Vernacular Religion in Diaspora: a Case Study of the Macedono-Bulgarian Group in Toronto

By

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Abstract

This study explores how the Macedono-Bulgarian and Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox churches in Toronto have attuned themselves to the immigrant community—specifically to post-1990 immigrants who, while unchurched and predominantly secular, have revived diaspora churches. This paradox raises questions about the ways that religious institutions operate in diaspora, distinct from their operations in the country of origin.

This study proposes and develops the concept “institutional vernacularization” as an analytical category that facilitates assessment of how a religious institution relates to communal factors. I propose this as an alternative to secularization, which inadequately captures the diaspora dynamics. While continuing to adhere to their creeds and confessional symbols, diaspora churches shifted focus to communal agency and produced new collective and “popular” values. The community is not only a passive recipient of the spiritual gifts but is also a partner, who suggests new forms of interaction. In this sense, the diaspora church is engaged in vernacular discourse. The notion of institutional vernacularization is tested against the empirical results of field work in four Greater Toronto Area churches. It shows three kinds of changes: the governance of the church is altered; physical space is transformed with architectural and decorative innovations; and space-utilization is changed. While the churches claim to maintain the canons, their practices are at variance with those of the homeland.
First, church governance in diaspora has radically transformed conceptions of property, leadership, and membership, which became dominated by the community. Second, architecture and decoration reflect significant changes. Traditionally a church building is an imaginary that delivers the faithful to the divine threshold. In diaspora it recreates a metaphoric home which delivers attendees to the homeland’s history, culture, and identity. Third, the data on events demonstrate significant changes in the function of space, which comprises a new social realm that promotes identity and plays a diaspora-structuring role. For post-1990 immigrants, who lacked meaningful contact with the traditions and religion of the homeland, the church provides a context for the ‘invention’ or ‘customization’ of these traditions within the landscape of multicultural Toronto. This is ‘vernacularization’—the attunement of church practices to diasporic realities.
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Some of the data from chapter 3 were published as “Icons and immigrant context,” Fieldwork of Religion, 2007 (2). Portions of chapters 3 and 4 are significant revisions of a chapter, “The Narration of Space: Diaspora Church as a Comfort Zone in the Resettlement Process for Post-Communist Bulgarians in Toronto,” in The Changing World Religion Map (2015). Data from my research have been regularly presented through the years at learned societies.
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Introduction

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 opened a flood-gate for Eastern European emigration. Millions have relocated, mainly to North America, Australia and Western Europe. As the emigration has continued, diaspora communities have become more delineated, socially structured and pronounced. The older and larger ones, such as the Jewish, Russian, Ukrainians, Italians and Greeks, have founded, in addition to their religious institutions, several meeting places as cultural centers, clubs, schools, and ethnic neighbourhood. Relatively newer and smaller immigrant groups, as most central and South European Slavic groups tend to have only one mediating space—their churches. Such is the case of the Macedono-Bulgarian diaspora in Toronto. Comprising the post-communist wave of immigrants coming from a social experiment where religion was excluded, in their new homeland this group approaches the church building as a central community space and the context for identity formation. The new church role among the community raises questions with respect to the transformation of the religious institution – whether it is becoming vernacularized by reconfiguring traditional meanings and functions and incorporating new relations.

Immigration and resettlement represents a private upheaval and a disruption of one’s personal history, since tradition and identity are intrinsically linked with location. The emotional and geographical boundaries of home, customs and embedded values are upset and identity is fragmented. Diasporic life is a creative process of rebuilding new personal and social space, forming new meanings to reharmonize the fragments. Communal space, with its relativity and reflectivity, offers layered connectedness for an individual and a group in their adaptive journey. A quintessential example illustrating this reflectivity is the celebration of
Budni Vecher (Christmas Eve) on December 24. This celebration is popular in Bulgaria as an immediate family gathering which is rooted in the folklore and pre-Christian beliefs and occurs outside of the church. But in Toronto it now appears also in the church setting.¹

