, including Muslim and Buddhist ones. Together with images from the global media, an increasing consciousness of the world's religious diversity is apparent. Initiatives for religious dialogue with Finnish Muslims exemplify this trend. For the Lutheran Church, its membership in transnational ecumenical organisations, participation in development aid to the Third World and mission have been the main forms of transnational activity. Global interconnectedness has a manifold infrastructure, including several organisations dedicated to intercultural work. Modes of religious interaction have been coexistence, co-operation and, to a lesser extent, competition, including mission.

The cross-cultural interconnectedness of the late modern era has been mostly European, but to a growing degree it also reaches different parts of the Globe. The number of cultural agents has grown and transnational contacts are no longer as elitist as in earlier periods, for instance international mass-tourism provides low-cost opportunities for travelling around the world. There is also a growing awareness of the world as a whole, based on the development of global media and the increasing immigrant presence in the country. If Finland was in earlier periods on the fringes of the globalisation process, it has now moved to a more central position and been transformed in a relatively short period of time from a state of 'thin globalisation' to one of 'diffuse globalisation', where global flows effectively create change in many, but not all, spheres of life.

All in all, the globalisation of the Finnish religious field is a fairly recent phenomenon, if understood in terms of either inter-



civilisational or –continental cultural encounters (Held et al., 1999) or as an awareness of the world as a whole (Robertson, 1992). Cultural flows and encounters with neighbouring peoples, however, have been of major importance ever since premodern times. Non-European international migration to Finland is, however, a rather new development, even though Finns in large numbers have been actively emigrating to distant localities for over a century. Today, Finland holds a more central position with regard to global cultural flows than it has ever had during its history. Even though Turku is no longer at the centre of national developments, it is still a major player in the country and belongs to those Finnish local societies that have experienced most changes related to global interconnectedness.

### **3.6.2 The role of international migration**

The role of international migration has been by no means insignificant in the development of religious life in Finland. Even though most new religious impulses have been infiltrated through national mediators, international migration has also contributed to the religious diversity of the country. Historically speaking, the movement of Swedes in early medieval times was of major significance. Even though it was not international in the strict sense of the word, as Finland was *de facto* a part of the Swedish state, it nevertheless can be viewed as a migration between different cultural regions that in its structure resembles international migration. The same applies to the later migration from Russia. For instance, Markus Hiekkanen (2002a: 51) has argued that the arrival of the already Christian, Swedish newcomers with powerful cultural resources was significant at the time, even with regard to the spread of Christianity. That Swedish remained the major official language of the country until the early twentieth century and that Sweden was the closest country of reference further stresses the importance of this early migration. To this day, the Swedish speakers seem to be over-represented among those who have brought cultural and religious innovations to the

country. For example, a large proportion of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century new religious movements were initially established by Swedish speakers, including Methodism, the Free Church Movement, the Pentecostal Movement, Jehovah's Witnesses and the neo-Pentecostal Word of Life (*Livets Ord*).

Since medieval times, small numbers of European nationalities have been present in Finland, playing a central role in the spread of cultural innovations and industrialisation in the country. Initially, the migrants were mostly merchants and craftsmen and later industrialists, but they included many other professionals as well. The people brought their own religious traditions with them but were not allowed to practice them officially until relatively late, if they were not Lutherans. Many of them settled permanently, gradually assimilating to the rest of the population (Joronen, Pajarinen and Ylä-Anttila, 2000). At the end of the medieval period, a number of Roma also entered the country. The Roma have remained the most marginalised cultural minority in the country, even though they have adapted to the national religious field and are mostly members of the Lutheran and the Finnish Free Church or Pentecostals (Grönfors, 1999). Migration from Russia was almost non-existent until the nineteenth century, when Finland became a Grand Duchy of tsarist Russia. During the 110 years of Russian rule, a migrant community was established, which gradually integrated into Finnish society after independence. Most of the migrants were Orthodox, but there were also Jews, Tatar Muslims and Catholics among them (Halén, 1999; Harviainen, 1999; Repo, 1999). All of these groups have continued with their religious practice until today, and Turku has been one their national centres. If compared to the influence of Sweden, the role of Russian migration has been more restricted, and has had less effect on mainstream society. International migration and other connections to regions beyond Europe were almost non-existent until the twentieth century, with the exception of mass Finnish emigration to North America at the turn of the century.

After the independence of Finland, immigration to Finland fell significantly for several decades and started to rise gradually in the

early 1980s and, especially, in the 1990s. A large number of Finns emigrated to Sweden in the post-war period and some of them have also returned. The new wave of immigration, starting in the 1980s, has both old and new features. Immigrants from Sweden, Western Europe and the former Soviet Union constitute the majority of new immigrants and can be seen in the light of continuing cultural connections. However, American, African and Asian immigrants constitute a new population of foreign origin. As Finland has at least a small number of immigrants from most corners of the world, it may be said that, since the beginning of the 1980s, international migration to the country has become truly global. All the different immigrant groups have become, to some extent, religiously active in Finland. They have either joined existing religious organisations or founded new ones. For instance, over twenty new Muslim associations have been founded and membership in the Catholic Church has doubled because of the new immigration.

To conclude, international migration, including migration from Sweden and Russia when Finland was a part of these states, has been one significant agent in the creation of contemporary religious pluralism in Finland and Turku. It has become most visible in the form of historically alien religions in the country, such as Islam and Buddhism, but it has also brought noteworthy variety to the Christian scene. Recently, the geographical scope of international migration has increased and become *de facto* global and most of the world's large religious traditions have established themselves in the country. However, the medieval migration of the neighbouring Swedes still seems to have proved more important in terms of Finland's cultural positioning and religious field than all the rest of the international migration combined, at least at the present time.

# 4

## Religion in Turku

This chapter will present an overview of the current religious situation in Turku. It will begin with a brief sketch of the city, so that a clearer view its position within the national context will emerge. The description of the contemporary religious field will concentrate mostly on religious organisations, thus giving an idea of the religious infrastructure of which the immigrant organisations are now a part. The local religious field is described as an interactive network. Most of the local congregations have links with other communities that may be based on a shared identity and religious views, common interest or other reasons. The picture given plays down purely theological divisions, which tend to dominate descriptions of religious organisations in a typical handbook presentation (cf. Heino, 1997). This exposition of the organisations is based on my experience in the field that theological factors are often far less important in the local society than other reasons. They matter, but not always, and not as much as might be expected.

## 4.1 The city of Turku

The city of Turku is the central economic, administrative and educational locality in south-western Finland. The city had 174,618 inhabitants in 2002 and, together with surroundings, has a total population of almost 300,000 people. The city is located on the shore of the Baltic Sea and has one of largest ports in Finland. While the city has its share of industries and other commerce, it is also a central provider of educational services even on a national scale. In the aftermath of the recession of the early 1990s, the city has been among those that have benefited from the new economic growth. While unemployment has still been a problem, the city has nevertheless been a target of internal migration and did not therefore lose inhabitants like many other Finnish cities during the 1990s. The constant stream of new students and the growth of the immigrant population were the major factors behind this (Okko, Miettälä & Hyvärinen 1998: 42, 50-61; Kokko, 2002: 40). The closest large urban centres are Helsinki and Tampere, both circa 170 kilometres or two hours drive away.

Turku is the fifth largest city in the country, and the second largest immigrant centre after the capital region, where about half of all immigrants live (Martikainen, 2000: 329-330). In cultural terms, Turku is a major centre for both immigrants and for the Swedish-speaking<sup>24</sup> population of the country. Together these groups constitute about one tenth of the local population. As a matter of fact, Turku has been one of the most international cities in Finland throughout its history. The Germans—who were a significant segment of the city's burghers during the Middle Ages—probably played a key role in the city's foundation at the turn of the fourteenth century, and the city was a central administrative centre for the Swedish rulers until the early nineteenth century. Even in the Russian period (1809-

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<sup>24</sup> While there are numerically more Swedish-speakers living in some other parts of the country, Turku—or actually Åbo, to use its Swedish name—has several Swedish-speaking institutions, such as *Abo Akademi* and *Abo svenska teater*, that are central to the Swedish-speaking minority.

1917), Turku played a major role, containing a Russian garrison and a small migrant population, even though Helsinki became the new centre of the country in the late 1820s. Lately, especially the universities and businesses have brought significant numbers of international contacts and visitors. These few facts illustrate that Turku has a history of cultural diversity to meet the growing and changing immigrant scene of the 1990s.

In comparison to other Finnish cities, Turku can be described as politically conservative, highly educated and as a strong regional centre of its own. The presence of three universities is not insignificant with respect to immigrants either. The universities have many foreign employees as well as students, and have initiated a joint programme for English language studies in different topics which brings many foreign students to the city. The closeness of Sweden and good travel connections to Stockholm are also significant for many immigrants who have relatives and friends there. All in all, many historical, geographical and social issues make Turku one of the most international cities in Finland.

## **4.2 The contemporary religious field**

The local religious field in Turku can be looked at from a variety of perspectives, which will all give a slightly different picture. The following section gives an overall view of the religious and spiritual communities presently active in the city and emphasises religious organisations as the infrastructure of the local religious field. While the presentation follows mostly conventional theological lines, it also emphasises the local networks and identifications of belonging (see also section 4.3.2). The local religious field will be presented here within the following frame. It is dominantly Christian and the Lutheran parishes provide the basic religious structure of the locality. Protestant free churches, the Orthodox Church, the Catholic Church and a few non-mainstream Christian congregations make up the rest of the Christian scene, which is supplemented by Islamic, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu elements and a few other religions. Beside

conventional religious organisations, there is also a strong presence of diverse alternative spiritualities, including Spiritualism, Theosophy, New Age and interest groups featuring the paranormal and alternative medicine. A significant segment of the local population is also without affiliation to any conventional religious organisations. With regard to membership, the Lutheran Church is by far the largest local religious organisation as about 80% of the population are members; the corresponding figures for the non-affiliated are circa 15% and for other religions circa 5% as shown in Table 4.1.

	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2002
<b>Lutheran Church</b>	142 472	139 019	134 438	134 773	139 150	139 526
	87,1%	86,1%	84,5%	81,8%	80,6%	79,9%
<b>Other religions</b>	2 673	2 714	2 821	3 221	3 694	3 822
	1,6%	1,7%	1,8%	2,0%	2,1%	2,2%
<b>Population register</b>	18 535	19 665	21 921	26 750	29 717	31 270
	11,3%	12,2%	13,8%	16,2%	17,2%	17,9%
<b>Population of Turku</b>	163 680	161 398	159 180	164 744	172 561	174 618
	100,0%	100,0%	100,1%	100,0%	99,9%	100,0%

**Table 4.1** Membership of religious organisations in Turku 1980-2002 (Statistics Finland, 1997, 2004). Note that many people in the Population Register and the Lutheran Church also belong to non-registered religious communities. A more realistic figure for 'other religions' is closer to 5%. Alternative spiritual groups do not show in the statistics at all.

## 4.2.1 Christianity

### 4.2.1.1 The Evangelical Lutheran Church

#### *The Turku and Kaarina Parish Union*

The Turku and Kaarina Parish Union (*Turun ja Kaarinan seurakuntayhtymä—Åbo och S:t Karins församlingsgemenskap*) forms the most fundamental religious structure in the locality. The parish union consists of nine parishes, which function in the cities of

Turku and Kaarina. The parishes work within strict geographical boundaries, with the exception of the Swedish-language parish, which works over the whole territory. Every parish has one or more churches and a number of parish halls, which are spread throughout the area. The Lutheran parish union provides the organisational structure for most Lutheran activity in the city. It has a number of specialised offices that provide services for individual congregations and it co-operates with other Lutheran organisations in the city, such as the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (*Suomen Lähetysseura*). The parish union is a significant local institution in many respects. For example, in 2001 it employed 454 people, including 83 priests, 22 church musicians and 27 youth workers, while most other local congregations struggle to support one or two full-time employees. The parish union also owns significant real estate and investment funds. Approximately 80% of the local population are members of one of the Lutheran parishes (see Table 4.2).

<b>Turku and Kaarina Parish Union</b>	<b>Members in 2001</b>
Tuomiokirkkoseurakunta ("Cathedral Parish")	14 934
Mikaelinseurakunta ("Michael's Parish")	23 570
Martinseurakunta ("Martin's Parish")	19 507
Katariinanseurakunta ("Catherine's Parish")	19 919
Maarian seurakunta ("The Parish of Mary")	31 220
Åbo svenska församling ("The Swedish Parish of Turku")	9 186
Henrikinseurakunta ("Henry's Parish")	19 749
Paattisten seurakunta ("The Parish of Paattinen")	1 924
Kaarinan seurakunta ("The Parish of Kaarina")	17 016
<b>Total</b>	<b>157 025</b>

**Table 4.2** Members in the Turku and Kaarina Parish Union in 2001 (Turun ja Kaarinan seurakuntayhtymä, 2002).

Parish life touches, in one way or another, the lives of the majority of people in the city. However, besides the popular *rites de passage* (baptism, confirmation, marriage, burial) and activities for children and the elderly, only a minority of youth and adults are in ac-



tive relationship with their local parishes. Parishes are also behind most scout troops, and in that way they have contact with a large segment of local youth, as the scouts are the largest youth organisation in the country. Regular attendance at worship is not very common, with the exception of Christmas and some other major festivals. As noted by researchers, the meaning of belonging is for most parishioners not connected with active participation in public religious activities, but rather connected to *rites de passage* and keeping up family tradition. However, a popular form of expressing religiosity seems to be the growing interest in of taking part in musical and other expressive activities that are arranged in churches and that have a religious meaning (Salonen, Kääriäinen, Niemelä, 2000: 28-30, 54-60, 69). Examples of currently popular religious activities in Turku are the weekly Tuesday evening, Charismatic healing and prayer meeting in Martin's Church, arranged by the Ilpoinen Circle (*Ilpoisten piiri*) and the monthly Thomas Mass in Michael's Church. Both of these events gather full churches, including people who are not congregation activists, and are definitively expressive in character (see Ketola, 2003b: 72-81).

Despite its deep connections to Finnish culture and the Finnish way of life, the Lutheran Church has its share of multiculturalism and has been affected by recent immigration. Since the Reformation, Swedish-speakers have had their own activities and migrating Swedes have had the opportunity to integrate into local religious life, while keeping their own language. Also German Lutheran migrants have had their own parish since the early twentieth century (IF 2003/1: 21). More recently, due to rising immigration from Western countries, an unofficial international evangelical congregation was formed in 1980. The International Cathedral Congregation is a small, multinational community of mostly Lutherans and Anglicans that arranges services on a weekly basis (IF mgt 2002/38). Furthermore, due to the migration of Ingrians from Russia, new activity has been created (IF 2003/1: 26). These issues will be dealt with in more detail in Chapter 5.

## **Revival Movements**

Most Finnish Lutheran revival movements are also active in Turku. The city is the traditional centre for the Evangelical Movement (*evankelisuus*), whose Luther Church attracts circa 150 worshippers every Sunday. The Evangelicals arrange a broad range of activities and are successful among young people as well, which not many congregations in the city can claim. For instance, they have arranged a large youth festival since 1984, which gathers around 10,000 participants every autumn. The event takes place in the local ice-hockey arena, and according to the organisers, is the largest Christian youth festival in the Nordic countries (IF 2003/1: 12). The second traditional local revival movement is Pietism (*herännäisyys*), whose centre is the Turku Christian Institute (*Turun Kristillinen Opisto*), which is also a large provider of secular education. The Pietists do not have as much separate organised activity as the Evangelicals, but they still play an important part in the local Lutheran scene as many are active members in local parishes. The third large grouping, the Lestadians, are a different case. Perhaps the most sectarian of all the traditional revival movements, as well as being splintered into a dozen different subgroups, the Lestadians have several local, independent associations and a few prayer halls. There are at least five different Lestadian groups in the city, which altogether have a few hundred members. The fourth traditional revival movement, the Prayer Movement (*rukoilevaisuus*), seems to have suffered somewhat during recent years. They still had some activity in the late 1990s, but are now living a quieter life for the time being. There are, nevertheless, individual members in the city (Martikainen, 1996: 44-49).

The Fifth Revival (Evangelicalism) and the Charismatic Movement have created further revivalist activity in the city in recent decades. The former is traditionally counted as a Lutheran revival movement, while the latter, perhaps due to its vague organisation, has not been given the same position and has more often been seen as a renewal movement within the church. However, the recent separation of the Charismatic Nokia Revival (*Nokian herätys*) in the Tampere region created a separate Charismatic forum on a largely

Lutheran basis, so the situation might now change (Helander, 2001). These two revival movements are also closely intertwined (Heino, 1997: 61-63). However, both of them have brought about significant changes to local religious life. First, the various groups that make up the Fifth Revival are exponents of fundamentalist Christianity and also active in youth work. Evangelical organisations in Turku include the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran People's Mission (*Suomen evankelis-luterilainen kansanlähetys*), the People's Bible Society (*Kansan Raamattuseura*), the Friends of the Finnish Bible Institute (*Suomen Raamattuopiston ystävät*) and both the Finnish and Swedish sections of the Student's and School Pupil's Mission (*Opiskelija ja koululaislähetys*). Altogether, these have a couple of hundred members. Among these organisations both the Evangelical Lutheran People's Mission and the Student's and Pupil's Mission have had an interest in providing English-language activity in Turku, but without much success so far (IF 2003/1: 5, 25). Second, Charismatic activity takes place in Lutheran parishes often in the form of 'Evenings of Word and Prayer' (*sanan ja rukouksen illat*), as well as in other forums. The largest Lutheran Charismatic gathering is, however, run by an unofficial group, the so-called Ilpoinen Circle (*Ilpoisten piiri*), whose central figure is the evangelist Tuula Ekbom. Their weekly Tuesday-evening session attracts several hundred people. They also regularly visit other Protestant free churches and are a significant interfaith player in the city (Martikainen, 1996: 36).

The seeming uniformity of the local religious structure hides important internal differences within the religious life of the Lutherans, of which the Lutheran revival movements provide an illustrative example. Beside mainstream Lutherans, a large number of active parishioners have their background in some of the traditional or more recent revival movements. Many of the people are also active in local parish councils and core members of their local parishes. All of the revival movements have their distinct emphasis on certain key-issues that differ somewhat from mainstream Lutheran views. While for the most part inconspicuous, they may sometimes rise to the fore. For example, the Evangelical Movement has not hitherto

accepted female priests, which has created considerable strain in individual parishes. The head of the parish union's information office fell silent for a moment when I asked him about the local importance of the revival movements in general, but added after brief reflection; "Well, if we didn't have them in our ranks, there would be many important figures missing" (IF 2003/1: 14).

### **Associations**

Alongside parishes and revival movements, a number of Lutheran associations provide diverse, religiously motivated activities for local people. Some of them are tied to Lutheran revival movements, but others are more ecumenical or interfaith in character. For example, there are several student groups, all-round associations (e.g., YMCA and YWCA) and social care communities offering Christian activities. The activities supplement the parishes' work in many ways, and they are also an important importer of new ideas to the local field. While immigrants are usually not involved in these association, the Seamen's Church in Turku (*Turun Merimieskirkko*) is the main exception. According to Eija Kalliala, a local priest in charge of the association, the church localities in the Port of Turku have circa 6,000 visitors annually of diverse religious backgrounds. Discussions about life and religion play an important part in the association's ecumenical activities. Local employees often help interested seamen and travellers to find their way to other churches in the city, such as the Catholic Church (IF 2003/1: 2).

All in all, the Lutheran Church is a multi-vocal community which incorporates, beside traditional revival movements, many other interest groups. There are groups with an interest, for example, in retreats and silence, healing, social work and missionary activity. Sometimes these interest groups work peacefully together and in other instances there can be clashes between competing views. While it is not necessary here to go into detail about the different interest groups

within the church, it is useful to keep in mind that Lutheran parish life takes many different forms indeed and provides shelter for a wide range of different opinions, lifestyles and theologies.

#### **4.2.1.2 The Protestant free Churches**

The Protestant free churches are the most visible religious actors in the city after the Lutheran parishes. The ‘free churches’ is a concept used by the communities themselves (*vapaakirkot*, *vapaat suunnat*) and denotes that the communities are free-standing organisations without any direct links with the state. In practice, the concept refers to certain Protestant groups, including the Evangelical Free Church (*Suomen Vapaakirkko*), Methodists, Baptists, Adventists and Pentecostals. Many of these denominations established themselves at the turn of the twentieth century in Finland, but several new congregations were also founded in the post-war period. Traditionally, the congregations have identified themselves in opposition to the Lutheran Church. It seems that during the last decades these churches have found each other to a growing degree and, today, many of them stress the uniformity of their religious visions, instead of their differences. The ethos of these congregations is one of personal religious engagement and conservative values, often combined with an active interest in mission. The development of interfaith identification has mostly taken place since the 1970s and the emergence of the interfaith Charismatic Movement seems to have played a major role in this development (Helander, 1999: 59-64).

The local Protestant free churches can be divided into two groups, reflecting the internal dynamics among them. The following presentation will refer to these two groups as the ‘A&O network’ and ‘the independent congregations’ (see Table 4.3). ‘The A&O network’ refers to a group of congregations that were mostly established at the turn of twentieth century and which have regular co-operation with each other. The letters are a biblical reference to Alpha and Omega. The term ‘A&O network’ refers to a freely distributed tabloid produced by these congregations, although the actual term in its

Name	Founded	Members (2002)	Sunday attendanc
<b>The A&amp;O network</b>			
Svenska friförsamlingen i Åbo "Swedish Free Church in Turku"	1883	50	60-70
Turun baptistiseurakunta "Turku Baptist Congregation"	1887	150	40-70
Turun suomalainen metodistiseurakunta "Turku Finnish Methodist Congregation"	1887	40	20
Åbo svenska metodistförsamling "The Bethlehem Church"	1887	195	80-120
Turun vapaaseurakunta "Turku Free Church"	1889	428	200
Turun adventtiseurakunta "Turku Adventist Congregation"	1919	338	115
Turun helluntaiseurakunta "Turku Pentecostal Congregation"	1921	1700	700-800
Turun Kotikirkko "Turku Home Church"	1998	90	50-100
Varissuon vapaaseurakunta "Varissuo Free Church"	1998	45	20
<b>Independent congregations</b>			
Pelastusarmeija "The Salvation Army"	1890	60	15
Suomen Tunnustuksellinen Luterilainen Kirkko "The Confessional Lutheran Church of Finland"	1920s	-	10
Jumalan seurakunta "Congregation of God"	1970s	20	-
Raamattu Puhuu seurakunta "The Bible Speaks Congregation"	1984	50	-
Uusi Elämä "New Life"	1980s	-	-
Elämän Sana "The Word of Life"	1990	115	60-80
Henôtés-seurakunta "Henôtés Congregation"	1995	-	-
Turku City Church	2000	25	30-40
<b>Total</b>		<b>3306</b>	<b>1400-1660</b>

**Table 4.3** The Protestant free churches in Turku. The table includes the following information: the year each congregation was founded, its membership and average attendance at the most important weekly service. The congregations are

divided into two groups. The first group consists of the core congregations in the local free church network and the second group contains those that share a similar view of Christianity, but for various reasons are not involved in close collaboration with the first group. Missing data implies that the particular information at hand was not comparable and is thus omitted.

current meaning is my own coinage. The congregations usually describe themselves as ‘free churches’ (*vapaat suunnat*), but as that term is given a slightly broader meaning here, it could not be used in this study. ‘The independent congregations’ refers to other Protestant free churches for the time being outside the ‘A&O network’. Beside these, there are also several associations, either interfaith or not, which function within the same scene. Some of them will be discussed later, as they are important forums for interfaith action. Altogether, the Protestant free churches have over 3,000 members, ca. 2% of the local population.

### ***The A&O network***

The A&O network forms the core of local free-church activity. It can be seen as a distinct block, even though several theological differences exist between various congregations. Here the congregations will be presented in the order in which they began their activity in the city. Protestant activity beside the Lutheran Church started to take shape in the late 1860s (Turun Vapaaseurakunta, 1989: 8). The first community to arrange regular meetings was the one which later formed the Evangelical Free Church (*Suomen Vapaakirkko*). At the beginning, the activities were bilingual, but later the local Free Church community divided into two congregations based on linguistic differences. These are the Turku Free Church (*Turun Vapaaseurakunta*) and the Swedish Free Church in Turku (*Svenska friförsamlingen i Åbo*). The Finnish-language congregation today has circa 430 adult members and an additional circa 150 under 18-year-olds, and it is the second largest Protestant free church in the city. The congregation provides a wide range of activities and has been active throughout the region, helping to form several new congregations

(IF 2002/8: 6). For example, a new Free Church congregation was founded in 1997 in Varissuo, a suburb of Turku. Today, that third local Free Church congregation has 45 adult members (IF 2002/8: 17). The Swedish-speaking congregation has always been smaller than the Finnish one and almost died out during the 1980s. However, it succeeded in recruiting new members and today it is a lively and youthful community of some 50 adult members (IF 2002/8: 9).