One evening I attended Budni Vecher and witnessed how the church hall was transformed into a symbolic home by domestic ritual which in Bulgaria had never been associated with the church or the clergy and was restricted to one’s family only. Familiarity, hominess, and surprise comingle to create perplexity and became the impetus for this study. I observed the celebration in St. George Macedono-Bulgarian church in Toronto. It started with a short prayer performed by the priests of St. Cyril and Methody, St. George, and Holy Trinity churches standing in front of the stage, and solemn singing of the hymn Mnogaia Leta followed by the Bulgarian national anthem.² A child in a traditional costume sang the folksong “Tell me little White Cloud,” called the Immigrants’ Hymn on a stage adorned with both Canadian and Bulgarian flags.³ The audience of around 150 people, dressed up, stood up next to their tables and sang along with the songs, faces moved, and eyes glistening. The tables were covered with white cloths, decorated festively, and the air was permeated with the aroma of dishes and delicacies served usually at one’s grandparents’ and parents’ home

¹ In Bulgarian ‘Budni’ is an old word meaning future; ‘vecher’ means evening.

² The hymn Mnogaia Leta (Многая лета, or For many years) is a wish for a long and prosperous life. It is the most popular church hymn which has gained popularity outside the religious service and is used as well for solemn secular celebrations like weddings, birthdays, New Year, or group gatherings. Traditionally, on New Year Eve, at 12 o’clock, the national anthem and Mnogaia Leta are performed on the TV, Radio, and squares. The version popular in Bulgaria is one ascribed to D. Bortianski (1751-1825) and performed by the opera singer Boris Hristov. Initially wishing long and prosperous life has been part of the honouring ceremony for Byzantium emperors, as shown by De ceremoniis aulae Byzantinae by Constantine VII, 10th century. Later the wish is included in the liturgy. See Ioann, 1895.

³ The song is a conversation between an immigrant and a cloud, expressing deep nostalgia for home: “Tell me little cloud, where have you been what have you seen? Didn’t you see my father’s yard and didn’t you hear my mother to speak….Tell them little cloud, there is little time left until I will return, will return, my mother to hug....”
on this evening, in kind and number. Each table had ritual round bread containing a coin. After the priests ritually broke the bread, people did the same and shared the bread, each looking for the lucky coin in their pieces. Wishes for wealth were exchanged. This celebration attracted diaspora people from different generations, waves of immigrants, Canadian-born, single, and families. I overheard one lady remarking “I prefer coming here with the kids for Budni Vecher, it feels homier.” I wondered how it was possible a church hall to be ‘homier’ than their actual home.

In fact, the celebration of Budni Vecher (Christmas Eve) is a Christianized pagan series of rituals associated with the cult of the Sun (Georgieva, 1993:19-24). The days of the Christmas celebration keep its ancient name Koleda popular in Bulgaria, Macedonia, Poland, parts of Russia, and Serbia. In Bulgaria the festival is hardly church-related. Rather, it is oriented to the family members and their wealth, and the ancestors’ spirits. One is supposed to remain at home on this day. However, in Toronto this intimate dinner was converted into a community event, enriched with national elements, and performed in a church space. In a family-like fashion a sense of togetherness linked people; all familiar memory stimuli—visual, aural, olfactory and social—were present to evoked strong emotional response. In

4 The cult of Sun is one of the main cults on Bulgarian lands since the Stone Age (Georgieva 1993:21) and a part of Thracian religious doctrine. The sun has also been honoured as divine by the Slavs and proto-Bulgarians and the cult does not disappear with the Christianity and sun symbols persist. According to Georgieva the name Koleda used for Christmas and all days of the celebrations associated with it comes from the old Slavonic name for December—koloej (коложее) (1993:24). However the semantic of Koleda is not clear and often is connected with the Roman celebration Saturnalia. About the roots of Koleda in the Thracian cult of Sun see Katzarova and Djenev, 1976:38-39 and Foll and Marazov, 1977:39.

The celebrative cycle starts on 20 December (Ignajden) and finishes after New Year on 6 January. The days from Christmas on are called “dirty” because of the unclear spirits who come and walk around. Important elements of the Christmas Eve are: a ritual log for the hearth that has to be kept burning during the whole night, a table with seven or nine dishes, ritual round unleavened bread, and the ritual of Koleduvane that starts after midnight. A group of lads gather and visit every house. They sing songs that keep away the evil spirits, wish abundance and wellness for the house, and call for an awakening to meet the deity (Marinov, 1994:431, 391-453). After dinner the leftovers stay on the table for the spirits who would come during the night.
repeating the most domestic ritual, the church space in diaspora created a symbolic home, a place to reach cherished memories, conjoining past and present. Moreover, the event I observed is not an isolated one; most of the gatherings performed in the church space, either religious or social, convey multivalent connectedness with the diaspora community.

The celebration of Budni Vecher suggests a stark contrast in purpose between the homeland Church and diaspora. Eastern Orthodox Church in Bulgaria, in its all dimensions—organization (government), physical space (architecture and decoration), and space utilization—are intended to inculcate piety and veneration and represent a spiritual world meaningful solely to the pious. The Church is not involved in any of the other activities that constitute the lived reality of Bulgarians. Following twelve centuries of tradition, it marks off the sacred by focusing on the spiritual aspect of the human life. Thus, sacred and secular are held in binary opposition. In diaspora, however, the celebration of Budni Vecher represents an example of blending worlds to form a comfort zone. The post-communist wave of immigrants brings to the church premises examined in this study a mass of people who were previously unchurched. A senior clergyman commented that “the new immigrants saved the churches.” This revival promoted by mostly secular members, along with the observation on how the community spirit replaces the family one on Budni Vecher, inevitably raises questions regarding the coherence of relationship between the religious institution with its tradition and the community.

This study, vis-à-vis the perplexity, focuses on the nature of diaspora religious institution, its coherence with new settlement realities, and service to ethnic community. My original working hypothesis had been that the church as a religious institution had been secularized, in comparison to that in the homeland where the Church is a sacred polarity functioning as
conduit only for the divine. However, in the process of my research some modifications had to be made. Now the study argues that the diaspora religious institution experiences vernacularization as opposed to secularization. The churches and the community interact to re-create expression coherent with the life flow, a confluence of the sacred and secular cultural realms. The religious institution transforms its role to serve the community and function primarily as mechanisms for social–cultural adaptation and ethnic preservation. In that sense institutional vernacularization is occurring. The churches may appear to remain the same from a dogmatic point of view, while their activities are evidently increasingly secularized. Used as an analytical category, institutional vernacularization aims to detect and recognize the extent of their capacity to attune and respond to the needs of the diaspora community, or to take on a syntonic approach.\textsuperscript{5} The basis of the argument is that religious institution for the fast-growing immigrant community is a vehicle for identity formation and a site of historical memory connected with identity formation in a multicultural setting. The study observes the diasporic religious institution through the lens of vernacularized religion against a background of eastern orthodox theology, tradition, secularization, and diaspora.

**Institutional vernacularization: on the verge of the secularization**

In a diaspora setting, the preservation of ethnic culture often is structured around a core group or institution. As Safran puts it “in order to maintain its diasporic identity, an ethnic or religious community must have an elite, that is committed to the maintenance of a diasporic

\textsuperscript{5} The term ‘syntonic’ is used in the areas of: 1) electricity, where it relates to two oscillating circuits having the same resonant frequency; and 2) psychology, where the term is used to characterize a high degree of emotional responsiveness to the environment. From the Greek *syntonos*, highly attuned, and *synteinein*, to draw tight. Here the term is used in its meaning of a strong capacity to attune oneself to the environment and to respond to it.
culture and ideology” (2004:18). Larger communities such as Jewish, Greek, Italian, Spanish, Chinese, or Indian have multiple meeting places within which are found elite groups. But small communities gather mainly around their religious institution. This is so for the Macedono-Bulgarian diaspora, where the leading role seems to be taken by the institution of the church as a location around which native cultural activities and contacts form, and in which an elite group is constructed. This situation differs drastically from that in the homeland church, which besides meeting spiritual needs has virtually no impact on the society at large. In Bulgaria the levels of religious practice and attendance are low, the country being one of the most secularized in the world. Churches embody sacred symbols that are significant for a very small fraction of the people. Yet churches themselves are symbols embedded into the historic memory as the only institution that ensured national and ethnic survival during the centuries of Ottoman rule.

Though the diaspora churches are bound by tradition to retain their sacred symbols, the substantial presence of secular immigrants from the last wave has introduced a new motivation for the religious institution. That motivation blurs the sharp division between sacred and secular functions. On the one hand, immigrants approach the church hall as

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6 As shown by the results of Word Value Survey 1981-2001, Norris and Inglehart, 2004:60-68. Some of the post-communist countries—Russia, Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Hungary, Montenegro, Slovakia, and Slovenia—show levels of religious practice and commitment to the church as low as most of Western Europe (2004: 60, 113, 121). However, Poland (Catholic), Croatia (Catholic), Romania (Orthodox) and Bosnia-Hercegovina (predominantly Muslim) tend to be significantly more religious (2004:120).