A local Methodist congregation was founded in 1887, and the role of Swedish-speakers was central in the beginning, as it often was with regard to the introduction of Protestant free churches to Finland. The congregation was divided to separate Finnish and Swedish organisations in 1906 (Elfving, 1981: 10-18; Martikainen, 1996: 58). For a long time, the two congregations shared the same church, but since 2000 they have been in separate places. The Swedish-language Bethlehem Church (*Åbo svenska metodistförsamling*) has experienced a tremendous renewal over the last 20 years and is today a Charismatic, highly international community. The congregation has circa 200 official members, but altogether some 500 people are involved in its activities. Its members include people of 22 nationalities. It offers a broad range of activities in different languages and holds bilingual services in Swedish and English. The congregation is an untypical Finnish Methodist congregation (IF mgt 2002/37). The Turku Finnish Methodist Congregation (*Turun Suomalainen metodistiseurakunta*) is a smaller and less youthful community with circa 40 members and currently attempts to profile itself as a suburban church. It moved in December 2000 to a suburb called Nätinummi and bought space previously owned by a Lestadian association. Its Sunday service gathers 10-30 people at the moment (IF 2002/8: 14). Both of the local Methodist congregations belong to the world-wide United Methodist Church organisation.

The Turku Baptist Congregation (*Turun Baptistiseurakunta*) was also founded in 1887 and, like the Free Church and the Methodists, also started as a Swedish-speaking community. In their case, however, the Finnish-speakers soon became the dominant part and no separate Swedish congregation was formed. The congregation to-



day has 130-150 members and is experiencing a generational change, as a large number of its current members are rather elderly. Sunday service gathers some 40-70 people, while at the same there are about ten children in the Sunday school (IF 2002/8: 10; Martikainen, 1996: 59).

The Seventh Day Adventists started their activity in the 1890s but did not organise themselves officially until 1919. The Turku Adventist Congregation (*Turun Adventistiseurakunta*) has some 340 members, of whom the more active ones number circa 200. There are also some 10 people of immigrant origin in the church. Saturday services attract an average of 115 participants, but there is also lively small group activity. The Swedish speakers have a small congregation of their own, which also meets occasionally in the church localities (IF 2002/8: 8). Local Adventists belong to the global Seventh-Day Adventist Church and to its Trans-European Division.

The first Pentecostal meeting in Turku was held in 1911 by a Norwegian Methodist missionary called T.B. Barratt, who had experienced first-hand contact with the Pentecostal Movement in Los Angeles and later founded his own Pentecostal Philadelphia Church in Oslo (Holm, 1978: 21-22). In Turku, a bilingual congregation was founded in 1921 which is today called the Turku Pentecostal Congregation (*Turun helluntaiseurakunta*). It is by far the largest of the local Protestant free churches and has about 1,700 members, of whom circa 1,100 live in Turku. According to the congregation leader, Taisto Toivola, some 800 people are involved in voluntary work for the congregation each month. The community has ten full or half-time employees and an annual budget of circa one million Euros. The congregation has a wide range of activities for people of different ages and the Sunday prayer meeting is attended each week by an average of 700 people (IF 2002/8: 3). The Swedish-speakers separated early on and formed the Philadelphia Congregation of Turku and Pargas (*Filadelfiaförsamlingen i Åbo-Pargas*) in 1933. This congregation no longer has any activities in the city of Turku (IF 2003/1: 3). In 1996, a group within the congregation started to plan a different kind of Pentecostal community and in 1998 the Turku

Home Church (*Turun Kotikirkko*) was founded. It is a youthful, independent congregation with some 90 adult members, most of whom are between 20 and 25 years old (IF 2002/8: 1).

The congregations described above form the local ‘A&O network’ and have close co-operation on many different issues. The network also includes a number of other congregations in the neighbouring municipalities. The congregation leaders meet monthly and discuss different matters related to local religious life. All participants see the co-operation as fruitful and beneficial. It has resulted in a ‘gentlemen’s agreement’ that all congregations may work without fear of outside interruptions and that, if congregations specialise in certain activities, then others will not try to imitate them and compete. For instance, as the Swedish Methodist Congregation had become well known for its immigrant activities, the other congregations ‘handed over’ their own immigrant groups. The latest form of



**Photo 4.1** The Pentecostal Church of Turku. Photo: Ollipekka Kangas.

co-operation is the foundation of a common media office (*Turun seudun vapaiden seurakuntien viestintäyhdistys A&O ry*), which now takes care of all media connections in the locality (IF 2002/8: 1, 3, 6, 8, 9, 12, 14, 17; IF mgt 2002/37).

### ***Independent congregations***

Beside ‘the A&O network’, there are also several other congregations that share a similar Protestant heritage. Most of the following congregations are rather new in the locality and not in major ways parts of local interfaith networks, even though there are exceptions to this. Here the congregations are presented in chronological order. The first one in this group, the Salvation Army, started its activities as early as 1890s, the same period in which Methodists and Baptists began their activity in the city. Unlike in some other countries, the Salvation Army has never become a separate free church in Finland, but most of its members are members of the Lutheran Church. However, due to its theological views, the Salvation Army is in many ways close to the free churches and also co-operates with them, even though it is not involved in ‘the A&O network’. In Finland, the Salvation Army is mostly known for its second-hand shops and humanitarian aid. For the public, its profile resembles more that of the Red Cross than that of a separate church. In Turku, the Army also runs several second-hand shops, as well as engaging in charity work. The religious activities attract a relatively small number of people, but still every Sunday some 10-15 people gather for the service. The Salvation Army’s premises regularly host other religious meetings, for instance Lutheran, with the Charismatic Ilpoinen Circle. The Salvation Army has also taken part in ecumenical activity (IF 2002/8: 18; Martikainen, 1996: 59-60).

Also active in the city is a small independent Lutheran congregation—the Confessional Lutheran Church of Finland (*Suomen Tunnustuksellinen Luterilainen Kirkko*), which separated from the Evangelical revival movement in the 1920s. Its monthly service gathers circa 10 participants (IF 2003/1: 7, Martikainen, 1996: 55).<sup>25</sup>

The church promotes an understanding of the Lutheran faith similar to that of the Missouri Synod in the United States.

The Congregation of God (*Jumalan seurakunta*) is a small community which has been active in Turku since the 1970s. Weijo Lindroos, the spokesman for the community, nevertheless maintains that the congregation is as old as any true Christian activity in the city. According to Lindroos, there exists in every locality only one Christian community—the Congregation of God—and that is not a secular entity at all. No church organisation can claim to represent this community as such. In practice, however, the Congregation of God forms a small group of circa 20 activists. Many of them are involved in street mission in central Turku, where they play music and evangelise next to the Market Square (IF 2003/1: 19).

The Bible Speaks Congregation in Turku (*Turun Raamattu Puhuu seurakunta*) began its activity in 1984. It is part of the transnational Greater Grace World Outreach (formerly known as ‘The Bible Speaks’), which has activities according to its Internet homepage in over 180 countries (Greater Grace World Outreach, 2003). The local congregation has circa 50 members and provides a variety of activities, including a Bible School. Members also regularly evangelise in local suburbs as well as occasionally arrange meetings in other localities. The community is tight-knit and does not have regular contacts with other local congregations (IF 2002/8: 4; Martikainen, 1996: 63).

The Word of Life (*Elämän Sana*) congregation started its activity in August 1990. It is an independent neo-Pentecostal congregation, but has close connections with the Swedish Word of Life congregation (*Livets Ord*) in Uppsala, near Stockholm. The local congregation has some 110-120 members and, on a regular Sunday, circa 60-80 people participate in the main service. The community

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<sup>25</sup> Since my previous fieldwork in 1995-96, another independent Lutheran Church seems who have finished its activities in the city. The church in question is the Federation of Free Evangelical Lutheran Congregations in Finland (*Suomen vapaa evankelisuterilainen seurakuntaliitto*) (Martikainen, 1996: 55).

is one of the most active evangelising groups in the city and also runs an independent Christian School, as well as a Bible School. The congregation created some controversy during its first years in the city, but lately it has become more co-operative and is willing to become recognised by other free churches and join the ‘A&O network’ (IF 2002/8: 2; Martikainen, 1996: 64).

For several years two other Christian associations have been actively arranging religious meetings and now they seem to have stabilised their activity in the city. These are the Henôtês Congregation (*Henôtês-seurakunta*) and the New Life (*Uusi Elämä*) association. The Henôtês Congregation has its base in the city of Salo, located 50 kilometres east of Turku, and has been arranging services and prayer meetings in the city since the mid-1990s (Henôtês seurakunta, 2003). The New Life association has organised Charismatic meetings since about the same time and they now have a permanent place in the city (Uusi Elämä, 2003; Martikainen, 1996: 79).

The latest addition to the local Christian scene is the Turku City Church (*Turun City-seurakunta*), which is an independent Pentecostal congregation. It is a continuation of a previous Messiah Congregation (*Messias-seurakunta*), which was active for a year and a half in the mid-1990s. It has links with other ‘City Congregations’ which have been formed in large numbers in Finland over the last ten years. The couple who run the congregation—Eeva ‘Glory’ and Mats Backman—are also active in sending humanitarian aid to other countries as well as running a second hand shop in the city centre. They even have a special missionary society called Global Power Evangelism. On a regular Sunday, the City Church attracts 30-40 people to its service (IF 2002/8: 5).

Beside the ‘A&O network’ and ‘the independent congregations’, a number of other Protestant free churches have also been active in the city, but their activity has now ceased. The Quakers had a small group of activists from the 1950s till the first years of the present century, but their activities have now finished (Martikainen, 1996: 63; IF 2003/1: 8). The International Churches of Christ (formerly the Boston Church of Christ) also conducted a missionary initiative

in the city 1997-98, but they failed to establish a permanent base despite active efforts (IF 2003/1: 32).

### **Associations**

Several associations also function on an interfaith basis in the local Protestant free church scene. These include groups dedicated to missionary work, Israel, social care, etc. One example of such interfaith association is the Aglow Turku (*Turun Aglow ry*), which is part of Aglow International, which attempts to bring women back to congregational life (Martikainen, 1996: 75-80). With regard to immigrants, one association deserves special mention. The Inter-Christian Youth Team (*Yhteiskristillinen Nuorisotiimi ry*) was founded in 1994 in order to provide Christian-based activities for youngsters during the weekends. They run a youth café on Saturday evenings and provide possibilities for spiritual discussions. During the last couple of years, most of the people visiting the café have been immigrants. In the autumn of 2002 an Alpha course started in the café in order to give youngsters an elementary knowledge of Christianity. Some 20-30 people have regularly taken part in the course (IF 2002/8: 15).

The Protestant free churches represent, in many respects, the antithesis of mainstream Lutheran religiosity. Active personal engagement is the norm and this includes regular participation in church activities, a religious lifestyle and eagerness to spread the message of the Gospel. They are also highly voluntaristic and lay-leadership has a central role in most of them, even though formal education for pastors has become more common. For them, being a Christian is more than just being a member and occasionally taking part in *rites de passage* and other religious activities. While this picture does not represent the whole story, it certainly shows the way in which the congregations see themselves as alternatives to a Lutheran Church demanding less involvement. The relationship to the Lutheran Church

is not, however, completely antithetical. Certain conservative Lutheran groups are generally respected. These include the Evangelical revival movement and exponents of the Fifth Revival and Charismatics. Also the general denominationalisation of the older free churches during the last century seems to have lessened their sectarian tendencies, and many of the congregations are today open to discussion on the official level, at least, if not in practice, with the Lutheran Church and other religious organisations. Both on the local and the national levels, the growth of the Ecumenical Movement has played a significant role in this.

The free churches' missionary zeal has also been directed towards the new immigrants. Most of the local free churches are members of transnational churches or movements, and have gained new members among those immigrants who belonged to the same or a similar church in their home country. Several churches provide minor activities for the immigrants, but only one church regularly provides worship in different languages; the Swedish Methodist Bethlehem Church has established itself as the most significant immigrant church in the city. These issues will be looked at more closely in Chapter 5.

#### **4.2.1.3 The Orthodox Church**

The Finnish Orthodox Church is historically an offshoot of the Russian Orthodox Church and in many ways still has close links to its origins. The local parish was founded in the early part of the nineteenth century among Russian officials and migrants in the city. After the independence of Finland in 1917, the parish remained a small, mainly Russian and partially Swedish-speaking community, but after the resettlement of the Karelians in the post-Second World War period, the parish soon became mostly Finnish-speaking. After independence, the church became separated from its mother church, as was explained earlier. During the transformative post-war years the church followed in many ways the example set by the Lutheran Church, in the sense that it also started to offer many services beside



worship, including confirmation camps, free-time activities and other voluntary activities. Today, laymen play an important role in the parishes (Martikainen, 1996: 65-66; Repo, 1999).

The local Finnish Orthodox parish functions in a large area in south-western Finland, although almost 60% of its members live in or near the city of Turku. The church's membership rather stagnated until the 1990s, but has risen by ca. 25% during the last 10-15 years. The growth in membership has been largely due to immigration from Eastern Europe. Current membership is ca. 2,500 and the members represent several language-groups. Languages used on a regular basis are Finnish, Swedish, Church Slavonic and sometimes Romanian. The Sunday service attracts on a weekly basis 60-70 people, ca. 3% of the parish members. The parish has two full-time priests, of whom one is peripatetic (IF mgt 2002/39).

In October, 2002, in close co-operation with the local Russian consulate, a Russian Orthodox chapel was opened with activities directed towards local Russians. The chapel is situated next to the consulate and services are now arranged there on a regular basis. The Russian monk in charge of the chapel estimated that the congregation has ca. 100 members. In the small chapel, there are usually 20-30 people gathered. The congregation functions under the jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church, but has also good relations with the local Finnish Orthodox parish. Many local Russians welcomed the chapel as there are certain differences between the Finnish and Russian churches, for example with regard to the calendar (IF 2003/1: 28).

#### **4.2.1.4 The Catholic Church**

The local Catholic population started to grow slowly during the nineteenth century, largely due to the military presence in the city, and the military also included Catholic priests. A local parish was finally founded in 1926. However, the number of Catholics at the time was quite small, a couple of dozen, mainly because the Russian military was no longer in the city. The community consisted in the early dec-



ades of people of Italian and German descent, as well as a few Finnish converts. The parish gradually grew and had over 200 members in the 1960s. From the 1970s onwards, the parish has grown steadily, largely because of immigration. A major leap occurred in the 1990s and the parish has doubled its membership over the last fifteen years. Today, it has over 1,000 members, representing over 40 nationalities and many different language groups (IF mgt 2003/2; Vuorela, 1989: 208-218, 356-357).

The parish's official name is St. Bridget's and Blessed Hemming's Parish (*Pyhän Birgitan ja autuaan Hemmingin seurakunta*), referring to local religious history. Over the years, various Catholic orders have been active in the congregation. In 1986, the Order of St. Bridget established its activities in the city and the sisters have been of great help to the community. They are also of significant ecumenical interest and there exists an association for their support. The parish's main languages are Finnish and English and Sunday services in these two languages attract a full house each week. The local Catholic congregation is today one of the most central local, international institutions, bringing together people of different national and ethnic origin in the city (IF mgt 2002/36; IF mgt 2003/2).

#### **4.2.1.5 Outside the Christian mainstream**

There are also three other religious organisations of Christian origin in Turku, but as these have to some extent distanced themselves from mainstream Christianity, they are best seen as separate entities in theological terms. Mainstream Christians and the groups presented here also share a common feature, in that both sides consider each other heretics and not proper Christians. The organisations in question are the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) and the New Apostolic Church. The distinguishing theological factors include the Christology of Jehovah's Witnesses, the use of other sacred texts beside the Bible by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the existence of contemporary Apostles in the New Apostolic Church. All of the churches have

risen from Protestant backgrounds, the first two in an American, and the last in an Anglo-German, context, and consider themselves Christians (Heino, 1997: 158-162, 175-188).

The Jehovah's Witnesses established themselves in Turku as early as in 1909. A Finnish man came into contact with the Jehovah's Witnesses abroad and later started their activities in Finland. The community grew particularly in the post-war period and today there are nine congregations with 850-900 active members in Turku. Seven congregations use the Finnish language, one is Swedish-speaking and one English-speaking. There are even small Spanish and Russian language groups. The Jehovah's Witnesses are known in the locality, as elsewhere in the world, for their active missionary work (IF 2002/8: 7, 19; Martikainen, 1996: 70-72).

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints started their work in the post-war period in Turku. The first congregation was founded in 1948 and the community's church was finished in 1967. In 1995 the congregation was separated into two separate organisations, as membership had grown. Today, the two congregations have 450 members, most of whom live in the Turku region. The Sunday services attract an average of 250 participants (IF 2002/8: 20; Martikainen, 1996: 71-72).

The New Apostolic Church had individual members in Finland already in the 1960s. The members were German immigrants and their family members. The church headquarters were established in Turku in the 1970s. The congregation has remained quite small, with circa 50 members, of whom about 20 live in Turku. The local group has a church near the city centre, which functions as the centre of the whole church in the country (Heino, 1997; IF 2002/8: 21; Martikainen, 1996: 72-73).

Common features of these congregations are that they remain mostly outside local interfaith networks, with the exception of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which has recently become active in a local inter-religious enterprise, the Forum of Religions in Turku (see section 4.2.2). They are not interested in cooperation with other religious organisations, whom they mostly con-

sider heretics, but prefer to stay in their own circles. The Jehovah's Witnesses and the Mormons are both very active in missionary work and thus to some extent visible in the locality. For all of these organisations transnational religious connections are more significant than the local ones.

### **4.2.2 Judaism**

The local Jewish population started to take shape in the middle of the nineteenth century, when retired Russian military personnel were allowed to station themselves in the city after their military service. The local Orthodox Jewish congregation built a synagogue in 1912 and was officially registered after the independence of Finland in 1918. Today, the congregation has ca. 130 members and its membership has been in a steady decline for several decades. A wave of emigration to Israel in the 1970s strengthened this development. Finnish Jewish congregations in general have not received many new immigrant members in the last years, so that their growth or decline has been related to the development of the national Jewish population. The local congregation, however, has a variety of activities going on. Saturday service gathers 15-20 participants and additional activities are also organised (IF 2003/1: 24; Martikainen, 1996: 81). The Jewish Congregation in Turku (*Turun Juutalainen seurakunta*) is, despite decreasing membership, an active religious organisation and a traditional part of the local religious field. The coming decades will show whether the community can revive its fortunes and again become the lively community it once was.

### **4.2.3 Islam**

Turku had a Russian garrison during the period of Russian rule and it is known that among the soldiers there were some Muslims in the latter part of the nineteenth century. However, not until the arrival of Tatar Muslims at the turn of the twentieth century did a local Muslim community begin to take shape. Their number has always been relatively small and has never exceeded 100. The Turku Tatars are

members of the Islam Congregation of Finland (*Suomen Islam-seurakunta*) based in Helsinki. The community has had its own graveyard since 1912, which is not open to other Muslims (Leitzinger, 1996: 150-151). They have even their own place of prayer in an apartment in the city centre. Today, there are less than 40 Tatars in Turku and most of them are quite old. Common meetings are held a couple of times every year during the large Islamic celebrations. The imam comes from Helsinki. The Turku Tatar community is not very vital any more (IF 2003/1: 20; Martikainen, 1996: 83).

Before the 1990s there were some individual non-Tatar Muslims in Turku, but their number was fairly small. A great change occurred in the first years of the 1990s. The local authorities made the decision to accept a quota of refugees in 1987 and quite soon after that refugees arrived from Iran, Iraq, Somalia and the former Yugoslavia. Today, these groups form the majority of the local Muslim population. By the end of 2002, the city of Turku had accepted altogether about 3,200 refugees, of which people from Muslim countries formed about 85%. In the autumn of 1991 a small group of Muslim immigrants founded a new place for prayer. There were men from Egypt, Lebanon, Algeria and the USA. They were allowed to build a prayer room in the attic of the International Meeting Point, which is a gathering place for foreigners financed by the city. There was one room for men and one for women, and about ten Muslims took part in the Friday prayer, which was the only activity at that time. At this stage, some participants already planned to form a Muslim association, but the idea faded away. Quite soon after the establishment of the prayer rooms came the Somalis, who were the first refugees to take part in this activity. The place was too small, and so it was later exchanged for a larger one in the same house (IF 1998/2: 3 R).

In the autumn of 1992, the first Shia Muslims arrived from Iraq. Then again the place became too small, and the search for more appropriate premises started with the help of the city authorities. In the spring of 1993, the authorities offered some rooms in an old factory building for the Muslims, but the city required that there should be an association, which would then hire the place. The Shias

were quick to form the Islam Centre of Turku (*Turun Islam-Keskus ry*) which was registered in April 1993. The association rented the place from the city, and this was then to become the meeting place of the Shia Muslims in Turku. Soon after that, an Algerian rented an apartment for the use of Sunni Muslims. Later on, the same group formed the Islamic Society of Turku (*Turun islamilainen yhdistys ry*), which was registered in July, 1994. It should be stated that there have not been any serious disagreements between the local Sunnis and Shias, and the main reason why there were two separate associations at this stage was the question of space. As there were already so many Muslims, neither of these places could manage that amount of people. But as their religious practises differ to some extent, it also seemed to be a natural division.

Thus, by the mid-1990s, there were two new Muslim associations functioning in the city, and their division was based on religious differences. In the latter part of the decade two new associations were formed. First, a group of people separated from the Islamic Society of Turku and founded a new religious community in 1996. The community was officially registered under the name Islamic Dawa Community (*Islamilainen Dawa-Yhteisö*), which was later changed to *Anjuman-e-Islahul-Muslimeen of Turku, Finland*. The group has rented an old laundry, which it aims to rebuild as a mosque and community centre. The group consists of circa 60 members and is part of the transnational *Tablighi Jama'at* movement (IF 2003/1: 15). Second, a group separated from the Shias' Islamic Centre of Turku in the late 1990s. They registered a new association in 1998, which was named Al-Imam Al-Baker Islamic Association (*Al.Iman Al.Baker Islamilainen yhdistys ry*). The group has 50-100 members, mostly of Iraqi origin (IF 2003/1: 23). There are thus five different Muslim communities in the city at the moment: three Sunni and two Shia communities, with altogether ca. 700-800 members. Furthermore, there are a large number of Muslims who are not involved in the activities of these communities.

#### 4.2.4 Hinduism

Religions and spiritual practices originating in India have made their way to Turku both through Western channels and as a result of immigration. The western influence has been greater in the Finnish context and it mainly manifests itself in various Yoga groups, some of which have been commonly known as New Religious Movements. The first local Yoga and meditation associations were founded at the turn of the 1970s. They include two Hatha Yoga associations, Transcendental Meditation and Divine Light Mission (later Elan Vital). Since the 1970s, at least the following groups have conducted activity in the city: Sahaja Yoga, Kundalin Yoga and Astanga Yoga. Also the Amma Center has a group in the city. The local Hatha Yoga (*Turun Joogayhdistys ry*) and the Astanga Yoga Turku association are the largest and, together, have circa 500 members. Most, but not all, of these groups state that they teach 'secular Yoga', which has no explicit religious connotations and is practised for its health benefits as well as for physical and mental exercise. That also seems to be the central motivation for most practitioners. However, many Yoga activists are to some extent also interested in Indian spirituality and in this sense it seems acceptable to view some of the practices as at least religiously or spiritually motivated. However, Yoga also obtained a breakthrough in the fitness sector, so that its relationship to eastern spirituality is ambiguous at best (IF 2003/1: 9; IF 2003/1: 13; Junnonaho, 1981: 23-24; Ketola, 2000; Martikainen, 1996: 88-90).

So far, Hindu immigrants have not formed any local religious associations, even though there are a small number of Hindus in the city (IF 2002/8: 22; Keski-Petäjä, 2001). In Helsinki, local Hindus have to some extent taken part in the activities of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISCKON, the Hare Krishna Movement) and form an important part of their current membership. There was also an ISCKON temple in Turku at the turn of the 1990s, but it was closed down due to financial difficulties. Individual immigrants frequented the temple, when it still was open.

The Hare Krishnas have occasionally had activity in the city since then, but have not established any permanent forum (IF 2002/8: 22; Martikainen, 1996: 90-91). In general, it seems that the national immigrant Hindu scene is still at a very formative and unorganised stage.

#### **4.2.5 Buddhism**

Buddhism in an organised form is a post-war phenomenon in Finland. Even though Buddhism was already a source of inspiration among Theosophists at the beginning of the twentieth century, it took several decades before separate Buddhist societies were formed in the country (Heino, 1997: 271-277). The beginning of the local Buddhist scene is not very clear for me, but there have certainly been people identifying themselves as 'Buddhists' in Turku for some time. Martti Junnonaho (1981: 25) names four different Buddhist groups in his study of religious organisations in Turku in the early 1980s, but none of those have continued their activity until today. Of contemporary communities, the Buddhist Dharma Centre (*Buddhalainen Dharmakeskus*), which has its headquarters 60 kilometres north of Turku, started its meditation and lecture activities in the 1980s. The activity discontinued in the late 1990s and began afresh after an exhibition of Tibetan art at the Turku Cultural Centre in 2000, organised by Dharma Centre. Since then, a small group of circa 10 activists has taken shape. The group meets once a week for meditation and lectures. About half of the local members have also officially joined the Buddhist Dharma Centre, which is a registered religious community organisation. No immigrants have been active in the local group (IF 2003/1: 29).