7 The mix of symbolic religious and ethnic messages is represented to some extent by an example of a “vernacularized” Easter celebration which occurs at midnight on Easter Saturday. From around 10 p.m. on Saturday the streets are busy with people who are going to a church, but only small fraction enter the church: it is already crowded inside, since the pious come early and the liturgy lasts until 3 o’clock in the morning. People come to the church yard, wait until the bells start ringing at midnight, light a candle, and crack coloured eggs. They gather (especially the young ones) with a group of friends; sometimes they bring a bottle to share, or go afterwards to a pub—the cafes and restaurants are open till the small hours that night. At that time of the year, spring nights are warm and saturated with smell of blooming trees and flowers and people enjoy the idea of having a reason for a midnight stroll.
simply a community gathering venue; but on the other, churches see the potential created by this situation. As a result institution, symbols, and community (both congregation and non-religious) are employed in a new dynamic. The community is comprised of two groups defined in terms of their relation to the church: a) second and third generation immigrants who preserve its ethnic ties through religion, and b) the most recent wave of immigrants who are becoming more self-conscious of their ethnicity markers. Churches have been proactive with respect to these markers by accommodating a variety of activities to evoke these identity symbols, and to further elaborate them. And in this accommodation, the churches themselves undergo a transformation. The same process is apparent for individuals of the third wave: while discovering new sides of their ethnicity they are ineluctably introduced to the sacred symbols.

Seen from a traditional homeland perspective, the diaspora church leaves an impression of being secularized. As a process, secularization involves a systematic erosion of religious practices, values and beliefs. It occurs most clearly among the social sectors in industrial and post-industrial nations. Steve Bruce, a more recent exponent, believes that secularization involves a decline, not only “in the social standing of religious roles and institutions,” but also in the individual engagement of religious practices and beliefs with respect to personal conduct and expression of life (2002: 3-18). Bruce includes in his discussion the supply-side and demand-side perspectives on secularization as ways to correct some errors in the

traditional secularization thesis. Norris and Inglehart offer an update of the thesis based on existential security: the absence of rudimentary human security, they argue, raises both the levels of religiosity and the demographic trends (2004). However, opponents of the secularization thesis argue that world today is “as furiously religious as it ever was, and some places more so than ever” (Berger 1999:2). Berger recants his earlier view on secularization and along with Stark and Finke suggests that, based mainly on the higher religious rates in US, the secularization thesis was a mistake (2000:79). The supply-side theory, according to Stark and Fink, states that religious pluralism creates religious vigour (2000:237-238). Yet, it is obvious that the location of the religious pluralism also plays a role. Western and Eastern Europe with its post-communist nations show lower, not higher levels of religiosity (Norris and Inglehart, 2004:111-132). The World Value Survey conducted between 1981 and 2001 illustrates that in terms of religious participation and beliefs Bulgaria is grouped with the least religious countries in the world with a level of religious participation at 8 percent, similar to that of Belgium, Netherlands, the UK, Denmark, Vietnam, France, and Russia (2004:60-68; Kanev, 2002:75-95).

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9 There are the two most influential strands connected to secularization debate. One is the demand-side, which suggests that with the erosion of religious habits, public spiritual needs are diminishing. The second, supply-side, opposes the first one and offers an alternative. Its religious market theory claims that religious freedom and vigorous competition among religious leaders and denominations play a strategic role in creating an increased need for religion based on the idea ‘if you build a church, people will come.’ Principal proponents of this idea are Finke and Stark (1992, 2000) among others. However, religious freedom in Eastern Europe does not appear to confirm the viability of the supply-side theory (Bruce, 2000:32-46).