The city of Turku started to accept quota refugees in 1987 and Vietnamese were already included in the first groups. Since then, the number of Vietnamese has continually grown in the locality. Most Vietnamese refugees are Buddhists and during the 1990s they started to plan a Vietnamese Buddhist society. The Vietnamese Buddhist Community of Finland (*Suomen vietnamilaisten buddhalaisten*

*yhdyskunta*) was founded in 1997 and registered as a religious community organisation in the following year. The society claims to represent some 3,000 Vietnamese Buddhists in the country, of which 300-400 live in Turku. The society arranges annually two large religious festivals—*Vulan* and *Vesak*—as well as occasional meditation sessions and other activities. The main aim of the society, however, has been to build a Vietnamese Buddhist Cultural Centre in Finland. Finally they were able to find a suitable place in Moisio, near Turku. Now the society is looking to forward starting the building of the centre (see section 5.2.4) (IF 2003/1: 11).

Interest in Zen Buddhism was long of a literary nature and referred to, for example, in Japanese martial arts. During the 1990s, a few Zen associations were established in Finland. In January, 1998, the Zen monk Tae Hye (Mikael Niinimäki) held a lecture in Turku and after that a small group was formed. The group meets once a week in a local martial arts studio, Shaolin, where circa five people gather. Several group members have also visited longer *sesshins* both in Finland and abroad. No immigrants have been involved in the activity with the exception of the half-year visit of a German exchange student, whose father was a Zen teacher in Germany. Surprisingly, perhaps, none of the members are currently active in martial arts training (IF 2003/1: 27).

Aspects of Tibetan Buddhism were already present in the activities of the Dharma Centre, but since the year 2000 two further Tibetan Buddhist groups have started their work in the city. The first of these was the Karmapa association (*Karmapa ry*), which is known internationally as the Diamond Way Buddhism of Lama Ole Nydahl and follows the teachings of the 17<sup>th</sup> Karmapa Trinlay Thaye Dorje. The association was founded in 1998 in Helsinki and extended its meditation and lecture activities to Turku in 2000. Two Ingrian immigrants started the activity, which consists of two weekly meetings. There were just under ten practitioners in the city in early 2003. Lama Nydahl's Diamond Way is an internationally disseminated organisation and about half of the 30-40 members in Finland are of immigrant origin, including Russians and Hungarians (IF 2003/1:



10). The second new Tibetan group is related to the Finnish nun, Ani Sherab (Pirkko Siltaloppi), who studied for several years in the Kagyu Samye Lingi monastery in Scotland, which follows the 17<sup>th</sup> Karmapa Ugyen Trinley Dorje. She lives now on the island Vanö in South-western Finland and has founded the Rokpa Finland association. Local activity in Turku began, inspired by Ani Sherab's lectures and led to the founding of a small meditation group of five persons. The group meets in a private home and has no interest for the time being in expanding its activities (IF 2003/1: 17). Ani Sherab has become a media personality and has recently been interviewed in several of the media (e.g. Hyytiäinen, 2002)

The five groups presented above are the organised forms of Buddhism in Turku. With the exception of the Vietnamese Buddhists, they are all fairly small and do not have an official organisation based in the city, but are offshoots of associations based elsewhere. None of the communities are interested in extensive marketing or mission, but wish rather to have a small but interested group of followers. This means that they are quite invisible in the local context and not all that easy to find for those interested. Despite their small size, they nevertheless form a basic structure for continuous local Buddhist activity, which attracts both immigrants and Finns. Interestingly enough, three of the groups are related to Tibetan Buddhism.

#### **4.2.6 Other religions**

Two organisations of other religions supplement the previous sections on 'world religions': these are the Bahá'í and the Mandaean communities. A local Bahá'í group was formed at the turn of the 1960s when foreign missionaries, or pioneers, to the use the correct Bahá'í term, started the activity. The group has remained fairly small, but it has received several new members since the 1990s, due to refugees from Iran. Today, there are circa 30 members in the city, of whom half are Iranian refugees. The Bahá'í community throughout the country has grown slightly because of immigration (IF mgt 2002/40; Martikainen, 1996: 84). Another group of Middle-eastern origin

is the Mandaeans. The Mandaeans are the only surviving Gnostic religion, which had historically most of its practitioners in the southern marshlands of Iraq. However, due to the repressive politics of Saddam Hussein's regime, a large percentage of the Mandaeans have been forced to emigrate, and today there are groups of Mandaeans literally all over the world (Buckley, 2002; Lupieri, 2002). The local Mandaean community started to take shape in the late 1990s. In 1999, they formed an association named the Mandaean Association of Finland (*Suomen mandaalainen yhdistys ry*). There are ca. 60 Mandaeans in Finland, of whom most live in Turku. The association arranges regular meetings, but their main concern has been to find a place for baptising ceremonies, which are at the centre of the ritual life of the Mandaean religion. So far they have not been successful (IF mgt 2002/42-43).

#### **4.2.7 Alternative spirituality**

'Alternative spirituality' is used here as an umbrella term for bringing together a number of diverse associations and activities that are concerned with spiritual matters, but which are not usually understood as 'religious'. While the term is far from unproblematic, the groups in question have important links connecting them to the local religious field. A central feature of these groups is that they either consider themselves as supplementing what the churches or 'religions' teach, or they present themselves as alternatives to church religiosity or in opposition to it. It is not a homogenous group and it could be further subdivided, but from the viewpoint of this study it is enough to state that they represent, or claim to represent, a substitute or a supplement for organised religion. Drawing on various religio-philosophical traditions, the organisational plane provides more a selection for those who are interested to choose from rather than establishing deep personal connections in the form of membership and dedication in the cause of one institution. Therefore the following organisational map of local alternative spirituality can only touch on one aspect of the field (Martikainen, forthcoming).

The western occult-esoteric tradition has been present in the locality ever since the turn of the twentieth century. It was then that the Theosophical Society began its activity, and later offshoots from Theosophy brought further diversity. These included the Liberal Catholic Church, the Anthroposophical Society and a national offshoot of Theosophy called Cristosophy (*Kristosofia*). Their products were essential for the later development on the national field of alternative spirituality and are still widely used and known in alternative circles. While the Theosophical groups constitute the visible part of local, traditional esoteric milieux, a more secretive scene also exists. There are the Finnish (Grand Lodge of Finland) and Swedish (The Swedish Order of Free Masons—Grand Lodge of Sweden) freemasons, as well as the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, which have functioned as religiously inspired semi-secret societies, and have a few hundred members. These groups have had a closer connection to traditional religiosity, but have nevertheless been exclusive and secretive in a similar manner to some of the above mentioned esoteric groups (Martikainen, 1996: 85-87, 94-96). A growing form structurally similar to these closed organisations at present seems to be the various orders of knighthood connected to the traditional churches, such as the Catholic Church (IF mgt 2002/36).

Despite similarities to older societies, the alternative spirituality emerging from the 1970s onwards is a much more widespread phenomenon than the early occult-esoteric scene. It takes an organised form in associations, companies, private entrepreneurs and exhibitions. The associations are dedicated to, for example, the paranormal, UFOs, spiritual growth and healing. They arrange lectures and courses on various topics, such as astrology, religion and healing. The rapid growth of alternative medical practices in the 1990s is an example of the many private entrepreneurs that find their inspiration in the alternative spiritual field. Certain places function as centres where information is spread and courses held, and where, for instance, several alternative therapists work. The centres are the fo-

cal point of the local alternative field (Ketola, 2003b; Martikainen, forthcoming).

The earlier mentioned Buddhist and Hindu meditation groups, alongside a number of Asian martial art clubs, supplement the alternative spiritual field and illustrate the difficulties of drawing boundaries between different activities. For example, meditation courses are often organised by alternative spiritual associations, even though many participants are not all that interested in the religio-philosophical background of the practice. With regard to martial arts, my personal reflection as an active participant for many years leads me to suggest that they also create a platform for many to speculate on spiritual matters. Moreover, the historical connection to Zen Buddhism and Eastern philosophy shows a direction in which the devoted may seek, if such interests emerge. However, to be honest, the spiritual aspect of Asian martial arts more often than not plays a very marginal role for most participants.

A further part of the local alternative field is neo-Pagan activity. Similarly critical of established religion, many people have sought spiritual guidance from re-established religious traditions. The group consists of such diverse areas of interest, such as Asatru, Wicca and Satanism. In Turku, there is at least one organised association functioning, called the Pagan Network (*Pakanaverkko ry*), which has ca. 10 local members (IF 2003/1: 6). In addition, there are most probably a few dozen private practitioners, who are not interested in taking part in organised activities, but prefer to work on their own. Furthermore, groups such as the Satanists are not likely to be public about their activities, either, as they are generally regarded with suspicion. However, the neo-Pagans form a small undercurrent in the local alternative spiritual field.

All in all, the local alternative spiritual field in its diversity and ambivalent relationship to traditional forms of religion is an important part of local religious and spiritual life. Even though most of the groups are fairly small, many ideas present in this cultic milieu are widely disseminated and may, at least to some extent, be right-

fully called elements of contemporary popular religion (Ketola, 2003b).

#### **4.2.8 Beside ‘religions’**

A large segment of the local population is not actively involved in the activities of local religious and spiritual organisations that have been described above. While this study concentrates on the activities provided by local religious organisations, it would nevertheless be incorrect to presume that the unaffiliated are irreligious by definition. Organised irreligion attracts only a small following in Turku. There are two associations that motivate their existence by opposing organised religion: the Free Thinkers and the Secular Humanists. Together these associations have just over 100 members (Martikainen, 1996: 97-98).

### **4.3 Reflections on the religious field**

The local religious field in Turku can be seen from many other perspectives than that of religious organisation, as just presented. Obviously the organisations constitute a highly significant element in the field, but knowledge of them is only a part of the general picture. In the following I shall present four different views of the local field which illuminate other, also important features. First, language and ethnicity divides the field in a different way to the more theological boundaries applied in the previous section. Second, the position that interfaith activity has in the locality is of central importance as it brings people from diverse traditions together, creating new bonds and networks. Third, local media are an essential factor in how the religious organisations are understood as a part of local life. Fourth, it is also valuable to reflect on the effects that the local religious organisations play in the surroundings of the city as well as on the national and transnational levels.

### 4.3.1 Language and ethnicity

Language, often combined with ethnicity, creates one of the main boundaries between religious organisations in the city. The boundaries are rather *efficient* in the sense that it usually requires significant additional work in order to overcome them, and they are also *natural* as people talking the same language are more easily drawn towards each other, especially if it is a minority language. Obviously, ethnicity is often closely connected to language, so that it effectively reinforces linguistic borders. Many congregations are well aware of their linguistic nature, and the only ‘language-blind’ congregations are often those presenting the majority language—Finnish. As there are dozens of different languages spoken in Turku, it should be no surprise that the local religions field also reflects this situation (see section 5.1).

The local religious organisations can be linguistically divided into a number of blocks. Beside Finnish-language organisations, there are also congregations that work mainly in Swedish, English, Arabic, Russian, Vietnamese and German (IF 2002/8: 9; IF 2003/1: 11, 23, 26; IF mgt 2002/37-38, 41). Small group activity is known to take place in additional languages, including Chinese, French and Spanish (IF 2002/8: 19; IF mgt 2002/37). Most local congregations are monolingual, but a number of them have at least some kind of activity in a second language. Only a few congregations are effectively bi- or multilingual, including the Catholic and Finnish Orthodox parishes and the Islamic Society of Turku. In multiethnic communities Finnish often functions as a *lingua franca* (IF mgt 2002/36, 41).

Traditionally, Finnish and Swedish have been the main languages in the city, but recently the role of other languages has increased. The Finnish-language organisations form the largest and religiously most diverse linguistic block in the city. Swedish-speakers are mostly Protestant Christians, even though in both the Orthodox and Catholic Churches there are small Swedish-language groups. English, on the other hand, is a more universal language and in Turku it seems to

bring together mainly Protestants and Catholics. With the exception of the International Cathedral Congregation, English is often the second language in the congregation and not the main one. Arabic is the main language in Muslim organisations. Russian is used by Finnish and Russian Orthodox and Protestant Christians, including Lutherans and the Methodists. Vietnamese is used by Catholics and Buddhists and, to a lesser extent, by the Methodists. Lutherans and the New Apostolic Church use German. Missionary groups mostly use languages beside these. The linguistic religious map mirrors the regions of origin of the immigrant groups.

Deliberate attempts to overcome linguistic barriers are often based on a missionary idea. They are attempts to draw people of other languages into the activity presented by the organisation in question. For instance, the local Swedish Bethlehem Church is actively seeking persons who could lead Bible groups in their own languages to add to their already multilingual range. They have realised that effective religious teaching is most often conducted by fellow countrymen, and not by Finnish natives. A telling example of such plans is the following quotation from the leader of the local congregation.

I would like to start Bible groups for Chinese as I have many contacts with them, but there is one problem. Their culture is so different that it would be impossible for a European to lead it. So far, we have not found a leader. I have tried a couple of times myself to start a Chinese group, but have noticed that it does not work.<sup>26</sup>

Many congregations have realised that, despite active efforts to attract people of other languages, it is not so simple. Several local

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<sup>26</sup> Original in Swedish: "Jag sku gärna liksom villa börja grupper för kineser för att jag har mycket kinesiska kontakter, men problemet där är det att det går inte att ha en europé som leder en kinesisk grupp, kulturen är så annorlunda. Tillsvidare har vi inte hitta nån ledare. Jag har försökt ett par gånger själv att starta en kinesiska grupp. Jag har märkt att det går nog inte" (IF mgt 2002/37).

Christian free churches have interpretation systems which could be used for translating services, but they are not all that actively in use (IF 2002/8: 2-3, 6). Only when a larger number of people are attracted and a group formed, does bilingual activity create a foothold. An interesting event took place among local free churches (the A&O network) in the early 1990s, when they decided together that all foreign language activity would be concentrated on the Swedish Bethlehem Church. Congregations realised that it is more effective when a single unit takes care of non-Finnish language activity and thus the Bethlehem Church received new members from other congregations (IF 2002/8: 6).

A different logic seems to function in transnational religious organisations, such as the Catholic and Orthodox churches, and transnational religions such as Islam and Buddhism. These religions have adherents from multiple national, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds all around the world, who through immigration end up in a new social environment. In these organisations it seems that they need fellow-countrymen or co-ethnics to be in charge of religious activity as clergy or lay-leaders, so that this group becomes active in the congregation of which they already might be members. For example, in the Catholic congregation of Turku are there several Polish members who have become more visible in congregational life than earlier. According to Jouni Elomaa, the reason for this could be a new Polish parish priest. “For example, the Poles weren’t as visible in the parish before as they are now. The reason for this could be that now we have Polish clergy.”<sup>27</sup> Sometimes the activity also takes place outside the congregation, as exemplified by the Chaldean Catholics, who have formed ethnic associations for this purpose (IF 2003/1: 31). This is similar to the formation of cell-like units like those described by Ebaugh and Chafetz (2000: 359-362). This seems to indicate that, in general, for a congregation to be successful in

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<sup>27</sup>Original in Finnish: “Ja esim. aikasemmin puolalaiset ei ollut seurakunnassa ihan yhtä näkyvä ryhmä kuin tällä hetkellä. Mut siihen on saattanut tämmöseen puolalaiseen ulostuloon vaikuttaa myöskin sitten se että on puolalaista papistoa” (IF mgt 2002/36).



breaking the linguistic barriers it needs to have a large enough group, but also the presence of a countryman in charge of the religious activities helps significantly.

Language, often combined with ethnicity, draws one of the main boundaries between various congregations in the city. The boundaries are so efficient that even common religious background does not necessarily keep the group together. As we have seen in many countries around Western Europe, for instance, Muslim organisations are more often than not divided along linguistic and ethnic lines (Landman, 1996: 564). This development is also seen in Finland, even if on a small scale, as the ethnic groups themselves are still relatively small (Martikainen, 2000c). However, most probably the tendency will only increase in the Finnish context, if immigration to the country continues and the ethnic communities grow.

### **4.3.2 Interfaith activity**

Interfaith activity plays a central role in local inter-religious dynamics. It takes place on both the individual and the institutional planes, and takes various forms: for example, meetings, campaigns and permanent co-operation. There are several forums for inter-religious activity in Turku, of which some are more important, while others only affect a few individuals. Most inter-religious activity takes place between theologically close organisations, such as different Protestant congregations, but sometimes it extends further and questions established theological boundaries. The importance of inter-religious activity and dialogue has increased over the last decades and seems to be growing all the time. Perhaps the oldest form of institutionalised local inter-religious activity was the creation of Christian interfaith associations at the turn of the twentieth century. Associations such as the YMCA and YWCA brought people together to some extent from the Lutheran Church as well as from the Protestant free churches. However, at the time, the division between the Lutherans and the free churches was more conflictual and the interfaith dimension was rather marginal (Suominen, 1998: 143-149).

Only later did the interfaith character become more important. The Christian associations were already described earlier, so they will not be considered here. It is rather the role of four interfaith initiatives which will be at the centre of analysis: a local ecumenical group, the co-operation of the 'A&O network', the biannual meetings of Christian congregation leaders and a new interfaith group, the Forum of Religions in Turku.

The local Ecumenical Group of Turku (*Turun ekumeeninen ryhmä*) was founded in 1954, based on a Lutheran-Catholic initiative, and has brought together Lutherans, Protestant free churches, Orthodox and Catholics. The major outsiders have been the Pentecostals, who, for theological reasons, cannot take part in ecumenical activity, and the local congregation of the Evangelical Free Church (IF 2002/8: 3, 6). The group has not organised itself officially and its members are not official representatives of their faith communities. The group has usually had 15-20 members, and it has been a theological discussion group. The community has also arranged an annual, ecumenical prayer week—the Prayer Week of Christian Unity (*Kristittyjen ykseyden rukousviikko*)—since 1969 (Kokko, 1994; Luojola, 1994). Many of the group activists have also participated in the ecumenical pilgrimage of St. Henry, which is a revived pilgrimage of Catholic origin in the surroundings of Turku (Anttonen, 1998). The main function of the group has, however, been one of theological discussion, which has furthered mutual religious understanding in the locality. The current chairman of the group, the Lutheran priest Kalle Elonheimo, describes the group's local importance as follows: "If we didn't have the Ecumenical Group, then surely the image of Ecumenics in Turku and for local people would solely be that church leaders meet each other. It would not in that regard be of local importance."<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Original in Finnish: "No jos ei ekumeenista pöriä olis, niin kyllä ekumenian kuva Turussa ja turkulaisille niin olis ihan yksinomaan se, että se on jotain että kirkkojen johtajat käyvät toisiaan tapaamassa. Ei se tuntuis siinäkään määrin paikallistasolla merkittävältä asialta" (IF mgt 2002/38).

‘The A&O network’ represents a different kind of interfaith activity. It is a more practical forum, where the congregation leaders meet once a month in order to inform each other about their ongoing activities, to plan co-operative efforts and to pray. The group has, for example, co-ordinated various events, such as a free Christmas dinner and celebration for the unemployed and common prayer meetings for Turku. The foundation of a common media office to co-ordinate media relations and to obtain more publicity for the congregations in the network has also been a major initiative. Four times a year the bureau publishes the *A&O* tabloid, which is distributed by members of various congregations to householders (IF 2002/8: 12). So, simultaneously, the network reinforces each other’s religious views as well as creating a common Protestant Christian ethos.

Since 2000, all local Christian congregation leaders have met twice annually. The call for the forum came from the Lutheran Cathedral dean Jukka Paarma, the leader of the local parish union at the time and the current archbishop. The assembly mostly gathers congregations that were already active in the local ecumenical group and ‘the A&O network’. The purpose of the assembly is to provide a forum for co-operation and discussion for different local Christian congregations. While the assembly has not yet found a more ‘practical’ role, there have been discussions on whether it should take charge of the ecumenical prayer week (IF 2002/8: 3). All parties have welcomed the assembly and it might prove to be to an important forum for local religious collaboration in the future.

The Forum of Religions in Turku (*Turun Uskontojen Foorumi*) was founded at the turn of the second millennium and is part of a transnational network, the United Religions Initiative. It has brought together, among others, Lutherans, Catholics, Mormons, Sunni Muslims, Jews, Bahá’í and Finnish Buddhists in the local context. Members of the group are not official representatives of their organisations, but individuals who are interested in interfaith work. This non-official group meets once a month in a locality in which members are active so that participants can also see and feel the different shrines in practice (IF mgt 2002/36). The group is still at

an early and formative stage and it remains to be seen to what extent it will become a player in the local field. With regard to inter-religious co-operation, it is unique, as it brings together communities that could or would not participate in ecumenical activities. The group has the potential to develop into a significant local religious actor, if it wishes to do so. So far, it has mostly been an interest for a small group of people.

The various forms of interfaith activity provide a basis for discussion and for the search for common, rather than divisive, factors. In the increasingly pluralistic local religious field various interfaith groups may become central mediators between the congregations (see Ebaugh, 2000: 380-382; Eck, 2000: 370-380). Obviously not all organisations are included in these networks, but those who are start to appreciate the efforts of others, thus lessening local religious conflicts. When I asked during the interviews how local interfaith relations would look without these contacts, the answer was always the same: there would be more stereotypical images of others, prejudice and no interest in finding common denominators in religious thought and activity. Most of this local interfaith activity is still rather new, so only time will tell what its further implications will be, but so far they have planted significant seeds for inter-religious tolerance.

### **4.3.3 Religion in the local media**

The visibility of local religious actors and institutions in the local media helps us to position religious activity in the local society. However, the following section will only offer preliminary remarks on the issue, as the theme could well be a topic for research on its own. The local mediascape consists of a small number of newspapers, a local television channel, several radio stations and a number of Internet sites. These function alongside national and transnational media in the locality. Of by far the greatest importance is the main local newspaper, *Turun Sanomat*. Other significant newspapers are the freely distributed *Turkulainen* and *Aamuset* as well as, for Swedish-speakers, the newspaper *Åbo Underrättelser*. The commentary

here will consider these newspapers as well as some local radio stations. In addition, there are some remarks about local religious media.

*Turun Sanomat* is the main local newspaper. It reports regularly on religious events and other news. Most news is about the Lutheran parishes in the region and only rarely are other local religious organisations portrayed. Matters related to the church are often of a similar type to these of any other significant local institution, thus strengthening the image of the parish union as an essential part of local society. Other religions are usually portrayed as representing something different from mainstream society. Events such as the celebration of the end of Ramadan for Muslims, the activities of the Catholic Bridget sisters and the celebration of Easter in the Finnish Orthodox Church illustrate this trend. *Turun Sanomat* is also the main forum for local, public debates. For instance, when the local Muslims had a plan to build a mosque in the late 1990s, it was in this newspaper that most discussion was conducted (Martikainen, 2000b). The two free distribution newspapers—*Aamuset* and *Turkulainen*—also sometimes publish news about religion, and especially *Turkulainen* is the main forum for local religious advertising. Other local media have the occasional religious programmes, but their reach is much smaller.

Local religious organisations also have a number of media of their own, some of which are indeed spread throughout the locality. Most congregations produce at least a newsletter for internal use, but there are two locally distributed free tabloids. The Turku and Kaarina Parish Union produces annually circa ten issues of *Kirkko ja Me* (“The Church and Us”), a tabloid that is distributed to all households. This monthly tabloid provides various news about Lutheran activities in the city. According to a survey conducted by the parish union, 70% of parish members read the tabloid at least every now and then (Taloustutkimus, 2002). A newcomer to the field is the *A&O* tabloid, which is a co-operative effort of the local Protestant free churches. Alongside these two print media, most local congregations also have Internet homepages. Furthermore, there has been

a local Christian radio station, *Radio Dei*, functioning since spring 2000, run mostly by the two previous actors, even though it includes other actors as well. Before that a local community radio, *Radio Robin Hood*, had several religious programmes, but its role is much smaller today. Radio Dei is listened to extensively by active Christians. A survey carried out in Helsinki came to the conclusion that, among radio listeners, the threshold for changing station is highest for the listeners of *Radio Dei* (IF 2002/8: 11, 12).