10 The authors argue that advanced industrial societies that offer safer, comfortable and predictable conditions are moving toward more secular orientation. When human security is absent, religiosity rates increase along with birth rates, and “due to demographic trends in poorer societies, the world as a whole now has more people with traditional religious views.” Owing to low birth rates in secular countries and high fertility rates in poorer societies, the religious population is growing (2004:24-25). The book demonstrates with data the contradiction between secular trends and the growing population with traditional religious views. As a result, while secularization may be a trend, the role of religion is increasing worldwide.
Yet, during the process of gathering data it became clear that in Toronto the religious institution plays a major role. Nevertheless this role seems to be connected rather with its social functions than with increased levels of religiosity; the secularization model does not adequately capture all the dynamics that shape relations between the churches and the diaspora community. The perplexity of this relationship is rooted in the inherited characteristics of the third wave of immigrants: it is a wave that brings to Canada underdeveloped national pride and ethnic self-esteem and is detached from its original culture. After the fall of the Wall, the population emerged from conditions that considered universal communist values superior to ethnic and national ones. In addition, as a result of internal personal resistance, Western culture and standards were idealized. Three generations grew up disconnected to various extents from their native traditions and heritage. These traditions were regarded as antiquated and behind the times, and were replaced by new ideological values, regarded as progressive. Shifting values after the collapse of the Wall left people with identity confusion in the homeland. Joining the European Union was yet another side of the identity puzzle.

The countries of the former Yugoslavia and the USSR have undergone an even more problematic transition as the essence of their culture and language were dominated respectively by the Serbian and Russian cultures and languages. This is especially true of the Croatians (Winland, 2002:702). The fact that most of the Balkan and south-east European countries, including Bulgaria, were not politically independent until the beginning of the 20th century also needs to be taken into account. Chapter one provides a brief summary of the history of the region, focusing on Bulgaria. In short, most of the Balkans was under Ottoman rule until the beginning of the 20th century and the demographic, cultural, and economic
development of these countries had been retained. The Balkan Wars, WWI, and WWII, each of which resulted in territorial redistributions, and the establishment of communist regimes in the mid-20th century, further challenged the identity of the Balkan and South European nations.

How do immigrants coming from these countries adjust to a multicultural environment? Curiously, the timing of the Canadian Multiculturalism Act of 1988 almost coincides with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. The two events intertwine in a peculiar way. The Act promotes the freedom to “preserve, enhance and share their cultural heritage” and language, and “encourage[s] the preservation, enhancement, sharing and evolving expression of the multicultural heritage” (3-a and 5.1-e). While the Act confirms respect for diversity, to some extent it creates a moment of expectation for original cultural expression. However, for the post-communist wave and the groups whose ethnicity, culture and language has been buried or replaced by political and ideological substitutes, it is not a straightforward step. For some it is easier and perhaps preferable to disappear into the mainstream culture than to promote their own heritage. Others are at a stage of developing and articulating their ethnic characteristics.\(^{11}\) It is also problematic to rely on religion to bolster ethnicity for most of the post-communist bloc countries, which have had only a very distant acquaintance and troubled relationship with the grammar and life of religion.\(^{12}\) To express and assert cultural belonging in a diaspora, where large groups have already established a robust presence, may

\(^{11}\) See Winland on “(re)creating of distinctively Croatian identity” and the process of ‘recovery’ of the historic Croatian state, 2002:693-718.

\(^{12}\) Hannah Arendt offers a profound dissection of the Stalinist regime and Nazism in her book *The Origins of Totalitarianism* which helps to understand the psychology of the people who were immersed in these political conditions (2004). It is important to mention that the political situation has been incomparably milder for the Balkan and Central European countries than for the USSR/Russia.
not be an immediate and effortless process. It is at this point that the religious institution of the diaspora group enters to bridge the gap.

Canadian society offers an environment in which the role of religion and religious belonging is relatively well pronounced. The World Value Survey shows Canada, together with the US, among the group of countries with the highest level of religious beliefs, even though Canadian religious participation is only moderate (Norris & Inglehart, 2004: 60, 68). Thus the group of Bulgarian immigrants studied here is set in a multicultural society with intrinsic (expectation of) religious values. The impact of this environment in shaping personal identity is captured in a comment of one interviewee: “I have never set foot in a church—here or in Bulgaria, I am an atheist. But in Canada I am Eastern Orthodox, because everybody is something and asks me what I am. So my answer is Eastern Orthodox.”13 This comment suggests that the demand for identity attracts religious affiliation (if only as a cultural reminiscence) and that both intertwine in the diaspora. This intertwining may be just notional and not expressed in action, yet, as a result, new expectations and responsibilities are imposed on the only communal institution available to this group.