To sum up, it is not too audacious to claim that religion in general is not among the most popular topics in the local media. Local religious reporting is concentrated on the Lutheran parishes in Turku and its surroundings, both with regard to religious events and to organisational matters. The content is seldom specifically religious, but rather describes events like any other news. However, local media, with the exception of Radio Dei, seldom mention any other religious organisations beside the Lutheran Church. Immigrant Muslims during Ramadan, the Catholic nuns and Orthodox Easter celebrations are examples that occasionally bring other exponents of world religions into the news, but more as exotic curiosities than as a well-known part of local religious life. Matters related to alternative spirituality seem to come to the fore every now and then, but then most often in disguise, such as in interviews. However, certain local religious institutions try to publicise their message, as exemplified by the media collaboration among the Protestant free churches. It remains to be seen in which ways this will change the situation, but so far they have had some success. Paradoxically, in these cases the congregations have only rarely been named (IF 2002/8: 12). In short, the local media mostly strengthen the view that Finland is a Lutheran country, that other religions are exotic and that religion is not at the core of local social life.

#### 4.3.4 Extended locality

Even though this study centres on the city of Turku, it should be remembered that most local congregations are parts of regional, national and transnational organisations and networks. With the exception of the Lutheran parishes, most congregations do not restrict their membership to the geographical borders of the city and some even have members far away from the locality. For instance, the Finnish Orthodox Parish serves a large area in South-western Finland and circa 40% of its members live outside the Turku region (IF mgt 2002/39). Also, the Catholic parish and the Mormon congregations work over an almost equally impressive area and have many members outside the city (IF 2002/8: 20; IF mgt 2003/2). This means that Turku is a central provider of religious activity to the surrounding region. Conversely, many local inhabitants take part in religious activity outside the city. For instance, the so-called Nokia Revival in Tampere attracts many people to its meetings on a monthly basis (IF 2003/1: 33). However, even in the case of the strictly local Lutheran parishes, they are members of the national church, which then again is part of larger transnational religious organisations, such as the World Council of Churches.

Extra-local membership and religious activity is only a small example of the diverse ways in which local religion is connected with a larger whole. Of special interest in this study is the role of transnational religious networks and organisations that guide, resource and motivate local religious action. In addition, when global ethnoscapas affect the locality through missionaries and immigrants, the mirror image of this are the missionaries sponsored by local congregations in destinations near and far. Just about every Christian congregation sponsors missionaries or has friendship congregations somewhere around the world and keeps in touch with them in one way or another. This creates concrete and imaginative bonds between congregations in Turku and, for example, Estonia, Russia and Thailand. Transnational religious movements may rejoice about

a movement's growth elsewhere in the world, even though it might be locally declining in numbers.

The following will show with examples the many ways and the great extent to which the local religious field is interconnected with religious activity elsewhere. The aim of the presentation is more to show that there are significant transnational connections than to evaluate how important these are. The latter would be a separate task, as there are a large number of active organisations in local society, and a detailed analysis of each one would be required. Thus, the following is a preliminary attempt to produce a picture of extended locality in the Turku local religious field. It is based on the model of David Held *et al.* (1999), presented in the theoretical chapter, and looks at spatio-temporal and organisational attributes of global interconnectedness in the local religious field. It will help us to focus on certain key-issues in the next chapter.

First, the extensiveness of global networks that are directly tied to the locality seems to play an important role, but varies a great deal between congregations. Most local groups have some kinds of transnational connections, which are either on an institutional plane or of a personal nature. However, they are never truly global in scope and the term 'transnational' describes them better. A common Christian type of network is the friendship congregation, which is an institutionalised type. The congregations keep in touch with each other and often the Finnish congregations provide material or spiritual assistance to their friendship congregations. For instance, the Turku and Kaarina Parish Union has helped the Ingrian St. Mary's Parish in St. Petersburg, Russia, with significant economic resources, so that the parish has been able to renovate its church in the post-Soviet period. In general, extensive contacts are only maintained with a small number of other congregations, institutions and individuals in different countries. On the individual level, if combined, the contacts can be quite extensive when members of immigrant communities keep in touch with their relatives around the world. Usually, however, the extensiveness of global networks is better described as transnational and these are rather limited in number.



Second, the intensity of flows and levels of activity within the networks vary highly between local congregations. Mostly the connections are of less intense levels, but they are often actualised when needed. The Chaldean Catholics illustrate this well. While for the most part it is a question of maintaining contacts with relatives in Sweden and around the world on a weekly or monthly basis, there exist ready connections with Chaldean religious authorities, which can be consulted in case of need (IF 2003/1: 31). The missionary contacts of many Christian congregations are similar. While mostly in the background, they are actualised when missionaries visit the congregation, or humanitarian help is collected and local members take it to its destinations. Generally speaking, the intensity of flows and level of activity is not very high, but is actualised on a regular basis.

Third, the velocity or speed of global flows of interchange is fairly high as global refugee flows well illustrate. In cases of political crisis, it can be a question of days before asylum seekers get to Finland. The arrival of the Somalis in the beginning of the 1990s is a good example of this, made possible due to international travel facilities (Alitolppa-Niitamo and Ali, 2001). Otherwise, the use of contemporary communication technology—telephone, fax, e-mail, Internet, etc.—makes instant contact easy and affordable. The global media also rapidly inform local public about events taking place elsewhere and, for the immigrant population, the use of satellite television is a widely used means of following news from former homelands. The Iraq crisis of 2003 had many families literally glued to their television sets (IF 2003/1: 31). Thus, when necessary, the speed of global flows of interchange is very fast.

Fourth, the impact of global flows on particular communities can be looked at from the point of view of a) decisional, b) institutional, c) distributive and d) structural impacts. The decisional impacts are related to what Roland Robertson calls ‘the intensification of the consciousness of the world as a whole’. Due to global media coverage and growing cultural plurality in Turku, several local religious congregations have had to come to terms with it, either in their

own organisations or through how they should relate to other religious organisations. This means that Turku has, to an increasing degree, become a microcosm of the world's cultural and religious plurality, as is also to some extent recognised. The institutional impact can be seen in the fact that migrant-related issues have come on the agendas of many local congregations. The foundation of the Forum of Religions in Turku is a good example of this. The distributive impacts are exemplified by the emergence of immigrant communities in Turku, which has significantly altered the local linguistic, national, ethnic and religious composition in recent years. The geographical origins of the local population are now more diverse and global than earlier. The structural impacts of global flows are exemplified by the fact that the very notion of Finland as a Christian, and especially Lutheran country, has been questioned in many domains. The whole multiculturalism debate in Finland over the last ten to fifteen years has been a product of this (cf. Wahlbeck, 2003).

Fifth, the infrastructure of transnational connections among local congregations is the same as elsewhere in society. This refers, among other things, to the availability of communication and transport technologies such as telephone, fax, the Internet and international air travel. From the organisation's viewpoint, it also highlights the ability to use or purchase them. As most of these technologies are reasonably priced, they can be and are in extensive use. Sometimes, however, the costs are too high and thus, for example, the local Mandaean have not been able to afford to invite religious leaders from other countries (IF mgt 2002/42-43). In general, it can be said that the infrastructure for transnational contacts exists and most organisations also use it to some extent.

Sixth, the institutionalisation of transnational networks refers in this case to the extent to which local transnational ties are institutionalised or of a private nature. Both types exist and are important, but as institutionalised ones are usually more stable and permanent, they are of central interest. Local congregations are important institutions with transnational connections, such as missionaries working abroad and links with transnational religious bodies. They also

channel information and resources to local people (see Levitt, 2001: 6-8). For instance, so that a local Muslim community could buy a place for prayer, it used connections with Arab countries in order to finance the building (IF 2003/1: 15). In this way, local institutions channel transnational resources to all of its members. Moreover, this can also be seen as an example of how a particular Muslim organisation wishes to create power relations with Finnish Muslims in order to further its own goals. In practice, however, many transnational connections are often channelled through secondary organisations such as national mission agencies and national church headquarters, which also changes the nature of the connections, as the local congregation is not directly in touch with its partner abroad.

Seventh, patterns of global stratification function mostly in a national and global framework. Local congregations are usually parts of national religious organisations and at a lower level of the hierarchy. This limits to some extent the ways in which they can function freely in a transnational context, and they often follow organisational, doctrinal and practical paths decided elsewhere. On a global plane, however, the importance of historical and contemporary contacts with European and Anglo-American religious tradition is of central importance, while other features play a much lesser role. Most local congregations belong to religious traditions that have their origin far away from Finland and were often channelled to the country via Sweden. Thus, in terms of wider global religious stratification, Finland as well as Turku has been mostly on the receiving end.

Eighth, the dominant modes of global and transnational interaction on the local level refers to the ways in which the transnational connections exist. Several different types of interaction can be seen. Coercive interaction is the case when a transnational religious body forces change on the locality. This type does not exist today, but in historical times the Crusades exemplify this type of religious connection. Co-operative interaction is the case when two partners collaborate and this is a more common type. The flows of material and immaterial resources to local congregations are also good examples

of such co-operation. Competitive interaction is the case when a transnational religious body does missionary work in the locality. This type of connection exists and is sometimes central in bringing in new religious actors, but it is also quite costly.

The extended locality presented by the examples above shows the blurred distinctions between local, national and global life. There does not exist such a phenomenon as a 'purely local religious field', untouched by events taking place elsewhere. Local religious life is involved in a myriad of ways that extend the locality. Even though the local plane is obviously the practical, physical environment in which the congregations function, it cannot be reduced solely to that. However, what differs to a great extent is the way in which, and how often, the extended locality plays a role in particular organisations.

## 5

# Immigrant Religious Organisations in Turku

The city of Turku has the third largest immigrant population of Finnish municipalities and is the country's second largest immigration centre after the capital region (Väestökisterikeskus, 2002: 9). The local, as well as the Finnish, religious fields have changed significantly since the late 1980s, when immigration to the country started to grow and the growth of the Muslim population, in particular, has been of great interest to researchers, as well as to the general public (Sakaranaho and Pesonen, 1999). However, immigration has brought about many other changes to local religious life which have received only minor attention or gone unnoticed. One of the main underlying arguments of this study is that research on immigration and religion has been one-sided and too often concentrated on seemingly alien forms of religious practice, while other, also important, religious changes have not received the attention they deserve (Hamberg, 1999: 73-74). This has led to a situation where a corrective is needed in order to point out the extent to which immigration changes life in most religious organisations and is not solely related to the establishment of exotic immigrant religious organisations.

A local perspective is helpful in this project as it forces the researcher to look at the phenomenon holistically from the viewpoint

of a single local religious field. The view presented in this chapter points out the variety and breadth of the consequences of immigration on local religious life, and problematises the concept of local society in a globalising world. It also puts the developments into a perspective, so that immigrant religious activity can be compared with the size and scope of other local religious action. This reminds us that while, for instance, the study of Islam in diaspora is a worthwhile endeavour, it is useful to place even that in the broader context of local, national and transnational religious structures. While the text naturally opens up horizons on immigrant religious activity and emphasises its potential, it also simultaneously reminds us that there are other significant players in local religious life. Ultimately, this chapter reveals a picture where both the immigrants and other local religious activity are in a reciprocal relationship in a local context that again forms part of broader national and transnational religious contexts.

The chapter starts with a presentation of the local immigrant population and takes a closer look at its composition from various viewpoints, including the immigrants' ethnic and religious background. It will then present the ways in which the immigrants have integrated within local religious organisations or founded their own congregations. After that, a picture will be given of social life within immigrant religious organisations and of the variety of activities within them. It will be then apparent how the organisations have become parts of the local religious field, as well as what kinds of connections exist between local and immigrant religious institutions.

## **5.1 Immigrants in Turku**

Turku has had an immigrant presence since its earliest days and the city has always been a multilingual society. While the largest groups have been the Finnish and Swedish speakers, it is good to remember that other linguistic groups have a long history in the locality and that not all of today's changes are without historical precedents. In the following presentation of the contemporary immigrant popula-

tion of Turku, references will be made to previous times in order to point out historical continuities as well as discontinuities. During the last 150 years, a significant demographic change in Turku has been the growth of the Finnish-speaking population. Table 5.1 illustrates this historical change, through which Swedish speakers have moved to a distinct minority position during the period. It also shows that at times there were large numbers of immigrants in the city and that their number is increasing at the present time.

	<b>Finnish</b>	<b>Swedish</b>	<b>Other languages</b>	<b>Local population</b>
1870	48,5%	43,3%	8,2%	19 793
1900	69,9%	27,4%	2,7%	41 920
1930	83,0%	16,4%	0,6%	74 988
1960	92,0%	7,7%	0,3%	124 359
1970	94,0%	5,8%	0,2%	152 210
1980	94,6%	5,1%	0,3%	163 680
1990	94,1%	5,1%	0,8%	159 180
2002	89,9%	5,2%	4,9%	174 618

**Table 5.1** Languages spoken in Turku 1870-2002 (Statistics Finland, 2003c; Turun kaupunki, 1999: 32).

Before we take a closer look at the contemporary immigrant population, it is useful to remind ourselves of the main characteristics of Finnish migration history of the last 150 years, because this forms part of the context in which contemporary immigration is experienced. Throughout the period, Finland has mainly, but not solely, been a country of net emigration. The two main periods of emigration were from the 1860s to the 1920s when ca. 300,000 Finns emigrated to the United States and Canada and from the 1940s to the 1970s when ca. 500,000 Finns emigrated to Sweden. The main motivation in both cases was the search for a better life, when national labour markets could not provide enough opportunities. It has been estimated that there are over one million Finns or their descendants living outside the country today, and some 300,000 of

these were born in Finland. Thus, Finland has been a significant reserve of labour in both American and European contexts.

With regard to immigration, during the Russian period tens of thousands of Russian soldiers and civilians lived in the country and after the independence of Finland, ca. 30,000 people either stayed there or entered it as refugees of the October Revolution. Many of them continued on their way to further destinations, but a small number of them remained in the country and formed some of the traditional, 'national minorities', including German Lutherans, Orthodox Russians, Anglicans, Jews and Tatar Muslims. From the 1930s until the 1980s, Finland had a restrictive immigration policy and the national labour market was not internationally attractive, either. From the 1960s onwards, however, immigration to the country was slowly increasing, even though most of the migrants were Finnish returnees. The number of foreign citizens started gradually to rise during the 1980s and a major change occurred in the early 1990s. The change in numbers is as follows: 12,502 (1980), 16,478 (1985), 26,255 (1990), 68,566 (1995) and 91,074 (2000) (Statistics Finland, 2001). The growth of immigration to Finland is a later development than in the other Nordic countries: Denmark, Norway and Sweden. The reasons behind the current Finnish development are several: 1) the collapse of the Soviet Union and the acceptance of Ingrian Finns as returnees, 2) the growth in the number of quota refugees and asylum seekers and 3) a growing openness to immigration because of economic and political developments. Economic reasons cannot explain the early growth of immigration in the 1990s, however, because at the time Finland was experiencing a deep recession, even though economic factors have played a role since the late 1990s (Forsander, 2002: 105).

### **5.1.1 The immigrant population**

There are three main ways of looking at the contemporary immigrant population from a statistical point of view; these are citizenship, mother tongue and country of birth. Citizenship is the best



measure for recent immigrants, but less so as the period spent in the country extends and the migrants receive Finnish citizenship. Until a few years ago, citizenship was the best measure, but now other indicators are becoming more important. Mother tongue reveals clearly the first-generation migrants as well as their children born in Finland and is at the moment the best indicator of immigrant-origin population. Country of birth is the widest measure and includes most of the two above-mentioned groups as well as Finnish returnees (Forsander, 2000). These three perspectives are complementary, so that it is possible to give a more detailed, demographic picture of local immigrants. This section will present a general view of the local immigrant population, while the next section breaks this category down and introduces the largest groups.

The number of foreign citizens in Turku is a useful measure from the independence of Finland onwards. With the exception of the first decade after independence, the number of resident foreign citizens was fairly small until the 1980s, when it gradually started to grow. Until the late 1980s, most foreign citizens living in Turku were either married to a Finn or working in the city. From the late 1980s, the number of foreign citizens started to grow rapidly, so that from 1990 until 2000 the number grew almost fivefold. In December, 2002, there were 7,452 foreign citizens living in the city. The number of people speaking foreign languages in Turku has risen in a similar manner to the number of foreign citizens. However, their number has over recent years rather exceeded the number of foreign citizens, thus indicating that many immigrants have already received Finnish citizenship. In December, 2002, the number of people speaking Finnish (157,011), Swedish (9,040) and Sami (5) was 166,056 combined, while other languages constituted a total of 8,562 people (Statistics Finland, 2003c). The figures indicate that the number of people of immigrant origin is closer to 9,000 as many of the 395 Swedish citizens are included among the Swedish speakers, even though some of them are Finnish returnees. Also, among migrants from the former Soviet Union there are also many who speak Finnish. Between 1994 and 2002, there were at least 1,047 Ingrian

returnees who moved to Turku, many of whom speak Finnish (Ulkomaalaistoimisto, 2003). The number of people born abroad is the largest of all the figures, amounting to 9,750. To sum up, it can be estimated that there are 9,000-10,000 people of immigrant origin in the city of Turku, constituting ca. 5% of the local population. Their number is similar to that of the local Swedish-speaking minority.

	1985	1990	1995	2000	2002
Inhabitants in Turku	161 398	159 180	160 799	166 100	174 618
Foreign citizens	755	1 029	3 945	6 461	7 452
%	0,5	0,6	2,4	3,7	4,3
Foreign language	586	1 298	3 997	7,093	8 562
%	0,4	0,8	2,5	4,3	4,9
Born abroad	2 012	2 812	5 416	8 433	9 750
%	1,2	1,8	3,4	5,1	5,6

**Table 5.2** People of immigrant origin in Turku 1985-2002.

That the number of immigrants in Turku has risen during the 1990s is a matter of fact, but it is also reasonable to ask why this has happened. The general factors behind immigration to Finland were mentioned earlier, but what is it that makes Turku a destination for migration? The city has been a target of immigrants' internal migration in Finland and, according to the recent master's thesis of Karoliina Kokko (2002: 51-68), in which she interviewed migrating immigrants, the general reason for migration to Turku was a wish for a better life in a larger urban centre. Further factors behind migration were better opportunities for finding a place to work or study, loneliness in the previous locality and the presence of co-ethnics. Even better possibilities for religious activities were mentioned as one reason. It was also presumed that it would be easier to keep up transnational contacts, for example visiting relatives in Sweden, from Turku. The immigrants' motives for migrating are different from those of Finns, who often migrate to get a better job (not because of unemployment) and because of family reasons. Like elsewhere in the West, in Finland, too, the immigrants tend to gather in large ur-

ban centres, even though refugees in particular were originally settled in a large number of smaller localities around the country (Haddad and Smith, 2002: v-ix; Rätty, 2002: 140). That Turku is a major city in the country with a large immigrant population and also strategically close to Stockholm are thus the main reasons for internal migration.

The age structure of local immigrants differs from that of the local population in general. The immigrants are generally speaking younger and also have more children than other Finns. Figure 5.1 presents the differences between the age structure of Finnish and foreign citizens in Turku in 2001, which also corresponds closely to the national average. The figure illustrates that most immigrants are of working age or below. However, there are significant differences between immigrant groups in this respect. For instance, while many of the Finnish returnees (especially from Sweden, the USA and Canada) include more older people, people from the former Yugoslavia, Iranians, Iraqis and Somalis are almost 40% of minority age. However, also Russians and Estonians (of whom many are Ingrians) have more children than the population on average (Statistics Finland, 2001: 10-12). The statistics illustrate well that most recent immigrants have been young adults and their families, and that there is a second generation growing up fast in Finland. It also implies that especially the educational and medical sectors (nurseries, etc.) have been facing major challenges over the last decade.

Unemployment is far higher among immigrants than in the majority population even though great differences exist between different immigrant groups. Throughout the country in 1999, 37% of foreign citizens were unemployed, while the same figure for the whole population was 14%. The largest unemployed nationalities in the year 2000 were Iraqis (76%), Somalis (68%), Iranians (63%) and Vietnamese (60%). Generally speaking, those who have come to the country as refugees and as Ingrian returnees had higher rates than other groups (Statistics Finland, 2001: 23-24). In Turku, the unemployment rate of immigrants is somewhat smaller, but still the immigrants constituted circa 10% of all unemployed, which is a

disproportionate figure (Kokko, 2002: 46). With regard to specific nationalities, it means that in certain groups most are unemployed. The situation creates a serious threat to national integration policies, as it has been shown that integration within the labour market is the main way in which immigrants acculturate to Finnish society (Forsander, 2002; Forsander and Ekholm, 2001). However, it should also be remembered that refugees were not accepted by Finland because of their potential contribution to the labour market, but for humanitarian reasons. There also seem to be structural reasons (level of education, etc.) why some immigrant groups have difficulties entering the labour market, even though obvious discrimination and racism are also to be found (Forsander, 2002).

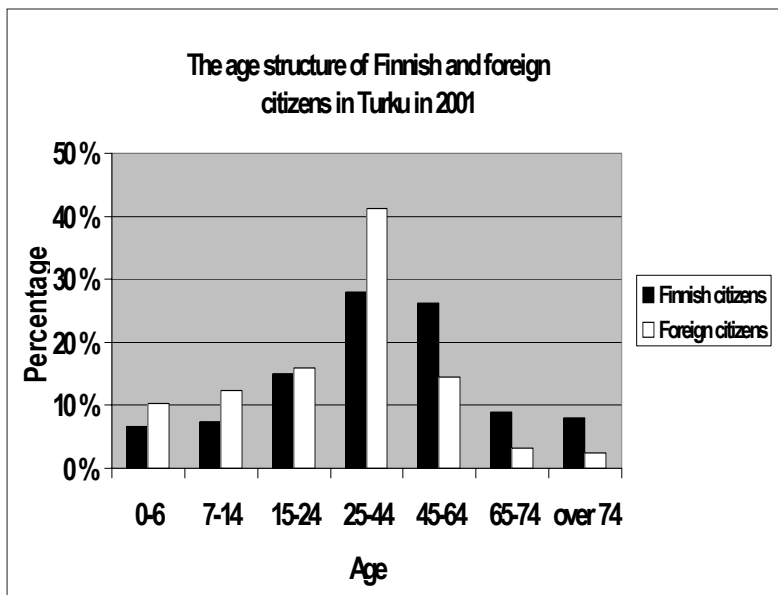


Figure 5.1 The age structure of Finnish and foreign citizens in Turku in 2001 (Statistics Finland, 2003c).

With regard to spatial distribution in the city of Turku, the immigrants are not evenly distributed in the housing areas, but rather concentrated in certain regions. The largest immigrant housing areas are the suburbs of Lauste, Varissuo, Halinen and Pansio as well as the Student Village (*Ylioppilaskylä*). For instance, 17% of the inhabitants of Lauste and 14% in Varissuo are foreign citizens. Some other areas, however, have only a very limited number of immigrants. The reasons for the development are that the regions just mentioned have more inexpensive housing possibilities, but also the closeness of co-ethnics is important. It is also a common story that landlords have rejected offers when they have realised that the customer is an immigrant, which means that immigrants' chances of renting apartments are more restricted than those of the majority population. Regrettably, some of the areas where immigrants live also house less affluent Finns, which has created some hostility and tensions between these groups (Kokko, 2002: 43-45). While it would be an exaggeration to speak of immigrant ghettos in Turku, developments contain the seeds for this.

To summarise, there are today 9,000-10,000 people of immigrant origin living in the city of Turku. Turku has become a national immigrant centre for several reasons and the fact that it is in such a position today will most likely in future increase the same development. Immigrants are also on the average younger and have larger families than other local residents. They are gathered in certain suburbs, but nowhere are they close to a majority position for the time being. Immigrants are somewhat marginalised in the labour market, even though differences between nationalities are quite high. With this picture in mind, let us now turn to take a closer look at the national and ethnic composition of the local immigrant population.

### **5.1.2 Immigrant groups**

The local immigrant-origin population is a heterogeneous group. They originate mostly from Europe (35%) and the former Soviet Union (28%), but other continents are also represented: Africa (8%),

the Americas (3%) and Asia and Oceania (24%). With regard to nationality, there are 83 different countries which have at least five of their citizens living in Turku. In addition, there are circa 150 people whose nationality is unknown or who do not have one. Most of these are from the former Soviet Union. With regard to language, there are 60 languages that have at least five native speakers in the city. Additionally, circa 250 people speak other languages (Statistics Finland, 2003c). Obviously, some of the national groups are larger and some fairly small, consisting of a few individuals or a couple of families.

In this section different geographical regions of origin will be the basis for the presentation of the local population of immigrant-origin. These geographical regions are 1) Europe and the former Soviet Union, 2) Africa and Asia and 3) North and South America and Oceania. This order reflects the size of the groups in question and also by and large the general motive to migrate within each group, even though exceptions are to be found. Generally speaking, the West Europeans have migrated to Finland because of work or marriage. East Europeans and people from the former Soviet Union have been mainly Finnish returnees and refugees from the former Yugoslavia, or have come to a lesser extent for other reasons. Africans and Asians are mostly refugees or have come to a lesser extent because of work, marriage and study. People from the Americas and Australia are often Finnish returnees, but have also migrated because of marriage and work. Unless stated otherwise, all population statistics refer to the situation on 31 December, 2002 (Statistics Finland, 2003c).