Institutional vernacularization is a new theoretical frame proposed by this study to capture the relational dynamics of religious institutions and the community. ‘Community’ here is used in its broadest meaning as diaspora membership, and includes the congregational membership as a part. In short, institutional vernacularization refers to motivation; to the way that a traditional religious institution communicates, responds, reflects, and conforms to the communal agent and/or new cultural context without changing its dogmatic basis. The

13 On one hand this statement is reminiscent of social mimicry in the sense used by Bhabha as “desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as subject of difference that is almost the same but not quite” (1994:86). On the other hand the contradiction may be a lead to ethnic discoveries brewed through the diaspora experience.
vernacular approach examines the “outer” or social layers of relational existence, reflects the communal factor as an authority, legitimizes this factor and acts in accord with it. It focuses on social exposure and on how the church acts and thinks at an institutional, rather than a doctrinal or a liturgical level. Diasporic existence is a radical leap into experimentation with one’s life-values, and the religious institution as a participant in this experiment creates a meaningful interpretation of the tradition. The data on the organization, architectural space, and functions of the religious institution and its space promote the idea of the vernacularization of the church that is open and respectful to “life as it is” and the community as it is. A new level of community commitment affects the architectural blueprint of the buildings, the choice of decorations and messages conveyed by architecture. Vernacularization changes the hierarchical authority and the interplay between the church and its members, a connectedness that resides in the zone of everyday negotiations and creates vernacular expressions coherent with the diaspora life flow. The implementation of the notion of institutional vernacularization allows an approach to the data using theoretical knowledge and practical awareness. Chapters two and four present a detailed development of the vernacular idea.

The expression “vernacular religion,” coined by Primiano, overcomes the dichotomy between the official and the unofficial, between institutionalized and folkloric religion, and thereby brings personal experience into prominence. In the last quarter of the 20th century a subtle shift appears in the study of religion, from concentration on systematic doctrine to examination of individual meanings, hermeneutics, and form. It was marked by D. Yoder who argues for a dynamic relation between institutionalized Christianity and folklore instead of opposition (1974:14). Primiano, as his follower, highlights the need to study religion as “it
is lived: as human beings encounter, understand, interpret, and practice it” (1995:44). Vernacular religion does justice to the ‘official’ aspect of Christianity with its well-developed dogmatic side, but also embraces personal and lived experience as part of the dynamic process; accordingly religion is more than the rituals and perspectives found within religious institutions. It also includes expressions outside of the institution and is “a way of communicating, thinking, behaving within, and conforming to, particular cultural circumstances” (1995:42). Bowman suggests that a realistic view of religion should include three components: official expressions, folklore, and individual religion (2004a). In general, vernacular religion is a sensitive approach to the individual interpretation, continuously adaptive to circumstances and depending on local experiences and thus is charged with creativity (Primiano, 2012). The vernacular line of thinking is a substantial step towards developing an understanding of the modern blend of religiosity and secularity. However, it is focused only on the individual and underestimates the fact that the official religious institution, while appearing less dynamic and anchored in its creedal foundation, is also a subject of creativity, especially in a diaspora setting. The proposed term of institutional vernacularization employs the idea of vernacular religion and allows for a new informational space to emerge within which one is able to understand the vitality of the institution in diaspora.

In this study I will test the notion of institutional vernacularization against the results of field work in four Toronto and Greater Toronto Area churches: three Eastern Orthodox Macedono-Bulgarian and one Eastern Orthodox Bulgarian. In these particular cases vernacularization appears as a way to encompass both traditional impulses and secularizing trends; it takes cognizance of the importance of lay presence and the community-orientation
of these diaspora churches, but it also recognizes the importance of the church as an institution. In general, the secularization thesis is a tendency and process, not a destination and law (Bruce, 2002; Norris and Inglehart, 2004:5). The third wave of immigrants is not self-consciously and deliberately looking for religion but connects with the institution as a vehicle of ethnic identity.\(^{14}\) Religion as an awareness of supernatural power is not a dominant idea for the diaspora community; even the church itself as an institution does not promote supernatural awareness exclusively. However secularization, as a loss of connection with the supernatural world and religious practices, has not taken place. Institutional vernacularization signals that the theological frame and purpose are not the primary concerns in diaspora, but nevertheless are not ignored either. The religious institution remains relevant in the new homeland though it appears not only as a supplier of spiritual goods but also represents the historical legacy and translates cultural messages.

**The diaspora group: waves of immigrants and their characteristics**

The Macedono-Bulgarian diaspora is one of the 20\(^{th}\) century resettlement groups and consists of three waves of immigration that are very distinct in their connections to the religious institution. According to 2011 Canadian Census data, there are 30,485 Bulgarians in the country; unofficially the number is probably about 45,000.\(^ {15}\) However not included in this number is additional faction of heirs of the first wave immigrants who are born in Canada, are Canadians by census but belong to and attend the ethnic diaspora churches. A conservative

\(^{14}\) This situation might remind one to some extent of the Implicit Religion thesis developed by E. Bailey (1998). However Bailey looks at clearly secular situations that might as well be interpreted as religious. An example is how a line bar could remind one of an altar.

\(^{15}\) Most likely this number is even higher as since 1990 more than 2 500 000 have emigrated from Bulgaria.
estimate of this faction is around 30,000. Thus the number ethnically connected to this diaspora most probably stands between 70-80,000. The three waves are a result of major political upheavals and possess different features. The first wave, occurring at the beginning of the 20th century, can be classified as a victim diaspora group, to use Cohen’s classification (1997: x). It is marked by traumatic events associated with the Ilinden-Preobrajenie Uprising (1903) against the Ottomans, the Balkan Wars (1912-1913) and World War I, the latter two followed by territorial redistributions. Many of those who survived were forced to leave their homes. This first wave exhibits all the features of the classic type of diaspora formulated by Safran (1991:83-84) and Cohen (1997:26): a traumatic dispersal, memory of the homeland that is mythologized and idealized, devotion towards a restoration of their homeland, and establishing a life in a closed ethnic enclave in proximity to the church. With a shared rural background, often from the same villages, the immigrants become consolidated into a strong and enduring group that established three churches and whose heirs are still the pillar of the diaspora. The first wave lived a traditional religious life and brought to Canada their intrinsic connection to the church and faith as part of their family, community, and everyday life.

The second wave, smaller in number, is comprised of political refugees who fled Bulgaria in 1944-1950 when the communist regime assumed power. A mix of rural and urban people, often non-religious, they were treated by the Bulgarian government as non-returnees (and

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16 The last decades of the Ottoman Empire were marked not only by the 1915 Armenian Genocide. Numerous Thracian and Macedonian Bulgarians lost their lives and homes. Although the Treaty of Constantinople was signed on 6 September 1913, the ethnic Bulgarians were persecuted. According to L. Miletich (2003 [1918]) there were over 200,000 Bulgarians in Eastern Thrace who were brutally persecuted; those who escaped moved over the borders into Bulgaria or emigrated to Europe and North America. On the genocide events see Mojzes, 2011; Georgiev and Trifonov, 1995.
traitors) with no or limited opportunity to contact their family back home.\textsuperscript{17} The second wave applied caution when connecting with the church and community. The church institution in Toronto was viewed by them with distrust; it was envisioned as a place that might be monitored by the Bulgarian Secret Services and the priests were suspected to be spies. This perception was confirmed to some extent with the public apology by the present Metropolitan of the North American and Australian Macedono-Bulgarian diaspora.\textsuperscript{18} Consequently, the second wave found itself in a state of double disconnectedness—from the homeland and to a significant extent from the new homeland community—and for decades were more strongly inclined to blend with the Canadian culture rather than to preserve ethnic characteristic. People of this group unreservedly accept Canada as their only home or often refer to it as a second homeland. In this regard the immigrants from the mid-20\textsuperscript{th} century show fewer similarities with the first wave and more with the last wave.