### **5.1.2.1 Europe and the former Soviet Union**

People from Europe and the former Soviet Union constitute circa two thirds of the local population of immigrant origin. West Europeans were during the post-war period the largest immigrant group in Turku, but lately the number of East Europeans and people from the former Soviet Union has exceeded them. Most of the West Eu-

Europeans have migrated to Finland because of marriage to a Finn and / or work. Some of them are also Finnish returnees. The largest nationalities are Swedes (395), Britons (127), Germans (105) and French (74). South Europeans have similar reasons for migration and the largest groups are Italians (62), Spaniards (54) and Greeks (28). Altogether, citizens of the EU countries constitute circa 10% of all local immigrants. East Europeans constitute a little over one quarter of the people in this group. The largest nationalities are refugees from the former Yugoslavia, mostly Bosnians and Kosovo Albanians, and their number is circa 1,000. Speakers of Albanian number 773 and thus the Kosovo Albanians are the largest ethnic group from the former Yugoslavia, while the rest from the region are mainly Bosnian Muslims. Smaller East European groups include Romanians (62), Poles (33) and Bulgarians (21). The majority of these people have arrived since the mid-1990s. People from the former Soviet Union constitute over half of the people in this group. There were 2,408 citizens from the former Soviet Union and 2,749 persons speaking languages from the area. This number does not include those Ingrians who speak Finnish. Russian (2,066) and Estonian (549) speakers are the largest linguistic groups.

These immigrant groups are mostly from regions near Finland and can generally be characterised as having some kind of ‘cultural affinity’ with a European way of life. Many of them have the status of Finnish returnees. They are also on the average less organised in civic associations than migrants from Africa and Asia. The West and South Europeans are often married to a Finn. With the exception of Russians and people from the former Yugoslavia, they are also better integrated in the Finnish labour market than other immigrant groups.

### **5.1.2.2 Africa and Asia**

Immigrants from Africa and Asia constitute circa one third of the local immigrant population. Most of them have come to Finland as refugees, asylum seekers or through family reunion programmes,

even though certain minor nationalities have arrived mainly through marriage to Finns (e.g. Turks and Moroccans). The largest groups are refugees from Iraq, Iran, Somalia and Vietnam. People from the Middle East include mostly Arabs, Kurds and Iranians, but also some other minor groups such as Iraqi Christians (Chaldean Catholics and Assyrian Orthodox), Mandaeans and Bahá'í. Speakers of Arabic (898), Kurdish (578) and Farsi (176) are the largest linguistic groups, and ca. 15-25% of the Arabic speakers come from other countries than Iraq. In Turku, there are 323 Somali citizens and 418 speakers of the language. The Vietnamese citizens number 144 and speakers of the language 440. Beside refugees, there are also people who have mostly come to the country via marriage. These are often people from the Maghreb, Turkey, Thailand and the Philippines. Study and work have been the main reasons for coming to Finland for people from sub-Saharan Africa and the Chinese.

The vast majority of people in this category have arrived since the early 1990s and are mostly first-generation migrants, but, as indicated earlier, there is a second generation growing up in the city. Most of these people are also unemployed or outside the labour market. They have also organised themselves fairly extensively and there are many cultural and religious associations founded by them. When Finns talk about immigrants, they usually think of this group.

### **5.1.2.3 North and South America and Oceania**

Immigrants from North and South America and Oceania constitute circa 3% of all immigrants. The largest groups are from the United States (95) and Canada (34). South Americans, of whom most are Spanish speakers, count for fewer than 100 and Oceanians not even half of that. These people are mostly married to Finns and some have arrived to work in the city. Also a small number originally arrived as refugees, as the first refugees to come to Turku were from Chile in the 1970s. The group is generally speaking well integrated in Finnish society and the labour market, and has not been particularly active in forming cultural associations.



### 5.1.3 Religious background

The religious background of the local immigrant population is central for the ways in which the local religious field has changed due to increased immigration. It is the religious affiliation that the migrant has had in his or her country of origin that seems to be the single most important factor for determining in which religious organisation the person becomes active in the new social environment. There are exceptions to this, but generally speaking a radical change of religious affiliation is a rare event and it seems to be much more common that immigrants become religiously inactive rather than change affiliation. Thus, the religious backgrounds of the local immigrant population are the most central explanatory factor in trying to understand the consequences of immigration to a local religious field. While no complete data about the matter exist in Turku, certain presuppositions can be made, which are also needed for the analysis later on.

The following section is based on knowledge about the religious situation in the immigrants' country of origin and on citizenship and language statistics, but also on data gathered during fieldwork. The following presentation should be seen more as a *rough estimate* than as an unproblematic piece of information. The section discusses the religious background of local immigrants from a 'world religions' perspective and leaves open the extent to which people have been religiously non-affiliated, inactive, or involved in alternative spiritualities or other non-official forms of religion. In the following section I will refer to exponents of different religions as 'potential Christians, Muslims, etc.', if it is not known to what extent the people in question indeed have that religious affiliation.

The local population of immigrant origin can be roughly divided into 'potential Christians' (ca. 50%), 'potential Muslims' (ca. 40%), 'potential Buddhists' (ca. 4%) and 'potential others' (ca. 6%).<sup>29</sup> Let

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<sup>29</sup> The percentages have been counted on the basis of citizenship. Therefore the numbers differ somewhat from those in section 3.5.3. 'Potential Christians' include most Europeans (except people from the former Yugoslav

us now take a closer look at these categories of ‘potential religionists’. The ‘potential Christians’ constitute circa one half of the local immigrants. The group can be further divided into the following sub-groups. People from the former Soviet Union and its subsequent states, which include Russia, Estonia and Ukraine, make up about 50% of all ‘potential Christians’. The other half is composed of diverse nationalities of mostly European and American origin, but also includes some Asians and Africans. With regard to Christian faith traditions the ‘potential Christians’ can be divided into three main groups. First, ‘potential Protestants’ (including Lutherans and Anglicans) are people from Northern and Western Europe as well as Ingrians from the former Soviet Union, North America and the sub-Saharan countries. This group constitutes circa 50% of all ‘potential Christians’. Second, ‘potential Orthodox’ would be people from Eastern Europe, Russia and Greece, who make up circa 35% of all ‘potential Christians’. Third, ‘potential Catholics’ include people from France, Ireland, Southern Europe and South America as well as smaller groups from Iraq and Vietnam, and they constitute ca. 15% of all ‘potential Christians’. This general picture can also be seen in local congregations, as local Protestant, Orthodox and Catholic organisations have all received new immigrant members (IF mgt 2002/36-39).

The ‘potential Muslims’ are the second largest segment of the local immigrant population. The group consists of immigrants from Northern Africa (ca. 200), the Middle East (ca. 1,300), Somalia (ca. 420), the former Yugoslavia (ca. 1,000) and, to a lesser extent, from

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via), North and South Americans, Oceanians and those from selected Asian and African countries. Their number was ca. 4,000. ‘Potential Muslims’ include people from countries where Islam is the majority religion and the former Yugoslavia. Their combined figure is ca. 3,000. ‘Potential Buddhists’ include most people from Vietnam and all from Thailand and Cambodia. Their number is ca. 400. ‘Potential others’ include Chinese, Japanese, Israeli, Indian and some people from Iran and Iraq who are Mandaeans and Bahá’í. Their combined number is ca. 600. The estimate is not entirely precise, but it provides a rough idea of the size of the different groups.

the Indian subcontinent (ca. 40), Afghanistan (ca. 40) and South East Asian island states (ca. 30). The Muslims can be divided into Sunnis and Shias. The 'potential Shia' come from Iran and Iraq and number around 500. The 'potential Sunnis' forms the rest (ca. 2500) of the 'potential Muslims' and also include Kurds, originating mostly from Iran and Iraq. The local Muslim population is also divided between Sunnis and Shi'ites. The main groups that are not active to any large extent in the existing mosque communities are people from the former Yugoslavia, Kurds and, especially, Iranians or Persians (IF 2003/1: 15, 23; IF mgt 2002/41).

The 'potential Buddhists' are perhaps the least problematic category and include circa 300 Vietnamese and 75 people from Thailand. It is also known that among East European migrants there are a small number of Buddhists. With regard to organisation, the people in question are active in the Finnish Vietnamese Buddhist Society and the Karmapa Association (Diamond Way). People from Thailand are to some extent active within the Vietnamese Buddhist society (IF 2003/1: 10-11).

'Potential others' is a category composed of diverse faith traditions and those that could not be put into any other category. The largest group, which was difficult to define, were the Chinese (206 citizens, 266 speakers). Even though there are individual Christians among the Chinese, I have not otherwise obtained any data about this group. Two minor religious groups from the Middle East are also included: the Mandaean from Iraq (ca. 50) and the Bahá'í (ca. 15). There are also individuals, who could be Hindus (26 Indians) and Jews (21 Israelis) (IF mgt 2002/37, 40, 42-43).

This speculative presentation of immigrants' religious background shows that most immigrants come from either a Christian or a Muslim background and to a lesser extent from other religions. It remains to be seen in the next section to what extent this general pattern is *de facto* the case with regard to immigrant religious organisation in Turku. On the one hand, it seems highly unlikely that major structural changes would have taken place with regard to religious affiliation, but if this is the case it is certainly of major interest. On

the other hand, it can be presumed that not all immigrant groups have organised equally extensively, which then leads us to ask why this should be so.

## **5.2 Religious organisation**

Most religious traditions have some kind of organisational structure constituting a forum for local, communal religious activity, even though the actual forms differ somewhat in nature. In Christianity it has been the local congregation, but in Islam and Buddhism the congregational form is alien and it is rather district mosques or local temples that have been places of assembly. In Islam, the Friday prayer and in Christianity, the Sunday services are important weekly gatherings, but the Buddhists, for instance, do not generally have a similar institution. However, in all of the traditions, some kinds of local gatherings play an important role, at least to some extent. However, when immigrant religions have been established in the West, they have tended in part to adapt organisational forms from the surrounding society and the models are often borrowed from Christianity, which represents the norm for religious organisation in the West (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2000: 347-348; Eck, 2001; Warner, 1998: 21). This process of structural adaptation is one of the most important changes that the religious traditions in question have to go through in order to be functional in the local society, as well as to be able further their aims on an equal basis with other civic organisations (Ammerman, 1997: 361). This section will discuss from various points of view the process of structural adaptation and institutionalisation of immigrant religious activity in Turku.

### **5.2.1 Establishment**

When an immigrant arrives in Turku and wishes to become active in a religious organisation, he or she has basically two choices. The first is to participate in an existing organisation and the second is to start a new one. If these choices are not possible, the person can remain outside religious organisations altogether. While reality is

more complex than this simple example allows, the two first-mentioned possibilities have been the basis for immigrants' religious organisation in the city. It is clearly much easier to become a member of an already existing organisation, while we can also presume that the threshold for starting a new community is higher than that for participating in already existing activities. This might be a reason why certain groups have not yet made a successful effort to organise, even though they might wish to do so. The increase in immigration to Turku occurred during the 1990s, and in the preceding decades only a relatively small number of immigrants had become members of local religious organisations. The organisation of immigrants' communal religious activity described in the following thus refers to quite recent developments.

First, old organisations that have gained new immigrant members have mostly been Christian congregations. The congregations with the largest number of immigrant members in Turku are the Lutheran, Catholic and Finnish Orthodox parishes and the Swedish Methodist Bethlehem Church. However, it would be misleading to think that there are only distinct immigrant congregations, while others are unaffected. As a matter of fact, most local congregations have at least a few immigrant members. In practice though, certain congregations have a distinct profile as immigrant communities, while others have small groups or a few individual members. Studies on immigrant religions have often highlighted the organisations founded by the immigrants and to a lesser extent those that have a small immigrant presence beside the old members. This view reinforces the sense of exoticism associated with immigrant religions, which I consider an arbitrary and misleading view.

Second, there are a number of organisations founded by the new immigrants. These include four Muslim mosque organisations, one Vietnamese Buddhist society, a Mandaean association, a Protestant international congregation and a Russian Orthodox chapel congregation. The two last-mentioned were founded in co-operation with already existing local religious organisations (the Lutheran Turku and Kaarina Parish Union and the Finnish Orthodox Parish), but

the others were based on immigrants' own initiatives. In all of the cases, the first initiative came from a single individual or a small group of interested persons (IF 2003/1: 11, 15, 23, 28; IF mgt 2002/37-39, 41-43). This seems to imply that, with regard to religious organisation, the importance of certain *key individuals* at the initial organisational phase is highly central. Sometimes the founding members have to put in a lot of work and effort on getting the organisation running and functional. However, as time passes and the organisation establishes itself, its existence seems almost self-evident. This might give the impression that a certain number of people is the only requirement for a religious organisation, but this is only



**Photo 5.1** The Orthodox Church of Turku. Photo: Ollipekka Kangas.

one side of the story. It does not tell us, either, anything about why certain groups do not succeed in organising.

That a small number of key individuals are central in the first phases of local organisation is ultimately unsurprising, but becomes an important fact when we begin to take a closer look at the general features of the organisation process of immigrant religions in Finland. During the 1990s, literally hundreds of different ethnic, cultural, political, etc. associations were founded by the new immigrants (Martikainen, 2000c). Many of the associations have only a handful of members and some of them are now inactive. This leads me to suggest that the organisation process of these organisations deserves a second look. While many immigrants have had difficulties integrating into the labour market, the third sector seems to have become an arena for finding prestige and influence in the public sphere, beside the interest in furthering one's religious, cultural and political views. The associations are one of the main ways of applying for financial support from local authorities in order to run various activities. There appears to exist a pattern where associations are formed in order to receive financial benefits, which makes it possible, for instance, to arrange clubs for education and recreation as well as to organise events. These again are forums where the internal hierarchy of immigrant communities is created. If this suggestion were valid, it would mean that many of the inactive 'one man organisations' are unsuccessful attempts in the process of trying to gain prestige and public influence. Nancy Ammerman's (1997: 365-366) argument that congregations, along with other civic organisations, may act as *subaltern counterpublics* seems plausible in the Finnish context as well.

With regard to religious organisation, the two alternatives presented above make highly different demands on the initiative takers. In the first case, the existing religious organisation provides many of the basic elements for religious practice, even though it might not in the beginning be suitable in all details. For instance, there may exist language difficulties, variations in religious practice and unfamiliar working methods. In the second case, it is the immigrants

themselves who have to be able to start everything from scratch. Questions such as ‘what is the best form of organisation’, ‘how to finance the activities’ and ‘where to find a place for prayer’ are examples of things that need to be solved. In the latter case, the immigrants’ ability to find material and immaterial resources becomes central. With regard to newly arrived immigrants, this is often problematic, as the immigrant community does not yet know how to handle many key issues, but later these problems become less important as the local knowledge of the group rises. In the initial phase, however, mediating locals or local institutions often play a central role. For instance, personnel in the International Meeting Point of Turku have helped to write the constitutions of many local immigrant associations. Also the constitution of the Finnish Vietnamese Buddhist Society was in practice written by an interested, friendly Finn (IF 2003/1: 11).

Thus, many issues that seem natural and ‘the way they always have been’ with regard to local religious organisation look, on closer examination, more complex and require a number of skills and resources which need to be applied during the process. Mediators in the process may be already-existing local religious organisations as well as local authorities, but also other interested locals. In this context, it would also be relevant to ask what the motives are for people participating in the organisation process. Regarding outsiders, humanistic goodwill is often a motive for people who feel an empathy towards immigrants, but the question of power relations also seems to come to the fore.

## **5.2.2 Forms of organisation**

As the immigrants’ religious activity starts to take the shape of formal organisation, it may adapt a *congregational* or *community-centre* form, as argued in the theoretical chapter (see section 2.3.3.2). The main differences between these two ideal-type modes are the extent to which secular activities and services are present in the organisation. It was also presupposed that the congregational mode



would be the dominant form among Finnish immigrant organisations, because of the way Finnish society is structured. With regard to formal religious organisation in Finland, the local religious organisations are either *registered associations* or *registered religious community organisations*, which are also the two central ways in which Finnish religious organisations in general are organised, beside the Lutheran and Orthodox Churches, which have their own legislation.

The majority of local immigrants have become members in previously existing organisations (see section 5.2.3), which all more or less follow the congregational mode. This group includes the Lutherans, the Bethlehem Church, the Orthodox and the Catholic Church and other minor congregations. However, it should be stated that all larger Christian congregations also provide activities which are not exclusively religious in nature. As a matter of fact, the Lutheran Parish Union is a major provider of social services, recreation and other secular services. The new organisations that have been founded are mostly congregational, but some of them include aspects of the community-centre type. The congregational ones include both of the two new Christian congregations: the Russian Orthodox Uspenije chapel community and the International Cathedral Congregation. Their activities centre on worship and very little additional activities take place (IF 2003/1: 28; IF mgt 2002/38). Organisations with both congregational and community-centre traits include the four Muslim associations and the Buddhist society. All of them have some of the following activities: education related to language and culture, the celebration of secular holidays and auxiliary recreational programmes, which are typical of the community-centre type. All of these ‘crossover’ organisations have a non-Christian background, as might be expected.

However, most of the immigrants’ religious organisations would certainly provide auxiliary activities if they had the resources. Thus, it seems to be a question of priority and the members of organisations founded by immigrants seem to have a greater need for such non-religious activities. For instance, the Chaldean Catholics, who

are members of the local Catholic parish, have arranged their own recreational and educational activities through additional registered associations. In this way, they can celebrate those religious and secular holidays which are not celebrated in the church where they are otherwise active members (IF 2003/1: 31). In a similar manner, many other ethnic associations supplement the activities provided by the religious organisations. In some cases there is no need for an additional organisation, but in other cases there is. Generally speaking, refugee groups have been more prone to found secular associations, which seems to me, to some extent at least, an indication of their social position in local society, where they are in many ways marginalised. The associations allow them to form a public sphere of their own, where they can keep up symbolic connections with their homelands and the way of life there (Ammerman, 1997: 365-366). Obviously other migrants groups do that as well, but not to the same extent.

That many of the new immigrant religious organisations have adopted a congregational form supplemented by elements of the community-centre model is neither surprising nor completely new. A similar development happened with regard to both the Jews and the Tatar Muslims, who have also created, in addition to religious forums, a number of secular activities incorporated in them. However, the organisations do not have extensive social welfare programmes etc., as the Finnish authorities take care of these.

### **5.2.3 Congregations and immigrant membership**

Most local religious organisations have immigrant members and the religious background of the local immigrant population is a key factor in those congregations where there are immigrants (see sections 4.2 and 5.1.3). This section will present a more systematic picture of immigrants in the local religious organisations. It will be seen to what extent the potential religious background manifests itself in the local field. The end of the section will also provide reflection on

the position of immigrants in local religious organisations in general. The order of presentation follows that of sections 4.2 and 5.1.3.

The local Christian field is the most diverse and includes the largest number of organisations. With regard to Lutherans, the Turku and Kaarina Parish Union is not only the largest religious institution in the city, but it also has the largest immigrant membership of all local congregations. In 2003, there were 877 non-Finnish citizen members, representing over 20 nationalities. The two largest groups were 523 people from the former Soviet Union—including citizens of Belarus, Estonia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine and the former Soviet Union—and 208 Swedes. It is also known that many immigrant members have already received Finnish citizenship, so that they are not visible in the nationality statistics. Furthermore, the ca. 100 members of the German Lutheran parish are not members of the local parish union. Thus, it seems that there are over 1,000 members of immigrant origin in the local Lutheran parishes (Turun ja Kaarinan seurakuntayhtymä, 2003). That is over 10% of the local population of immigrant-origin and about one fourth of the ‘potential Christians’. In one way or another, immigrants touch most local Lutheran parishes, but especially those that work in the areas where there are many immigrants living, such as Halinen, Varissuo and Lauste. The work is usually directed towards Ingrian returnees. As many Ingrians do not know Finnish well, there have been Russian language services conducted sporadically since the 1990s. For other international activities, there is the International Cathedral Congregation that provides weekly services in English and the German parish that provides monthly services in German (IF 2003/1: 21; IF mgt 2002/38). Lutheran revival movements and associations have generally had very few activities directed at immigrants or immigrant members. The few exceptions are the evangelical People’s Mission (*Kansanlähetys*) and YWCA (*NNKY*), which have tried to create an outreach for immigrants (IF 2003/1: 1, 4-5, 12, 25). All in all, my general impression is that the Lutheran Church has not yet noted that it is, *de facto*, the largest immigrant church in the city and

in the country. The annual report of the national Church Council confirms this (Kirkkohallitus, 2001:16):

The foreign population in Finland quadrupled during the last decade. The majority of them confessed some other faith than Christianity or are members of another Christian Church than the Lutheran Church. (...) The Church's mission, for its own part, is to further the integration of people from other cultures.<sup>30</sup>

Most of the Protestant free churches have individual immigrant members, but only two have a larger membership. These are the Methodist Bethlehem Church and the Turku Pentecostal Congregation. As mentioned earlier, the congregations in 'the A&O network' agreed that the Bethlehem Church would specialise in activities for immigrants and the activities organised by the other congregations are directed at different target groups. The Bethlehem Church has ca. 200 official members, of whom some 60 are of immigrant origin, but ca. 100 foreigners altogether have an active relationship with the congregation. They come mostly from 'Protestant Christian countries', but some individuals also come from other countries such as India, Pakistan, Russia and Vietnam. Most of the immigrant members were not members of the Methodist Church in their countries of origin, but rather of other Protestant Churches. Among them are also a number of converts. The community is bilingual (English and Swedish) and also has small-group activity, beside that in English and Swedish, in German, Finnish, French, Russian and Vietnamese. That the congregation represents Charismatic Christianity seems to be one of its strengths. Those who are interested in

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<sup>30</sup> Original in Finnish: "Suomen ulkomaalaisväestön määrä nelinkertaistui viime vuosikymmenellä. Suuri osa heistä tunnustaa jotain muuta uskontoa kuin kristinuskoa tai kuuluu muuhun kristilliseen yhteisöön kuin luterilaiseen kirkkoon. [—] Kirkon tehtävänä on osaltaan edistää erilaisista kulttuureista kotoisin olevien ihmisten sopeutumista ja kotoutumista."

more traditional worship seem to go the International Cathedral Congregation. The Pentecostal Congregation has some individual members of immigrant origin, around 30, in addition to an immigrant cell in Varissuo for Russian immigrants. Many of the Russian immigrants were previously in contact with the Baptists in Russia, but not with the Pentecostals, as the movement does not have a large following in the country. If we combine the members and people in contact with the local free churches, the number seems to be 150-200 individuals. Combined with the members in the Lutheran Church, this indicates that ca. 60% of the 'potential Protestants' are in some kind of contact with local Lutheran and Protestant churches (IF 2002/8: 1-6, 8-10, 13-14, 17; IF mgt 2002/37, 38).

Two congregations represent Orthodox Christianity in Turku. The first and the larger one is the Finnish Orthodox Parish, which has 2,500 members. The majority of its members are Finnish speakers, but of the new immigrants, both Russian (ca. 250) and Romanian (ca. 50) speakers form larger groups. Additionally, there are also a small number of Greeks. Most of the new immigrants also live in Turku. The congregation provides both groups with worship in their own language. The second and smaller congregation is a newly founded chapel parish of the Russian Orthodox Church, which has ca. 100 people attached to it, mostly of Russian origin. Some of these people are likely to be active in the Finnish Orthodox congregation as well (IF 2003/1: 28; IF mgt 2002/39). However, we can estimate that ca. 400 of the new immigrants have some kinds of ties with these two local congregations. This is a little under one third of the 'potential Orthodox'.

The Catholic Church is the most multinational congregation in Turku. The congregation had 1,080 members (1 January, 2003) and included people of 40-50 nationalities and native speakers of over 30 languages. Members with Finnish citizenship amounted to 647 (60%) and others 433 (40%). Relatively large new immigrant groups include Vietnamese (ca. 140) and Chaldean Catholics from Iraq (ca. 90). Among Finnish citizens there are also a large number of people of immigrant origin, even first-generation migrants. However, we

need to remember that the congregation covers a large area and not all of its immigrant members are living in Turku (IF mgt 2003/2). With regard to ‘potential Catholics’, it is safe to estimate that the vast majority of them are members of the local Catholic congregation.



**Photo 5.2** The Catholic Church of Turku. Photo: Ollipekka Kangas.

Other Christian congregations beside the mainstream churches included the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) and the New Apostolic Church. All of these churches are highly transnational and have congregations around the world, so it may be presumed that they would have received members through immigration (Heino, 1997: 161, 176, 181). Also, both the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Mormons carry out extensive missionary work in Turku, so it is possible that one would find some converts in these organisations. The Jehovah's Witnesses do indeed have activities in languages aimed at immigrants. They have an English congregation and working groups for Russian and Spanish speakers. Altogether, these communities have around 50 active participants or members. Furthermore there are several people of immigrant origin in other local congregations (IF 2002/8: 7, 19). The Mormons have some dozen individuals of immigrant origin, mostly from Europe, but generally their activities with immigrants are rather small at the present time (IF 2002/8: 20). The New Apostolic Church has several immigrant members, of whom most are from Germany and Russia (IF 2002/8: 21). It can be estimated that the number of immigrants in these three organisations is under 100 people and that the Jehovah's Witnesses have been the most active as well as the most successful in recruiting people of immigrant origin. However, it should be remembered, that in most cases, the people in question had also had some contact with the organisation in question in their homelands.

Altogether, we can estimate that ca. 60% of the 'potential Christians' are to some extent connected to local Christian congregations. With regard to different faith traditions, it seems that the Catholics have the most faithful followers, followed by the Protestants, with the Orthodox in last place. I am not willing to draw any far-reaching conclusions from this, but will only state that religious affiliation in Turku most probably reflects the position of religion in the country of origin. As most 'potential Orthodox' come from Russia, where the church had a weak social position for three quarters of a century, it is not surprising that that group shows the weakest affiliation rate.

The local Jewish congregation has received a few new individual members from Russian and Israel over the latter years, but not to the extent that it changed the congregation's activities to any degree (IF 2003/1: 24). As there has not been any significant immigration of 'potential Jews' to the city, this development is not surprising. However, in future it seems that only increased immigration will keep the congregation alive, as it otherwise has a declining membership. The situation does not look very likely, however, as Jewish migrants generally have other destinations, such as the state of Israel.

The immigration of Muslims has produced the largest change in the local religious field with regard to the diversity of world religions in Turku. The old Tatar Muslim community has been fading away over the last decades and there are ca. 40 of them left, with only sporadic activity taking place (IF 2003/1: 20). The number of new 'potential Muslims' is ca. 3,000, though, and there were four new mosque organisations founded in the city during the 1990s. The new immigrant presence consists of both Sunni and Shiite Muslims from a variety of national and ethnic groups. This diversity is visible in the local field as well, as different organisations are divided along religious and ethnic lines. It is also likely that in the future there will be even more organisations, drawing together people of different groups. People who have been involved in the mosque communities' activities are around 1,000. This means that about one third of the 'potential Muslims' have an active connection to local Muslim organisations. The groups that seem to be most active in the organisations include Somalis, Arabs and Iraqi Shiites, and to a lesser extent Kurds and Bosnians. Kosovo Albanians and Iranians do not usually seem to participate in local Muslim organisations (IF 2003/1: 15, 16, 23; IF mgt 2002/41). This observation says nothing about the extent to which people are religiously active in their own homes, but highlights the fact that the majority of local 'potential Muslims' are not actively involved in the local mosque organisations.

The 'potential Buddhists' number about 400, with most of them coming from Vietnam. Not many of them are formally members of the Vietnamese Buddhist Community of Finland, but most of them



have some kind of connection with the organisation. Also involved in the organisation are individual people from China, Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Thailand. As the organisation does not yet have a regular centre, it remains to be seen how much it will attract people. However, the annual New Year celebrations have drawn several hundred people (IF 2003/1: 11). Furthermore, a small number of immigrants have been active in the Karmapa association (Diamond Way Buddhism), being mostly of East European origin (IF 2003/1: 10). At the moment it can be estimated that most of the 'potential Buddhists' have some kind of relationship with the local Buddhist organisations.

With regard to other religions, I am only aware of the activities of the Bahá'í and the Mandaean. The local Bahá'í community has received about 15 new members from Iran. As the local community is fairly small, the change is seen quite clearly. The same applies to the national Bahá'í organisation (IF mgt 2002/40). The Mandaeans are circa 50 in number and come from Iraq (IF mgt 2002/42-43). So, the 'potential others' are to a large extent not affiliated with any religious organisation. It also seems that, among groups in alternative spiritual circles, there is no significant immigrant presence. A large part of the local immigrant population is also registered in the Population Register and does not show up in the official statistics for religion. It is not possible to make any further generalising comments about religious affiliation and practice, except to admit that we do not know.

The above observations support the argument that religious affiliation in the country of origin is the most important factor for religious affiliation in the new social environment, and the 'potential religious background' of the local immigrant population is well reflected among local religious organisations. Over one half of the local immigrants are connected in one way or another with local religious organisations. However, as the above discussion is based on a limited amount of data, it is best regarded as a tentative effort to understand the question in the local context. In Turku, Christianity and Islam are the largest gainers of new immigrant members,

while others have had a smaller impact. Christian congregations seem to have been able to attract, both relatively and absolutely, more new members than Muslim organisations, at least with the measures (membership and participation) used in this study. This situation is not surprising, if we accept that it is easier to become involved in already existing activity than to start new organisations. We can also argue that the notion of being an official, registered member in a religious organisation is more commonly shared among Christian migrants.

#### **5.2.4 Meeting places**

The organisation of religious activities is often closely combined with a wish to obtain a place for meeting and worship. Meeting places provide the physical space that the congregations need for their activities and, in some cases, the lack of them severely hinders activities in general. The latter may be exemplified by the Vietnamese Buddhists and the Mandaean, who have major difficulties in their religious practice, because of the lack of a suitable place (IF 2003/1: 11; IF mgt 2002/42-43). However, most congregations have resolved their need for space in some way. The question of a place for worship was least problematic for those immigrants that became active in congregations that already have one, like most of the Christian congregations. However, even in this case, increased membership has led to problems, as the churches become too crowded. For instance, the Bethlehem Church had to end its long relationship with the Finnish Methodist Congregation as it grew and is now having plans to extend its current church (IF mgt 2002/37). Also the Catholics have a full church on Sundays, even though there are two services (IF mgt 2003/2).

The goal of obtaining a suitable meeting place leads to many different developments that promote structural adaptation (Warner, 1998: 20-22). First of all, the organisation needs to mobilise its members and try to gain new membership in order to acquire a financial base for the project. Organisation members often do parts of

the work, so that different members' skills become useful. It can be assumed that an ongoing building process strengthens the organisation's internal relations, if no serious problems arise. This is a potentially democratising feature, when experts in other matters than religious teaching and education can prove their value to the organisation. As many immigrant organisations are under lay leadership anyway, this is another structural difference compared to the situation in the country of origin. Second, in order to be able to rent places and to apply for funding from local authorities, the immigrants usually need a formal organisation, so that their resources and their wishes are heard. This further encourages, or almost forces, migrants to found associations to represent their cause. Local authorities actually encourage immigrants to found cultural and religious associations, so that they have a body to negotiate with, as individual persons are not considered suitable partners in such discussions. Third, most building projects require a significant amount of paperwork and co-operation with local authorities. While this has also led to frustration, its potential for structural adaptation is significant. Getting to know the required details leads to a better understanding of the way Finnish society is structured and furthers the immigrants' ability to work with other authorities as well. Fourth, transnational channels may be used for receiving the funding needed, which may lead to closer connections with the supporting organisations and material as well as immaterial resources it has. For example, both Sunni Muslim organisations and the Vietnamese Buddhist Society have applied for transnational funding to cover a part of their planned projects (IF 2003/1: 11; IF mgt 1998/8 R). Fifth, in some instances the plans to build religious meeting places have created public debates and controversies, which affect the social position of immigrant religious organisations in the local society (Martikainen, 2000b). This issue is dealt with in greater depth later on in section 5.4.3.

All in all, the physical settings in which the congregations function affects the organisations in question in many ways. The building projects and the search for places to rent may be important fac-

tors for structural adaptation. It underlines the importance of organisation, formal membership and the need to learn about Finnish society and the way it functions. And beyond these matters, it can also be argued that it makes a great difference for the organisation's self-understanding whether it meets in obscure corners or in beautiful buildings.

### **5.2.5 Institutionalisation**

As indicated earlier, the way in which religious communities are organised in Finland differs significantly from that of many world religions. The idea of a separate congregation or 'church organisation' is alien for many non-Christian immigrants, but with regard to structural adaptation to Finnish society, precisely such structures are needed. The institutionalisation of religious activity is significant in many respects, but two practical reasons seem to be the core issues at the contemporary formative stage of immigrant religious organisation. First, some kind of organisation has been necessary in order to arrange collective local religious activity. This has led to the foundation of several local religious associations during the last twenty years. Second, local and national civil servants have needed organisations to negotiate with on matters such as education and health care, which have become central with regard to the integration of many immigrants, for example Muslims. As officials seldom accept individuals in such negotiations and require official representatives, the new associations and their leaders have taken, and have been given, this role.

From the point of view of the organisations, the associations allow them to create a legally recognised organisational infrastructure which enables them to run mosques, churches and temples, arrange desired activities and further their aims in local society. The founding of associations has usually coincided with the interest in finding a meeting place and, in many cases, local officials have been active collaborators in the organising process. It may even be presumed that if local officials had not been so active in pointing out the need

to create associations, the level of organisation among immigrants would be much lower today. Fairly soon, the associations also became partners in local negotiations in how to take into account the specific needs of different faith traditions in schools, hospitals, nursing homes and the like. From the point of view of the authorities, the associations are the only conceivable partners in discussions on how to take immigrants' collective needs into account. Independent individuals are not recognised as suitable partners, because they lack the representative authority that the association leaders have. The situation is understandable but far from unproblematic, as the existing associations do not fully represent the local immigrant population. They represent the voices of those who are religiously active in organised communities, but not others.

The institutionalisation of immigrant religions is, however, more significant than a simple adaptation to national organisational structure. According to Stephen Warner (1998:20-21), it is misleading to see immigrant religious organisations as 'an instrument of cultural conservation', for they may undergo profound changes during the process. Anyhow, simultaneously with organisation, the immigrants have had to come to terms with the democratic principles of civic organisation. The idea of representative democracy where all members of an association have equal rights—which is a central feature of national civic organisation—is not commonly shared among most migrants. Several associations have solved the case by reserving membership for a few chosen people. In practice, this means that only a limited number of people can decide about the organisation's matters and its religious orientation. However, as many congregations have a relatively diverse membership representing many nationalities, ethnic groups and religious backgrounds, an arena for power struggles has emerged. Different solutions to this dilemma have been found. First, conflicting views about religious practice and belief have led to the creation of more new associations. Second, some kinds of democratic principles in the running of the association have been created.

The institutionalisation of immigrant religions is a key component of the migrants' process of structural adaptation to Finnish society. Through structural adaptation, both the traditional form of organisation and, to some extent at least, the migrants' private religious views start to resemble those of Finnish religious organisation, practice and belief in general. However, it is not a question of a one-way assimilation process. Contemporary migrants are integrating in a multicultural framework—with its inherent conflict of cultural relativism and essentialism—which allows them to challenge the official ethos. Hence, matters such as gender relations can be explained as cultural differences which need to be tolerated by mainstream society. At the moment, it would be premature to estimate more closely how this process of cultural encounters will end. So far, the institutionalisation has mostly happened on a local level. In the coming years we will quite probably see a strengthening of 'church-like' structures binding together various local immigrant religious organisations so that they can more effectively pursue their particular interests. Simultaneously, immigrants have formed congregations, negotiated about their way of life and become a part of the local religious field and recognised actors in civil society.

### **5.3 Community life**

Immigrant religious organisations serve two main functions. On the one hand, they are forums for collective religious practice and, on the other hand, they provide the infrastructure for the religious education of the next generation. Beside these aspects, some others are also important, but from a religious point of view these are the central ones. The present section will describe and discuss the scope of activities found in local immigrant religious organisations and consider to what extent they are meaningful beyond the religious context. The section starts by discussing worship and ritual life, and then proceeds to take a closer look at religious education. It will then examine to what extent the organisations extend their activities

to the ‘secular sphere’. Finally, it will discuss the meaning of transnational bonds for local community life.

### **5.3.1 Worship, ritual and religious festivals**

Worship, ritual life and religious festivals form the religious core activities of all local congregations, even though there are differences as to which ones of these are central for individual religious organisations. They also bring people together, promote social bonds or networks and create social capital (Ammerman, 1997: 362-367). Regular worship—be it daily, weekly or monthly—is important for most congregations, such as all Christian and Muslim organisations. Sunday service and Friday prayer gather the most participants, even though there might be other possibilities for worship as well. For instance, 200-250 Muslims come every Friday to participate in the midday prayer and to hear the Friday sermon in the facilities of the Islamic Society of Turku (IF mgt 2002/41). On an average, participation in collective religious activity is higher among immigrants than among the rest of the population. While my data is not suitable for detailed comparisons, it seems that the local immigrant population is at least two or three times more active with regard to weekly participation in religious organisations. This observation supports general findings about immigrant religious activity in a European context (Hamberg, 1999).

The ritual life takes many forms and is often incorporated into worship, but *rites de passage* related to the course of life (for instance, birth, adulthood, marriage and death) are important for most organisations. The availability of these rituals is also a central factor for many to become members of the congregations in the first place. For instance, most non-Finnish members of the Finnish Orthodox Parish have first come to the church in order to baptise their newly born child. However, the ritual cannot be performed unless either one of the parents is a member of the parish and, thus, both or one of the parents have joined it (IF mgt 2002/39). The local Mandaean organisation provides another type of example. The baptism

ceremony forms the religious core of Mandaean faith. So far, the group has not been able to arrange a suitable place where the required freely flowing water is available, nor have they been able to afford the necessary priest. This has caused significant stress for the organisation leader, who would like to arrange the ceremonies (IF mgt 2002/42-43). All in all, the availability of religious rituals beside those that form part of the religious service are a central resource that local religious organisations possess.

Major religious festivals attract the widest participation in collective activities. Examples of these are Easter and Christmas for Christians, *id al-fitr* and *id al-adha* for Muslims and *Vulan* and *Vesak* for Vietnamese Buddhists. The festivals are usually celebrated at home, but also in the organisation and they attract even those that do not attend regular meetings. An illustration of the importance of festivals is the following case from the Islamic Society of Turku. Women did not have the possibility to participate in regular Friday prayers in the society's mosque until the autumn of 2003, because of lack of space, but they forced through their demands so that they could pray in the mosque during Ramadan, even though there were otherwise more participants than usual. The women insisted on the matter for so long, that the leadership had to find a solution to the problem. When the end of the fasting month of Ramadan is celebrated with the *id al-fitr* festival, around 1,000 local Sunni Muslims gather in a specially rented hall, where they hear religious talks, pray, enjoy good food and socialise with each other (IF mgt 2002/41). Most other local religious organisations have similar special events taking place during their largest religious celebration of the year.

While these gatherings are embedded in a deeply religious context, they also have another central function, that of creating social bonds and a feeling of community. It is almost a truism to say that when religious activity is performed in a community, it helps to preserve identity and create feelings of belonging. For many immigrants, the social significance of regular gatherings with fellow believers and co-ethnics is that these are among the few opportunities to spend time together outside the constraints of everyday life. Often, beside



religious gatherings, we find a number of auxiliary social activities aimed directly at creating situations where people can spend time together and enjoy each other's company.

### **5.3.2 Religious education**

The organisation of religious education for children and young people is the other central form of activity in most religious organisations. The religious education takes various forms, but is often conducted in special classes during the weekends. In Finland, Lutheran and Orthodox religious education has been to a large extent integrated within the official school system, but is also provided by the church, for example, in Sunday Schools for children and in confirmation classes for teenagers. In the following section, we will see how the local religious organisations have organised their religious education in their own congregations and to what extent the local school system has responded to this aspect.

All new Muslim organisations have a weekend school for children. A spokesperson of the Shia Islamic Centre of Turku<sup>31</sup> described their activities in 1998 in the following way:

We have a small school. It includes forty children, boys and girls of different ages. Teaching them the Arabic language and other languages—like Yugoslavian or any other—and culture, and try to show them how they can live in society, which is different for them fathers, and their mothers. So they can have two languages like Arabic and Finnish as a mother tongue or something like that (IF mgt 1998/5-6 R).

The interview continues with a discussion of how the children are living in two different societies at the same time and of their need for special skills in order to be both good citizens and good Muslims. The informant reflects on the social position that the parents have as first generation immigrants with language difficulties and

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<sup>31</sup> That was before the split of the organisation.

that the children, as second generation, have grown up in Finland and need special skills to manage their lives. However, the main point of the discussion was that the children need to learn about their cultural and religious background in a new way, so that they can appreciate their background and become ‘good Muslims’. This discussion illustrates well a common concern among those immigrant groups that have moved from a majority to a minority position. The socialisation of the next generation needs to be taken care of by them personally as the social environment does not support it.

Beside Muslims, also Catholics and Orthodox have received a number of immigrant children who need religious education. Orthodox teaching has been incorporated into the local school system and there were 53 Orthodox pupils, many of who were of immigrant origin, in the spring of 2003, 60% of whom were in primary school (IF 2003/1: 30). The teaching is conducted collectively, as is the case with the Catholics, whose faith has not yet been established as an official element of school religious education. Jouni Elomaa, who functioned as Catholic teacher for two years, describes the activity in the following way:

At the moment the lower comprehensive school religious education, which is also integrated with confirmation teaching, takes place on Saturdays, once a month, and is conducted in the parish’s locality. For upper comprehensive and secondary school we have had education for only two, two and a half years. (...) It takes place on weekdays after school in the parish’s locality. This is a practical arrangement because the pupils are from so many different schools.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Original in Finnish: “Tällä hetkellä on tilanne se, että peruskoulun ja alaasteen opetus, joka on samalla meillä konfirmaatio-opetusta hyvin pitkälle. Se tapahtuu kerran kuukaudessa lauantaisin seurakunnan tiloissa. Yläasteen ja lukion osalta meil on ollu vasta kahden vuoden ajan, kahden ja puolen vuoden ajan opetusta. [-] Ja se tapahtu arkisin koulupäivän jälkeen iltapäi-

The statement illustrates the problems that small religious organisations encounter in organising religious education, as people have to gather from a large area to receive education. However, the situation also strengthens the position of churches as community centres in which different activities take place, socialising children to a physical religious environment. In practical terms, the teaching has to overcome linguistic difficulties, as many of the children are not yet particularly capable of absorbing abstract religious education in the Finnish language. Muslims have had similar difficulties (IF 2003/1: 15).

While the teaching of children is the main form of local religious education, sometimes adults also are its target group. For instance, the Lutheran parishes have organised confirmation education since 1992 for adults, mostly Russian speaking Ingrians. As it was not possible to follow religious education to any large extent in the Soviet Union and Russia, many adults encountered the possibility for the first time in Finland. According to Olga Jounolainen, 200-300 Ingrians have attended confirmation teaching in Turku, with many of them then joining a local parish (IF 2003/1: 26). Also the Swedish Bethlehem Church has religious education in the form of Bible groups (IF mgt 2002/37). Furthermore, obviously all organisations that emphasise adulthood as a precondition for joining have some form of religious education for new members, for example, the Jehovah's Witnesses (IF 2002/8: 7).

Until recently, the only religions that were taught in local primary and secondary schools were Lutheran and Orthodox Christianity. Other religious organisations took care of their religious education privately. That is still the case, with the exception of Islam, which, since autumn 2000, has been incorporated on a municipal level with local school religious education. Prior to that, it relied on the schools' own decision making. In the spring of 2003, there were

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vällä. Seurakunnan tiloissa. Tää oli sellane käytännön ratkaisu ihan sen takia, että nää tulee niin monista eri kouluista nämä oppilaat” (IF mgt 2002/36)

187 children who had been registered as Muslims. About 70% of them were in primary school. In order to co-ordinate the teaching of Islam, a group has been formed which takes care of arranging the activities. People represented in the group include local authorities and representatives of local mosques. Issues which have come under discussion have included gender relations, physical education, music, prayer, art and religious education. One of the main problems of religious education has been that of finding a suitable teacher with the required pedagogical skills and able to teach a kind of 'general Islam', which would be accepted by all children and parents. For the time being, there are still several unsolved difficulties and school authorities find it problematic that there are no national guidelines to follow, which has led to a variety of solutions in individual schools (IF 2003/1: 30).

### **5.3.3 Other activities**

Even though religious activities and education are the core functions of local immigrants' religious organisations, only a few of them provide solely religious activities. Usually the congregations have some kind of 'secular' activities beside those already mentioned. These can include the celebration of national festivals, possibilities for recreation and leisure and non-religious education, as illuminated in the previous section. Sometimes these are also intertwined with religious activities, so that it is not actually meaningful to make such distinctions. The main point is that congregations are first and foremost social institutions, in which the members can interact with each in a mostly religious context (Ammerman, 1997: 367).

Let us start with a presentation of what kind of activities take place beside religious services and education. The International Cathedral Congregation organises a monthly meeting with a changing theme. In 2002 these included Bible study, a visit to the annual gathering of international congregations in Finland and the singing of Christmas carols, all more or less religious activities (IF mgt 2002/38). The Swedish Methodist Bethlehem Church attempts to provide

a home-like environment for its foreign members. The chief pastor, Håkan Sandström, reflects on it as follows:

It is natural that many of the foreign members are very, very active. You know that the congregation has an immense social function for them, as most of them do not have many relatives [in Finland], acquaintances, a summer cottage, etc. (...) There are also foreign families with children and we take care of them as well. I have noticed that it is extremely important that we do not only have services, but one needs to arrange different kinds of social gatherings.<sup>33</sup>

In this case, the church serves explicitly as a social gathering place in general, even though in a mostly religious way, like the previous one. The Russian Orthodox Uspenije congregation and the Finnish Orthodox Parish do not provide auxiliary activities, with a few exceptions. The Finnish congregation's locality hosts once a month a group of Greeks who teach Greek to their children. Also monthly, local Romanians hold, after the service, a social gathering in their language in the parish hall (IF mgt 2002/39). Both of the congregations would probably organise further activities if they had the resources. The situation is similar in the Catholic Parish, but there some immigrants seem to have integrated more into congregational activities. Perhaps the multiethnic nature of the congregation lowers the threshold for people to become engaged. However, even

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<sup>33</sup> Original in Swedish: "Och det är helt naturligt därför att de här utländska människorna de är, många av dom är väldigt, väldigt aktiva. Och du vet att församlingen för dem har också en mycket stor social funktion i och med att dom inte har släktingar så mycket, dom har inte heller så mycket andra bekanta, dom har inte en sommarvilla, och så vidare. [-] det finns utländska familjers barn som också, vi tar hand om dom också och ordnar olika saker åt de här barnen, för att den är en viktig del av arbetet, och jag sku säga, jag har märkt att det är hemskt viktigt att man inte bara har gudstjänster. Utan att man också ordnar olika typer av gemenskapssamlingar" (IF mgt 2002/37).

there, as in the Bethlehem Church, linguistic and ethnic differences affect organisation (IF mgt 2002/36). For example, the Chaldean Catholics have formed separate associations, where they can practice elements of their cultural heritage that are not taken into account in parish life (IF 2003/1: 31).

The new Muslim organisations also have other activities beside those already mentioned, as the Tatar Muslims still have in Helsinki. There was a children's theatre in a Shia organisation (IF mgt 1998/5-6 R), which now also has occasional sports training in their new facilities (IF 2003/1: 23). The Islamic Society of Turku has organised annual summer camps for selected children and even made a trip to Sweden with some of them (IF mgt 2002/41). Basically, these organisations try to expand their activities as opportunities arise and material or immaterial resources allow. The Vietnamese Buddhists and the Mandaeans have organised other activities to a lesser extent, as they are still struggling with more fundamental questions of religious practice. However, the Vietnamese have arranged New Year's celebrations, once together with their Catholic fellow-countrymen (IF 2003/1: 11). The Mandaeans have organised small exhibitions of Mandaean religion and culture (IF mgt 2002/42-43). Most communities also open their doors to outside visitors and are willing to give presentations of their religions and guided tours of their shrines. For example, I have myself taken different groups on several occasions to visit the mosques and churches, as well as giving advice on how to contact these groups in order to arrange visits. In this sense, the congregations function as windows to Finnish society. Congregational representatives also feel that this is an important part of their activity, as it may reduce prejudice and stereotypical images of them (IF mgt 2002/41).

All in all, even though the congregations are by their very nature deeply religious communities, most of them have a certain number of auxiliary activities. Moreover, those that do not have them would often like to include them if they had the resources. However, with few exceptions, the organisations do not provide to any large extent services such as social welfare and counselling, which seem to be a

common feature of North American religious organisations (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2000: 354-358). This can be explained by the structure of Finnish society, which has a large public sector dedicated to these matters. The activities in the congregation are mainly directed towards religious and cultural issues, as well as to creating social spaces for belonging.

### **5.3.4 Transnational connections**

Contemporary literature on immigrants often stresses the role of transnational connections in immigrants' personal, as well as their communal, lives. Beyond these formulations is often the assumption that the present age is qualitatively different from earlier times and that these transnational ties are essential for today's immigrant communities. However, the extent to which these are meaningful varies remarkably for different communities (see 2.3.3.4). The issue has partly been discussed with reference to the history of religions in Finland (section 3.5) and generally with reference to Turku (section 4.3.4), but let us now consider the matter from the viewpoint of the immigrant organisations in the city.

Established local religious institutions have less need of transnational networks than new organisations, which have greater resource potential to gain from them. The Lutheran, Orthodox and Catholic parishes illustrate this clearly. They already have their meeting places, clergy and other structures from which the immigrants can benefit. Thus, the need for new forms of transnational connections come from specific needs of the immigrants that the existing congregations cannot provide. The need for religious services in a different language is perhaps the most central one. For instance, there have been established regular English and Vietnamese language services in the Catholic parish and Romanian services in the Finnish Orthodox parish. In these cases, the human resources have been found in Finland, but the Chaldean Catholics and Mandaeans, for instance, would need to import their clergy from abroad (IF mgt 2002/36, 38-39, 42-43).

The local Muslim mosque associations are examples of communities that could benefit significantly from transnational connections, as they have limited resources available in Finland. The two Sunni congregations seem to have made more use of transnational networks than the Shia mosques. The Islamic Society of Turku has established links with the Rabita mosque in Stockholm and with Islamic organisations in the Arab world. These connections help the local organisation to develop their activities and it may provide them with material and non-material resources for developing their mosque (IF mgt 2002/41). The Anjuman-e-Islahul-Muslimeen of Turku mosque is related to the transnational *Tablighi Jama'at* network and they regularly visit other mosques in Finland and Europe, as well as often receiving visitors. Travelling and visiting other mosques is one of the most central working methods in this organisation, which also stresses the importance of *dawa* or mission. The local group received financial support from Dubai when it bought a house to be turned into a mosque in Turku (IF 2003/1: 15). Beside travel, contacts are maintained by letters, telephone, fax and e-mail in all the local congregations. So far, at least, the two local Sunni organisations have benefited from transnational contacts to some extent. The Vietnamese Buddhists also hope to make use of transnational financial resources now that they are planning to build a religious and cultural centre (IF 2003/1: 11).

Generally speaking, as important as these connections are, when compared to other local activity they are usually of a secondary nature. However, there is a different level of transnationalism also present. This feature is also more difficult to catch by direct measures such as travel and financial resources, as it is in the very structure of lived everyday life and related to the condition of globality—the mental representation of ‘the world becoming one place’. The following quotation illustrates this feature:

If the newspaper says there is something bad in Islam, I will see this is in the eyes of Finns tomorrow. (...) When I live with this kind of condition, I am in a prison. Even when there



are no walls around me. (...) Because the sky is not just over Finland. The sky is over the whole world (IF mgt 1998/5-6 R).

The quotation and the interview of which this is a part tell me the following story. In some instances, immigrants are definitively living in a glocal reality and whatever they do will be understood in a broader than local context. The reference to the media shows the structural disparity felt by minorities who cannot raise their own voices to be heard sufficiently, when they are surrounded by global media flows. In this case, the example illustrates the negative features of the global context, but it also implies a profound change in lived local everyday life.

Thus, transnationalism is present both in the form of direct resource flows and as a part of living in Turku. Following Appadurai (1996), it can be argued that while both of these aspects of globality are functional in a local context, where they also are in some kind of reciprocal relationship, there is nevertheless a disparity between them. This underlines the fundamental difficulties in predicting the outcomes of global interconnectivity. Furthermore, it is also known that many, especially, refugee communities and organisations send remittances to their countries of origin. In such ways, the local organisations are not only on the receiving end, but also active senders as well, making the situation even more complex.

## **5.4 Restructuring local society**

The increased immigration since the late 1980s has led to the birth of a new and lively immigrant religious field in Turku. This section will discuss from various viewpoints to what extent these new elements have transformed the local religious field and the local society in general. As the immigrants constitute only about 5% of the local population, it is reasonable to presuppose that the transformation has not been very large, but if it has been—as I will *de facto* argue—it should be of major interest. The section is divided as fol-

lows. First, it will be shown how the local religious field has received new features and structures due to migration. Second, the encounter between local authorities and immigrant religions will be examined. Third, it will be demonstrated how immigrant religions are visible in local media with examples from various building projects of immigrant shrines. Fourth, there will be discussion of the consequences of the growing immigrant presence in Turku.

### **5.4.1 Immigrants and the local religious field**

The new immigrants have over the last fifteen or so years become a basic, and to some extent familiar, element of the local religious field. It is nevertheless unclear what the consequences of this presence have been and this will now be discussed from three different viewpoints. First, the immigrants have increased the level of religious pluralism in the city as they include people affiliated to other religions than those that existed in the city prior to their arrival. Second, the immigrants have to some extent become part of local interfaith networks. Third, the immigrants have also been targets of mission and outreach.

#### **5.4.1.1 Growing pluralism**

The common connotations of immigrant religions conjure up a picture of exotic and unfamiliar religious traditions, but, as already shown, this view is not entirely correct with regard to the real situation. Let us now take a systematic approach and look at the ways in which the immigrant presence has been experienced in the different segments of the local religious field. The presentation follows the order of section 4.2, which described the contemporary religious field in Turku.

Among Christians, immigration has touched most of the local congregations, so that almost every one has at least a few members of immigrant origin. The Lutheran parishes have received the most new members, but as the parishes are so large, this seems to have gone by almost unnoticed and, in the early twenty-first century, the

parish union probably still does not know that it is the largest immigrant church in Turku. However, the establishment of the International Cathedral Congregation in 1980 and the appointment of a joint priest for the congregation and higher education students were structural changes adapting to this situation (IF mgt 2002/38). Also special Russian language activities have been founded and the immigrants play a noticeable role in some parishes (IF 2003/1: 26). Increasingly though, efforts to attract immigrants take place among parishes and certain Lutheran associations (IF 2002/8: 16; IF 2003/1: 1, 5, 18, 25).

The Protestant free churches were quick to find ways to integrate immigrants into their activities, but soon realised the special demands this placed on them in terms of language skills and other issues. So they decided jointly to concentrate all the activities on the Swedish Bethlehem Church, even though there are still individual immigrant members in other congregations, as well as some small group activity (IF mgt 2002/37). The free churches, with their active missionary and outreach programmes, make sincere efforts to gain new members and actively try new methods in this process, such as Alpha courses (IF 2002/8: 14-15). During the last fifteen years, activities in foreign languages have become a normal part of some organisations' activity and immigrants have been recruited as group leaders, whilst there are also some elders of immigrant origin in a few congregations (IF 2002/8: 6; IF mgt 2002/37).

The Orthodox and Catholic Parishes have both received many new members who have also become active in the congregations. This led to the introduction of services in new languages and created challenges for religious education. Various national groups have also taken advantage of the churches as meeting places. The founding of the Russian Orthodox Uspenije Congregation exemplified how differences within large traditions create a need to found new religious institutions. It may also be assumed that if the Finnish parish receives large numbers of immigrants of the same national or ethnic background, then new congregations will be founded. For the time being, however, this does not seem likely (IF 2003/1: 28, 31; IF mgt

2002/36, 39; IF mgt 2003/2). With regard to Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons and the New Apostolic Church, the immigrant presence also exists, but only the Jehovah's Witnesses have created new congregational structures to accommodate it, including an English language congregation (IF 2002/8: 7, 19-21).

In the Christian field, immigration has so far led to the establishment of only one new organisation—the Russian Orthodox Uspenije chapel community, but otherwise it has mostly led to an internal diversification of membership. The creation of language-based small groups and services in foreign languages has however changed their activities to some extent. Thus, it seems understandable that the knowledge of Christian immigrant activity in Turku has passed rather unnoticed, as it has not led to the creation of several new organisations. However, if the number of immigrants continues to rise and if developments in Turku follow those of other countries, we can expect that in the future new congregations will be founded and thus make the Christian immigrant presence more visible.

Islam has been the most widely noticed new feature of the local religious field, which is not at all surprising, as they are the largest new group. As the old Tatar Muslim congregation was fairly small and not interested in a public presence, for many people the existence of Muslims in Turku represents a new phenomenon, which on its current scale it actually is. Four new mosque associations have been founded, which also reflects internal differences among the local Muslim population. It can also be presumed that further groups will be created when the possibilities rise. At least the Albanians, Kurds and Bosnians have the potential to start their own places in terms of numbers. While the Muslim organisations are composed mainly of immigrants, there are also a few dozen Finnish converts (IF 2003/1: 15-16, 20, 23; IF mgt 2002/41).

Buddhism has also benefited from migration. The community of circa 300 local Vietnamese Buddhists has received publicity because of its temple plan, but the Diamond Way Buddhists also have an immigrant presence (IF 2003/1: 10-11). The Mandaean community of circa 50 people is also a novelty, but they have not yet been able

to organise a permanent infrastructure for religious practice (IF mgt 2002/42-43). Furthermore, the dozen or so immigrant Bahá'ís have doubled the local Bahá'í community (IF mgt 2002/40).

With regard to other segments of the local religious field, only minor changes have taken place. The Jewish and Hindu communities have been less affected by immigration, as only a few individuals of these faiths have migrated to Turku (IF 2002/8: 22; IF 2003/1: 24). The alternative spiritual scene does not seem to attract foreigners, either, but this might not be as straightforward as it appears. As organised activities on this scene are mostly in Finnish and as belonging is not a central feature anyway, it may be suggested that there are potentially interested people who have not so far found their niche on the scene. Moreover, among immigrants there are people, who in demographic and social terms, belong to the cohorts interested in alternative spirituality. However, my material does not allow the drawing of any conclusions on this matter, so it must be left open for further inquiry. The same applies for those who are not active in religious organisations.

All in all, the increased immigrant presence has led to growing religious pluralism in terms of new organisations and a significant immigrant presence in several old congregations. While the development has occurred partly as an internal diversification of existing congregations and is thus not publicly visible, it has also received a human face through the increased Muslim, and to a lesser extent Buddhist, presence. This has created the image that immigration is mostly related to locally hitherto less-known religious traditions and made the development much more exotic than it actually is. Christian immigration has not received as much attention, even though in numerical terms it is the largest change. That immigrants in general are more active participants in religious activities than the rest of the population indicates that their presence is disproportionately visible in the local congregations, but less so outside. In some cases this has also been noted, but my general impression is that the majority of local congregations have not yet come to terms with the changed circumstances.

### 5.4.1.2 Interfaith activity

The local interfaith scene was discussed earlier, but let us now take a closer look at how immigrants and immigrants' religious organisations fit into the picture. Certain congregations with immigrant membership are involved in local interfaith networks. These include the Lutheran, Orthodox and Catholic Churches, the Christian free churches and the Islamic Society of Turku. Among the missing immigrant congregations in this list are the three remaining Muslim organisations, Russian Orthodox, Vietnamese Buddhists and the Mandaean. So far they have not been incorporated into the interfaith networks. The likely reason for this is, on the one hand, linguistic as Finnish is the main language and, on the other hand, a disinterest in interfaith activity.

On an official level, it seems that most Christian congregations with immigrant membership are included in the interfaith networks, but what about the immigrants themselves? I am not aware that immigrants have been present to any great extent at the meetings on the Christian scene, as there are only a few congregation leaders of immigrant origin. The exceptions are Catholic clergy of foreign origin and a couple of elders from Christian free churches. The Forum of Religions in Turku is the only interfaith coalition, where the Islamic Society of Turku and Bahá'ís are also included. However, as the initiative is rather new, it is premature to say more about its significance to the local field. Nevertheless, some local Muslims are part of a national initiative promoting Muslim-Christian dialogue. The initiative was organised in the mid 1990s by Seppo Rissanen, who used to work as a Lutheran minister in Turku (IF 1998/2: 4 R). Today, a number of Finnish Muslim leaders, Lutheran priests and other interested individuals meet on a regular basis to conduct dialogue. I have myself attended these meetings three times and they appear to be of great interest for both parties. This dialogue group visibly constitutes one of the main forums of structural adaptation for Finnish Muslims in the context of understanding the position and potential of religious organisation in Finland.

From a local interfaith perspective, then, it seems at the moment that even though organisations with immigrant membership are included, there are only a few immigrants in these networks. This can be understood partially by the fact that most immigrant congregations are still rather new and are building their communities. Only later will they have the necessary time and resources to participate in auxiliary activities. However, it also seems that there exists a space for local inter-religious dialogue which has not yet been filled. The national Muslim-Christian dialogue shows that such activities have an important function.

#### **5.4.1.3 Mission and outreach**

Mission and outreach in different forms are a central part of many religious organisations' activity. Mission is historically a central part of Christian identity and it increasingly assumes a local interest. Many congregations see the local society as an important missionary field in addition to the traditional missions abroad. Most immigrant religious organisations are not interested in missionary activity, but try rather to maintain a low profile. Even if they have the interest, this does not usually extend beyond their own ethnic group. In this way, they are quite different from many religious organisations initiated by native Finns. The new immigrants have to some extent been targets of missionary and outreach efforts. This feature of the local religious field will be looked at from the following viewpoints: 1) immigrants as targets of mission and outreach, and 2) immigrant organisations' own missionary and outreach programmes.

First, there are several religious organisations that consciously conduct missionary work among the local immigrant population. The lowest level of outreach is dealing out leaflets and inviting people to participate in services or small group activity. This is done, for example, by the International Cathedral Congregation and the Bethlehem Church, of which the latter also regularly publishes announcements in foreign languages in the local free-distribution tabloid *Turkulainen* (IF mgt 2002/37-38). This type of outreach is basi-

cally informing those interested about different activities, so they can choose for themselves whether to participate or not. A higher level of engagement is to actively seek interested people. For instance, the Jehovah's Witnesses knock at people's doors and are able to provide material in different languages as well as using their internal language resources; the Bethlehem Church arranges pizza evenings in the Student Village and calls for students; the Varissuo Free Church seeks young people on the streets and organises activities for them; and the Christian interfaith youth association (*Yhteiskristillinen Nuorisotiimi ry*) organises Alpha courses for immigrant youth, so that they will have a better understanding of Christianity (IF 2002/8: 7, 15, 17; IF mgt 2002/37). The motivation for these initiatives is to provide information about existing activities and to gain new members.

A different kind of outreach is to provide social or recreational activities without a direct missionary interest. The services are similar to those of secular authorities or associations. Several Christian associations have tried to organise different activities for immigrants, including women's and family meetings, summer camps and sports. None of them have been very successful in their attempts (e.g., IF 2003/1: 1, 4). The Turku and Kaarina Parish Union has extended its social welfare activities towards people of other faiths. The organisation has one fulltime employee taking care of immigrant clients, who include refugees, international students and tourists. The holder of the post, deaconess Taina Viljanen, is a key-person in the parish union's multicultural activities and well networked with other authorities and associations working with local immigrants (IF 2002/8: 16). The local Seamen's Mission (*Turun Merimieskirkko*) serves visiting seamen and other travellers and helps them with various issues, including religious matters. Although less visible outside, the Seamen's Mission probably has the most extensive contacts of all local religious organisations to foreign citizens. However, as many of them are only sporadic visitors, the organisation's role in interfaith activity is bound up with its own activities (IF 2003/1: 2).



Second, as already mentioned, most immigrant congregations are not interested in active missionary work and do not currently have resources for active outreach programmes. Certainly, individual members encourage other people to participate in their activities, but these individual efforts are not the official policy. The most that the organisations usually do is to talk about their activities to interested people and invite them over. For instance, some local Muslim congregations often have school classes and other visitors, even religious seekers. Furthermore, immigrant religious organisations often give lectures about their religion and arrange other public events. For instance, the Mandaean have twice organised a small exhibition of their faith (IF mgt 2002/42-43). However, one significant exception exists. The Anjuman-e-Islahul-Muslimeen mosque conducts an active mission (*dawa*) several days a month, mostly among immigrants from Muslim countries. This is a main feature of the transnational *Tablighi Jama'at* faith renewal movement, that promulgates a message of active engagement and personal piety. The movement is one of the few Islamic movements that has been able to overcome ethnic and national boundaries in the Muslim world. Even in Turku it has been able to cross these boundaries to some extent (Geaves, 1996: 152-154; IF 2003/1: 15; Masud (ed.), 2000). The Anjuman-e-Islahul-Muslimeen mosque is, however, exceptional in its outreach and interest in the local field.

When the local organisations' efforts at mission and outreach are compared to their other activities, it becomes clear that they play a minor role in most congregations. For instance, among the 454 employees of the Turku and Kaarina Parish Union, there are only a couple of individuals who work solely with immigrants. Also most of the parish union's activities are directed at other local inhabitants (IF 2002/8: 16; Turun ja Kaarinan seurakuntayhtymä, 2002). The situation is similar in most local religious institutions, where immigrants are only one of many target groups. However, the immigrants are seen as an opportunity and several congregations have an interest in working with them, although the lack of resources is a hindrance. To sum up: with regard to the consequences of immigration

to the local religious field, it is safe to state that even though certain important changes have occurred, new structures have been created and immigrants have to some extent been recognised as actors in the field, they have remained on the whole in a rather marginal position. As I claimed earlier that the immigrants' religious presence is more than a marginal phenomenon, there should be other reasons for this than the ones discussed above. Let us now move on and look at the locality beyond the religious field.

#### **5.4.2 Multiculturalism, religion and local authorities**

Over the last fifteen years, the city of Turku has created a number of structures to provide services for the local immigrant population. The initial reason was to help refugees and Ingrian returnees to integrate into Finnish society, but some of the structures also serve other local immigrants. Religious issues related to immigrants have come to the fore every now and then. I have not studied the local authorities' views on a systematic basis, but have held a few interviews as well as numerous unofficial discussions on different occasions. I have also got to know several local authorities personally in the course of my fieldwork. However, in order to have an idea of the social position of immigrants in Turku, it is necessary to have a basic understanding of the role of local authorities.

Immigration has created new challenges for local administration which have directly or indirectly affected most local municipal institutions, including the social, cultural and educational sectors, as well as the employment office. The social welfare office is usually the first local institution in contact with refugees and Ingrians returnees. It takes care of most practical issues related to settling in the city during the first years. The same building also contains the interpreters' office, providing interpretation services as well as an immigrant health centre. The employment office provides expertise for foreign citizens. Issues related to the local schools system have already been discussed (section 5.3.2). Furthermore, the city has

taken into account various secular and religious service providers as support structures, such as the Finnish Red Cross, which has a refugee reception centre in the city and the Turku and Kaarina Parish Union's immigration office.

The International Meeting Point, which is part of the Cultural Centre (*Kulttuurikeskus*) of the city of Turku, also has close contacts with local immigrant associations. Staff at the meeting-point help immigrants to organise their activities, find places for them and assist them in the search for finance (IF 1998/2: 1 R). A large number of immigrants' local cultural and religious associations have been founded with the assistance of the International Meeting Point. In a way, it could be argued that the local ethnic associations are extensions of the meeting point's activities, as several of them meet in the localities and receive part of their finances from the city. In other words, many associations are partially dependent on the city's material and non-material support. This development is related to the policy of multiculturalism, which emphasises the role of keeping one's cultural tradition in a new social environment (Forsander, 2001: 43-47). So, when immigrants search for opportunities to create new activities, they are guided to the International Meeting Point, where they are told what opportunities are available. There they are given practical advice in how to further their aims and usually recommended to found associations. Municipal actors are, thus, not mere bystanders in the integration of immigrants, especially for refugees and Ingrians returnees, who need more outside support than others. Following the ideals of multiculturalism, the authorities attempt to provide the necessary resources for the communities so that they can establish cultural activities in Turku. Actually, the local authorities are actively creating multicultural forms and supporting them, so that multiculturalism does not remain only an ideal but becomes a reality.

Immigrants have become an important part of local life in recent years and much of the current growth in local population has been because of immigrants. However, religion is not usually a central issue from the authorities' point of view. In those cases where it

comes to the fore, it is usually Islam, as exemplified in the local school system. Islam is also disproportionately visible among refugees, as many of them are Muslims, at least in cultural terms. As Muslims are often among those trying to get their voice heard, it comes as no surprise that much discussion of multiculturalism resonates with Islam, if it touches on religion. This again furthers the biased view that Islam is the dominant immigrant religion.

### **5.4.3 From backyard to front-page religion**

Until recent times much immigrant religious activity in Europe and North America could be described as ‘backyard religion’.<sup>34</sup> The term ‘backyard religion’ illustrates clearly the social position of most immigrant religions in Turku, too. They have grown out of public sight and in some cases have literally occupied abandoned spaces of urban development, which have been affordable for them. The congregations have not had an interest in stepping out and affirming their presence and neither have they felt a need for this. They prefer to live a life among their own kind and avoid public controversies. However, as the organisations have become wealthier and sought proper meeting places, they have suddenly realised that they have become front-page news. The numerous battles over mosque and temple construction in the western world reveal almost without exception that the public had not known of their old, new neighbours, who might already have had a place of prayer in the neighbourhood for decades (e.g., Eck, 2001; Karlsson, 2000; Schmitt, 2001). The growing recognition of immigrant religious presence in the West has led to a shift from ‘backyard’ to ‘front-page’ religion, where local and national media play a central role with regard to the public image of immigrants’ religious life in their new environments. This section will discuss the issue from the viewpoint of three different

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<sup>34</sup> The term was at first used, as far as I know, by Samuel-Martin Behloul from the University of Lucerne. He told a project meeting in Århus, Denmark in April 2003, that he felt the term described well the social position of immigrant religious activity.

building projects for immigrant shrines in Turku: a Sunni Muslim mosque, a Vietnamese Buddhist temple and a Russian Orthodox chapel. They serve as a basis for discussing in which ways immigrant religions are presented in the local media. I also presume that this illustrates broader sentiments on the issue.

First, the Islamic Society of Turku has had its own meeting place since its foundation, but the facilities were not large enough for all the activities that the community ran. The society initiated a plan to build an Islamic Centre in 1996. These premises would include space for a mosque, kindergarten, school, shops, restaurant, festival hall, apartments, library and an exhibition hall (IF mgt 1998/4 R). A reservation for land close to central Turku was announced in July 1997. The cultural centre would have become a significant landmark. After the announcement of the land reservation, a heated debate began in the local media; television and radio programmes as well as newspaper reports were made about the matter. The case also made its way into the national media. The local debate lasted for a couple of months. A local politician also started a petition against the mosque plan (Martikainen, 2000b).

The debate about the planned mosque can be summarised as follows. After the initial announcement of the plan, several letters to the editor were published in the leading local newspaper, the *Turun Sanomat*. Most of the published letters were critical towards the planned mosque, with various arguments about Islam as a religion at the core of the debate. Islam was seen as alien to Finnish society and its expansive ideology was considered a threat to the Finnish way of life. Other issues mentioned included women's rights, terrorism and the loss of property value in the designated building area. Several writers also stated that the place designated was not suitable and criticised the planned minaret that would not fit into the Finnish landscape. In some instances, practical matters about parking problems and increased traffic were also mentioned. The Islamic Society of Turku did not take part in the debate (Martikainen, 2000b). The society had applied for financial support from Saudi Arabia, but did

not receive it and the plan has not so far been finalised. Later on, the organisation chose to expand its current premises (IF mgt 2002/41).

Second, the local Vietnamese community provides a different example. Among the Vietnamese Buddhists an idea arose that they would build a cultural and religious centre which would serve the national Vietnamese Buddhist community (IF 2003/1: 11). Different places were sought and in 2001 a place close to Turku was found, with the land being reserved for the building (*Turun Sanomat*, 2001). The Vietnamese Buddhist Cultural Centre was to be built in two phases: first, a general meeting place and then, later, a Buddhist type religious building or *pagoda*. The designated place for the centre is a place where there are few neighbours in the vicinity. That was how the planners wanted it, because they did not wish to create any controversies. However, people living in the neighbourhood were still worried about the plan and complained to the city. In order to finance the project, the local Buddhists have collected money and applied for transnational financing from the Buddhist community in France. Recently, the Buddhists were allowed to continue with their plans and it seems likely that the temple will be built, if the society succeeds in arranging the finances (Arvaja, 2002; IF 2003/1: 11).

In comparison to the Sunni Muslim Islamic Centre, the Buddhist plan has not created significant public controversies, even though issues related to the process have been reported in local newspapers. Interestingly enough, though, there have been obstacles to the project because of the earlier planned Islamic Centre. A local politician asked for a thorough analysis of the process, because of the mosque controversies (*Turun Sanomat*, 2000). Thus the images of the planned Islamic Centre had affected the way in which the Buddhists were treated in the planning process. With regard to the neighbours' opposition, the spokesman of the Vietnamese Buddhists stated in a newspaper interview that "Many Finns ask whether we have noisy services. Only few know that we are very quiet, because our religion is meditative" (*Turkulainen*, 2001). Again, images of other religions are understood as hindrances in creating a correct picture of Buddhism.

Third, a Russian Orthodox chapel was opened in Turku in October 2002. It aims to serve the local Russian Orthodox population, some of whom also take part in the activities of the Finnish Orthodox Parish. Local newspapers included small articles about the chapel, but no further debate took place. A feature that is missing from this case is that of finding a suitable building site. The city of Turku had agreed to give an old, small warehouse next to the Russian consulate for the use of the congregation, but no public debate about the matter took place, nor were neighbours consulted (IF 2003/1: 28; Pitkänen, 2003).

These three examples allow us to discuss the building of immigrants' shrines in a local context. They seem to illustrate different types of reception. The mosque plan created a hostile reception, the Buddhist temple plan gave birth to some suspicion and the Orthodox chapel did not create any public controversies. This seems to imply that the Orthodox faith is not considered alien, whereas the Muslims and Buddhists are. However, even between the latter two there is a qualitative difference that implies more negative attitudes towards Islam than to Buddhism. This interpretation finds support in national Gallup surveys, where the Orthodox faith is considered very positively, Buddhism somewhat negatively and Islam even more negatively (Niemelä, 2003a: 145).

The debates over the planned Sunni Muslim Islamic Centre and the Vietnamese Buddhist Cultural Centre in Turku are examples of local controversies that cannot be understood from a purely local perspective. The presence of refugees in contemporary Finland is based on Finland's changed international position and was made possible by international agreements; both developments related to the globalisation of politics. As contemporary refugee policies can resettle large groups around the world, Finland has also received people from countries with which it has not traditionally had much contact, including Muslims from the Middle East and Buddhists from Vietnam. Consequently, the new religious minorities have established themselves in the country and started to plan how they could best practice their religion and culture in the new social envi-

ronment. Plans to build mosques and temples are a part of that. This development can be understood as a consequence of international migration or global ethnoscapes.

The discussion about the building plans takes place in a different setting. The debate about the mosque plan was based on popular, stereotyped images of Islam. It had very little to do with the local or national situation of Muslims in Finland, but rather concentrated on images from the global media: terrorism, women's rights and expansionist Islam as seen on television, and mediated by transnational broadcasting companies. Furthermore, the persecution of Christian minorities in certain Muslim societies was seen as a justification for opposing Islam in Finland. The goals of the local Muslims were understood as an extension of the globally mediated images. Thus the people opposing the project reasoned that if we do not yet have terrorism in the country, the planned mosque would certainly bring it in. Later, the example of the mosque controversy scared some people into creating a similar debate, and thus the Buddhist organisation's project has been made more difficult partly because of this.

The conjuncture of the global ethnoscapes and mediascapes first took place in the public debate over the planned Islamic Centre. The images presented of Islam were not based on the experience of Muslims living in Finland, but rather on images from the Middle East, the former Yugoslavia and Saudi Arabia. Local actors drew material from far, far away to motivate their actions. The core of the debate was nevertheless local; what can be accepted in Finland and, specifically, in Turku. The idea of a minaret rising on the local skyline was too alien for many participants and considered a threat towards their way of life. The symbolic meaning of landscape as an embodiment of the Finnish way of life was an undercurrent in the debate.

The Muslim and the Buddhist building plans are examples of local projects functioning in a glocal structure that neither the locals nor the migrants can control and which may have effects on them. On the one hand, images from the global media are an important factor in how local migrants are met and what they are seen to repre-



sent. On the other hand, migrants themselves can feel helpless in trying to persuade local inhabitants to see them in a different perspective. Thus, local social reality is in many ways connected with developments taking place elsewhere which cannot be either controlled or influenced. In this sense, local reality is glocal, even though purely local developments also have a role to play. The news coverage of the Orthodox chapel further underlines how varied are the social positions in which immigrants find themselves in Turku.

#### **5.4.4 Local places—global spaces**

Now it is time to attempt to answer the final question: what have been the consequences of the recent rise in immigration, and the new religious elements related to it, for life in the city of Turku? As shown above, there have been changes in the local religious field, in municipal structures and even the public seems to some extent to be aware of the growing immigrant presence. Certainly, several more aspects could be included to show that the immigrant presence has been of, at least, some importance. However, it would still not undermine the fact that, despite a number of structural alterations, the direct changes have ultimately been somewhat fairly limited. In spite of this, it will be argued in the following that there has been a major change in local milieux directly related to the growing *visible* presence of immigrants, of which the religious organisations form a part.

First, as a result of political, economic and cultural developments, Finland has become part of global ethnoscaples to a hitherto unprecedented extent. Increased international migration to the country, and to Turku, has led to the presence of people from corners of the world with which the country previously had no similar contacts. With few exceptions, Finns did not have first hand experience of non-Europeans in their own backyards until the post-war period. In this sense, the current immigration has broadened the hitherto European, North American and Russian cultural networks. With regard to religion, this can be seen in the increasing number of immigrants in established congregations and in the foundation of immigrant religious

organisations. In this sense, the local population and the local religious field have globalised.

Second, the increased presence of people from around the world, with their visibly foreign social, cultural and religious practices and their need to adapt to Finnish society, has led to the creation of new structures and institutions to support their integration, which can be seen in all sectors of society. The municipal institutions function in the first place to facilitate the adaptation of immigrants to a Finnish way of life. This makes understandable the authorities' interest in guiding the immigrants to adapt 'correct' forms of institutionalisation, as well as their continuing, indirect influence on the organisations. Local authorities are central agents in the process of structural adaptation. While the new institutions are small in number compared to previously existing ones, they have indeed touched most municipal sectors and there are thus few possibilities of avoiding them. So, even though in absolute terms it is a question of minor adjustments, the indirect consequences are much larger as local cultural and religious diversity needs to be taken into account. Moreover, as some issues contest established practices, these force the participants to reflect on their actions and question previously self-evident practices. A corresponding development has occurred in some religious organisations.

Third, the immigrant presence and especially that of people whose cultural and religious practices are considered alien have created a discourse of multiculturalism. Östen Wahlbeck (2003), among others, has argued that the multiculturalism debate should be understood as a discourse broadening the meaning of Finnishness. The religious controversies have mainly regarded Islam, which has also been the most vocal at the local level in seeking for understanding and support for its way of life. The issues that have created controversies are actually more illustrative of certain features of Finnish society than those of Muslim immigrants in general. Key issues regarding Islam in Europe have included the social position of women (e.g., the use of the veil), human rights (e.g. circumcision) and socialisation (e.g. religious education), all of which are highly po-

liticised matters in Finnish society (Sakaranaho et al., forthcoming). In this light, the local mosque debate can also be seen as one of whether certain 'ways of life' should be publicly acknowledged and thus become respected parts of local society. It also implies that adaptation is not solely a matter for immigrants, but applies equally to other locals. Thus, it is a question of a two-way process, where both parties need to adjust to the changed circumstances.

Fourth, these developments are, to a growing degree, taking place in a glocal context. Both migrants and other locals make use of transnational networks that have made new material and immaterial resources available. Even though transnational connections and resources have, so far, mostly played a secondary role, they contain significant potential, which could in the right circumstances and in the right hands become highly important. Furthermore, global media bring images of distant lives to living rooms which, as shown in the mosque debate, play a role in local social relations. The mosque, temple and chapel examples further illustrated how unevenly the images affect different groups of people. That the glocal condition is by its very nature unpredictable and difficult to control stresses the position of local societies as mediators in contemporary times. Thus, recent immigration has opened local horizons of thought and extended the local milieu, a process that Roland Robertson (1992: 8) calls the 'intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole'. If immigration to Finland continues as many estimate it will, it would seem necessary to reformulate some of the current retrogressive strategies to meet cultural and religious diversity and, instead, start thinking of how to turn it into strength and opportunities.

# 6

## Summary and Discussion

The aim of this study was to describe and analyse, from a globalisation perspective, the processes of immigrant religious organisation in the local religious field in the city of Turku. These contemporary processes were placed from the beginning into a historical framework of global interconnectedness, where international migration and transnational connections functioned as the key components. Even though globalisation is a later phenomenon than what the early part of the historical presentation covered, similar processes of migration and cultural interconnectivity had been functioning on a smaller geographical scale. Efforts were placed to trace when and how these intercultural connections achieved a global scope as well as to the local processes through which the immigrant religions have established themselves in the local society. In the previous chapters the matter has been discussed from a variety of viewpoints which attempted to break down this general interest into smaller units, so that a more accurate picture of immigrants' local religious life would emerge.

Issues related to religion and immigration have not been dealt with to a large extent in Finnish research, and even internationally, the subject is only now emerging as a major area of interest. It was

presupposed that through studying a specific local religious milieu a holistic view of the matter could be presented. In relation to this, it was argued that the image of immigrants' religious activity in the West has been one-sided and largely concentrated on seemingly foreign religions, thus exoticising the subject. This study can be seen an attempt to point towards a corrective in the image of immigrant religions in the West at the same time as it provides basic research in the field within a Finnish context. Globalisation theory was chosen as the overriding perspective, so that the local religious field could be set into a larger perspective of transnational networks and international migration. The following pages will summarise the main results of the study, after which, there will be an indication of what kinds of issues arise from the platform of this study.

## **6.1 Immigration as an agent of local religious change**

The study started with a historical introduction in order to come to terms with the specific ways in which international migration and transnational connections have been formative for the development of religious life in Turku and Finland. Even though the conclusions were considered preliminary, it can be said that both international migration and transnational connections have indeed been of major importance for the development of the local and national religious fields. Transnational connections established by native Finns have over the years played a more extensive role than immigration, partly reflecting the fact that Finland has mainly been a country of net emigration. However, international migration, or phenomena similar to it, have at times been of significant importance, especially in recent years. The city of Turku had been, since its foundation around the year 1300 until the latter half of the nineteenth century, the main national centre for foreign populations, and even today it is the second largest immigrant centre of the country. Thus, Turku has experienced more changes in relation to immigration than most other Finnish local societies.

Historically, local and national religious life was long connected mostly to developments taking place in Sweden and Western Europe and, to a lesser extent, in Russia. The Swedish connection has always been strong in Turku, because of its geographical location and its Swedish-speaking minority. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, connections to the North American religious field emerged and, since then, most of the new religions established in Turku and Finland have had an American connection. A more global interconnectivity has only occurred during the last decades and, above all, since the 1990s. However, relations with neighbouring cultural regions and North America are still for the time being much more significant than other cultural relations. Moreover, the common history with Sweden and the Finnish Swedish-speaking population continue to be an important link, even though the social position of the Swedish-speakers has changed dramatically over the last one hundred years. Nevertheless, the Swedish minority still functions as a cultural mediator and appears to be over-represented among initiators of new religious activity in the country.

From a regional point of view, the historical processes of increasing intercultural relations could be summarised as follows. During the Middle Ages, Finland and Turku were incorporated into the West European cultural sphere as a part of Sweden and the establishment of the Catholic Church was an elementary part of that. After the Reformation and in the spirit of Lutheran Orthodoxy, intercultural relations decreased in scope and interest turned inwards. During the next centuries, the Nordic, Baltic and German dimension became more important, as much of the corresponding area became incorporated into the Swedish State. In this context, it is illustrative that inspiration for the Finnish revival movements of the early nineteenth century was mostly based on German influences, filtered through Sweden as well as the Baltic. During the Russian period (1808-1917), a number of ties to the east were formed, but the North European influence was still important. At this time, the Orthodox minority was also better integrated into the Finnish religious field, as its position had been much contested during the Swedish rule.

Gradually, contacts to the British and North American realms emerged, grew and became of major importance. The large-scale migrations to the United States at the turn of the twentieth century played a central role in this and led to the establishment of many new religious contacts and organisations. After independence in 1917, Finland turned again inwards and did not become more open again until the 1980s. During this last period of openness, the role of the rest of Europe beyond the northern dimension has become greater due to the European unification process. Furthermore, religious developments have also become increasingly global, as exemplified by the growing number of non-European immigrants and the establishment of new Muslim and Buddhist organisations.

It was also asked whether the current immigration represents a novel situation. Ever since the Middle Ages, and presumably even earlier, there have been foreigners living in Finland who have continued with their religious practices. From the beginning of the early modern period, the possibilities for foreigners to practice their religion publicly were restricted and native Finns were not allowed to convert to other religions. During the modern period, legislation was liberalised and new religious organisations could be officially organised, including religions of immigrant origin, which grew in number during the Russian period. There has been continuous religious activity of immigrant origin in this country since the early nineteenth century until today, but this has mostly taken place within ethnic boundaries. Conversions to these religions have been officially allowed since the establishment of religious freedom in 1922, but the movement between religions has been fairly small.

Since the 1990s, the geographical scope and the diversity of immigrant religions have increased. This was a result of the growing globalisation of Finnish society in general and specifically due to increased international migration. Even though there are no signs that the ethnic nature of immigrant religions is of less importance than earlier, as the number of native Finns in immigrants' religious organisations is fairly small, increasing movement between religious traditions has taken place. Moreover, as the immigrants have mostly

included people affiliated to religions already active in Finland, this has led to an internal diversification of membership in several organisations. The major differences between earlier and contemporary immigration are its larger geographical scope and its greater religious diversity. Also the social position of immigrants is somewhat different. Multiculturalism is the official national policy, explicitly encouraging immigrants to continue with their religious practice, which was not the case previously (cf. Levitt, 2001: 26-27). The historical section concluded with the argument that globalisation with regard to religions in Finland is a rather new phenomenon, starting from the latter part of the nineteenth century, and that Turku has been one of the local societies in the country to have been mostly affected by it.

Taking off from this platform, the rest of the study looked at religious organisations and immigrants' collective religious activity in the city of Turku. Being the oldest city in the country and the central urban centre until the late nineteenth century, the city has had immigrant minorities since the Middle Ages. Moreover, even though the local religious field looks predominantly Lutheran at first glance, substantial religious plurality has existed since the nineteenth century, even if on a numerically small scale. The rise in international migration in the last decades of the twentieth century has significantly broadened the hitherto mostly Christian religious field. Beside new members in most Christian congregations, Muslims, Buddhists and Mandaean are examples of new religious minorities that have made the effort to institutionalise their activities. Altogether, people of immigrant origin form circa 5%—9,000-10,000 people—of the local population and their numbers have been constantly on the rise since the early 1980s. The number of people of immigrant origin now corresponds to that of the old Swedish-speaking minority in the city. Turku has also become a destination of migration for people of immigrant origin in Finland, which further strengthens its position as a major immigration centre in the country. The local population of immigrant origin is a rather heterogeneous group, representing people from around the world. Most immigrants are from



nearby regions, especially Ingrian returnees from Estonia and Russia, and mainly with a Christian background, but immigrants from other continents and cultural regions are also present. Most non-western immigrants are refugees and among them we find a more diverse religious background, including Christians, Muslims and Buddhists. Immigrants are generally speaking younger and have more children than the population on the whole, and especially the refugees have had difficulties entering the local labour market, thus remaining in a somewhat marginalised position in local society.

The processes of immigrant religious organisation were of central interest in this study. It showed that people with a Christian background have on an average become more integrated in local congregations than the others, at least at the levels of membership and participation. It was concluded that this is based on two factors. First, the immigrants could join already established congregations, which is significantly easier than organising new religious activities. Second, it was presumed that people with a Christian background are more accustomed to the idea of being a member in a local congregation, which is a universal feature of Christian organisation. With regard to other religious groups, the option of starting new religious organisations was also common, even though they did not, generally speaking, succeed in mobilising their potential members as much as the Christian churches. In both cases, it became evident that the role of certain key individuals in the organisation process is highly central. The organisation of religious activity in Turku was seen as an aspect of immigrants' structural adaptation to Finnish society. It was concluded that, through organisation, immigrants become participants in local and national social structures, which furthers their adaptation to local society. It was also suggested that, through organisation, immigrants are able to create subaltern counterpublics, where they can create the social capital and organisational skills needed to be functional in local society (Ammerman, 1997: 365). This would be especially important for those segments of the immigrant population that are for various reasons marginalised in the local society.

The practical reasons behind religious organisation were connected with a wish to create a space for collective religious activity and to be able to provide religious education for the next generation. These are usually related to a search for a place that can be turned into a church, mosque or temple. With regard to actual activities in immigrant congregations, the religious meetings, rituals and festivals, in addition to religious education for children, were the core activities. Many of the congregations also had supplementary activities that were more cultural in nature, even though in some cases such distinctions are arbitrary. Those immigrants that became members of already established congregations had a tendency to create new structures for these secular activities, if they were not able to conduct them in the setting of the congregation. These included cell-like structures in congregations and cultural associations. These substructures were based on a shared language and, often, nationality and ethnicity. It was concluded that most organisations follow the congregational model, sometimes supplemented by elements of the community centre model (Ebaugh and Chafetz, 2000: 347-370), as was expected.

With regard to transnational connections, it was apparent that these exist, but to varying degrees. On the whole, the local plane of action was more important, but in some cases transnational resources were mobilised and of major importance. Generally speaking, the institutionalised connections seemed to be more sporadic than the private ones, which were not the focus of this study. However, it can be presumed that while the private connections are more common and extensive, in cases of major transnational resource flows congregations play larger roles. For instance, the building of immigrants' shrines needs institutionalised structures, if transnational resources are to be used. Moreover, beside the inherent transnationalism of many religious organisations, the glocal nature of local society came to the fore. Even in the most strictly local action, immigrant religious organisations are inherently participants in a globalising world, where events taking place on other parts of the planet may affect their social position in Turku. The building of immigrants' shrines

serves as an illustrative case, where local action is evaluated not by what the organisations do in Turku, but by images from elsewhere. The consequences of the conjunctures of global ethnoscapes and mediascapes are uneven and unpredictable, as suggested by Appadurai (1996:4).

Towards the end, the study looked at immigrant religious activity in the context of local society. It was first asked in which ways immigrants have become parts of the local religious field. In spite of a number of new institutions and elements in the local religious field, it was concluded that immigrant religious activity has so far remained in a rather marginal position, even though immigrants are certainly over-represented among the religiously active in the city. Nevertheless, groundbreaking initiatives have taken place in this respect, including the national Muslim-Christian dialogue and the Forum of Religions in Turku, but hitherto their effect has been limited. The immigrants have also to some extent been targets of mission and outreach. With regard to secular society, local authorities have played a central role in promoting the institutionalisation of immigrant religions and making them partners in local discussions in how to respond to the new local cultural and religious challenges. It was also pointed out that the indirect consequences of immigration have touched most sectors of local life, at least in the form of a growing awareness of the presence of the culturally and religiously other, even if the direct consequences are more restricted in their scope.

Finally, it is time to provide answers to the two sets of main questions that were posed at the beginning of the study. The first questions were whether immigrants' contemporary processes of religious organisation, and issues related to them, present a novel situation, or to what extent they have historical predecessors in Turku and Finland? Based on this study, the answer is as follows: the main novel feature of the contemporary processes of organisation is that today the immigrants are living in a social environment which explicitly encourages them to keep their religious traditions and, to some extent, also supports that. The situation is largely based on a

state policy known as ‘multiculturalism’, which is based on the view that the integration of immigrants into Finnish society occurs effectively when the people in question can maintain their religious, cultural, ethnic, etc. traditions. In this way, the state policy is also actively creating ethnic and religious diversity in the country. The second set of questions concerned the ways in which contemporary immigrants have organised themselves religiously and become part of the local religious field, and what this tells us about the current form of globalisation in Turku. The answers to these questions are as follows: the immigrants have largely adapted forms of religious organisation that were already common in the locality prior to their arrival, which has also made them recognisable religious actors among others and part of the local religious field. From the perspective of immigrant religious organisations in Turku, the contemporary form of global interconnectedness can be best described as diffused globalisation, which can indeed create large scale local change, but that is uneven in its scope and implications.

## **6.2 Towards the future**

At the moment, everything implies that the role of immigration and religious changes related to it will become more important in the future, in Turku and in Finland. The case appears to be more or less the same as that in other advanced industrial societies. The main reason for this is the large scale demographic changes in these societies, where the populations are becoming older and a new work force is, and will be, needed. International migration has been pointed out as one major means of solving this problem (Forsander and Trux, 2002). In a European perspective, the mass migrations of the post-war era, both between European countries and to the continent from the surrounding regions, not to mention the increasingly global refugee flows, combined with the forthcoming demographic changes, have already changed, and will further change, the European religious field on a large scale. Until now, the immigrant religious activity has taken place on the margins of European societies and only

occasionally, but increasingly, come to the fore. The critical issues have often been related to Islam, which is the largest historically alien religion in present-day Europe, but, as shown in this study, in the shadow of a growing interest in Islam a number of equally large developments are taking place, although in less noticeable forms. Finland and Turku have entered this changing field fairly recently, but we are already noticing similar developments taking place, including a growth in public interest in immigrants' religious activities. We could be in the wake of a 'new religious Europe' (cf. Eck, 2001), but only time will tell whether that is the case and how it will look in Turku and Finland.

Recent developments in world politics, furthermore, have shown that religion is still a vital force for structuring social relations on both the large and small scales and it has the power to stimulate political mobilisation (Beyer, 1994; Haynes, 1998). It should therefore be of major interest for social scientists and others working with contemporary social change to study the particular impact of immigrant religions on public life. If the suggestion that religious organisations together with other voluntary organisations are major creators of subaltern counterpublics is valid and can be applied more generally, it raises the question of why the issue has not become more prominent, even though there are admittedly growing signs of interest (e.g., AlSayyad and Castells (eds.), 2002; Rudolph and Piscatori (eds.), 1997). Perhaps modern science has become religiously illiterate, so that it has difficulties in understanding religious messages, especially when uttered in an apparently foreign language (Ammerman, 1997: 359). Whatever the reason for the lack of interest, it should not stop future researchers from seeking paths for a better understanding of the new religious diversity and its social implications. Especially when religious organisations are already paving the way, as seen in the growing interest in the theology of religion and the various interfaith initiatives around the continent (Mortensen, 2001; Vasko, 2003).

From the platform of this study, certain issues requiring further inquiry emerge. First, the organisation processes of immigrant reli-

gions are one of the fields of negotiation, where the surrounding society and immigrants meet. The roles of certain key individuals and local authorities illuminate how religious traditions adapt to new surroundings. A better understanding of the processes taking place and a clearer picture of the inherent power relation between the immigrants and authorities would increase our knowledge of how the society functions in the face of challenges that can be global on their scope. Second, interfaith initiatives seem to have much potential for redrawing religious boundaries. Ecumenical activity and religious dialogue on the local level can contest theological differences and are also important for social cohesion in local society. Third, even though religious organisations are an important field of inquiry, it should also be pointed out that the private religious lives of immigrants are also of interest. Marja Tiilikainen's (2003) recent thesis on the religious lives of Somali women in Finland indicates that major transformations are occurring on that front, too. Ethnographic studies of this hitherto less known territory would also highlight the role and position of the religious organisations, as well as create a better picture of the religious differences between the genders, as the immigrant congregations are often male-dominated. Fourth, a better understanding of the diversity and scope of immigrant religious impact is required for locating further areas of interest. Whereas much of the current research has centred on the new elements of the religious field, much less attention has been given to those changes that occur in traditional religious organisations. My educated guess is that the changes within traditional religious organisation may prove to be of equal importance to those among the seemingly more alien religions.

In my view, much of the debate and research on ethnic minorities and multiculturalism in Finland has been somewhat retrogressive. Following Wahlbeck (2003), it may be said that the critical issues related to religious adaptation are more revealing of Finnish society than of immigrants' religious life. These should not become obstacles, but should lead rather to self-reflection and a growing understanding of the hidden agendas of both parties, so that a better mu-

tual understanding can occur. I do not believe that there is one single answer to these difficult issues, but I do consider that mutual understanding is the best platform from which to proceed in the search for better alternatives. This further underlines the point that integration is a two-way process, where all parties need to change in order to find new strategies for getting along with each other. I will end this study by quoting Diane Eck (2001: 385), who in my view has summarised the issues in a concise way: “The ongoing argument over who ”we” are—as religious people, as a nation, and as a global community—is one in which all of us, ready or not, will participate.”

# 7

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# Appendix: Interview questions

## Questions

1. Community
  - Name, religion
2. Organisation
  - Official organisation, membership in a larger organisation, leadership
3. History
  - When was the community founded? Who were the central persons? A brief history.
4. Places of activity
  - Address, building, foundation, etc.
5. Membership
  - Definition of membership, number, gender structure, other participants beside members, joining, development of membership

6. Immigrants
  - Numbers, nationality, gender, the position of immigrants in the community, mission among immigrants
7. Activities
  - Ritual life, other activities, publishing activity, finances, etc.
8. Connections
  - Turku, Finland, abroad, visitors, communication, etc.
9. Relationship to society
  - Turku, Finland
10. Future plans

## IMMIGRANT RELIGIONS IN LOCAL SOCIETY

International migration is a major agent of religious change in the contemporary, globalising world. Immigrant religious communities have received substantial scholarly attention during the last years in the western countries, where they form a major current in transforming the traditional religious landscapes. Since the 1980s, international migration has been increasingly directed at areas that have not historically been known as immigrant societies, including Finland. The present study explores the consequences of increasing international migration on the religious field in the city of Turku, Finland's second largest immigrant centre. The study provides a picture of the multifaceted processes of local adaptation, transnationalism and religious creativity in the current world, as religious geographies are redrawn.

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