The third wave, which commenced with Perestroika, eludes clear classification as a diaspora group in terms of type and features. For an alteration has occurred, as Cohen expresses it: “the character of international migration has been radically altered as a consequence of the breakup of the familiar international balance of power” (1997:162). Post-1990 immigrants

\begin{footnote}
\textsuperscript{17} The political emigrants were considered to be traitors and were not allowed to return to Bulgaria; some of the émigrés had been given a death sentence. Their correspondence was monitored and often did not reach their families; their family members were not allowed to travel abroad, according to my interviewees. Many had no opportunity to see their parents for decades.
\end{footnote}

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\textsuperscript{18} An open letter from the present North American metropolitan Iosif titled “Прощавай Български Народе” (“Forgive me Bulgarian people”) asks forgiveness for being a part of the Secret Services (http://www.pravoslavie.bg, accessed on 9 May, 2014). In fact, most of the high level clerics were forced to sign document that will assist the government; not all of them actually submitted any information, which seems to be the case with the diaspora Metropolitan Iosif. He reported practically nobody to the authorities. Another article with the shocking title “От 15 митрополити 11 сътрудници на държавна сигурност” (Out of 15 metropolitans 11 have been collaborators of the state security services, http://e-vestnik.bg/13665, accessed on 14 March, 2014). For more comments on the high clerics’ past in Bulgaria see also an interview with Prof. K. Ianakiev, “Митрополити с дебели досиета не стават за патриарх” (“Metropolitans with thick dossiers are not fit to be patriarchs,” (http://www.faktor.bg/mnenia, accessed on 14 March, 2014)).
\end{footnote}
hardly fit into the nine classic features that Cohen outlines. Of all these characteristics the third wave clearly expresses one: they enjoy the possibilities of an “enriching life in a tolerant host country” (Cohen, 1997:26,180-187; Tolöyan 2010). The third wave comprises mainly urban professionals and landed immigrants, often relocating with family. Most of these are non-religious, socially and financially mobile before coming to Canada, with the advantage of high social capital. Yet, they feel unfulfilled, and thus are on a quest for self-realization: intellectual, emotional, professional, or personal—reasons that deeply motivate voluntarily emigration. As L. Tsvetkov summarises the character of the group, it is as a generation that has not had the chance to ‘happen.’ Their desire to “self-happen” and their drive for fulfillment might be what Clifford has in mind by his use of the expression a “poetics (of) displacement” (1988:163). Furthermore, having been participants in a major social experiment, this generation became disillusioned with the political chaos and corruption that followed. They were raised in appreciation of western culture and values that make one inclined to become a cosmopolitan citizen. Joining the European Union has broadened their native state-territorial identity. According to Radhakrishnan, the diaspora is a

19 The nine common features according to Cohen are: “1) dispersal from the original homeland, often traumatically to two or more foreign countries; 2) …expansion…in search of work,… trade, or to further colonial ambitions; 3) a collective memory and myth about the homeland…; 4) an idealization of the …ancestral home and a collective commitment to its maintenance, restoration, safety, prosperity, even to its creation; 5) the development of a return movement…6) a strong ethnic group consciousness sustained over a long time and based on sense of distinctiveness, a common history and belief in common fate; 7) a troubled relationship with host society, suggesting a lack of acceptance…8) a sense of empathy and solidarity with co-ethnic members in other countries; and 9) the possibility of a distinctive creative, enriching life in host countries with tolerance for pluralism” (1997:26, after Safran 1991).

20 Most are professional who were well positioned before their emigration and possessed their own homes. According statistics Bulgaria and Romania are at the first places in EU in home ownership (with no outstanding mortgage or loan), even though their overall economic status is low. See “Housing statistics” at http://ec.europa.eu, accessed on 28 April, 2014. This is a result of generational accumulation.

21 As cited in Mastagar, 2001:40. Tsvetkov (1935-) is a professor in Russian literature and a dissident who had been imprisoned for his democratic ideas. In personal conversations with him he shared that his generation, “with all its flaws and lack of individuality, have taken its own place [in history and in life]. While your generation—from the very onset—is confused and wandering about and has never happened.”
“space of the hyphen that tries to coordinate, within an evolving relationship, the identity politics of one’s place of origin with that of one’s present home”(1996:xiii). Conversely, the third wave immigrants show very little inclination to hold a hyphenated identity; they are emotionally attached to the new homeland, refer to themselves as Canadians, and share their ethnic background only when asked.

Settling in Toronto is a further step into their global belonging. More suitable to this group would be the loose criteria of diaspora summed up by Brubaker: dispersion, homeland orientation, and boundary-maintenance (2005:8-9). Again, aside from dispersion, the latter two criteria, are conditional (and problematic) when applied to the third wave. Their orientation to the homeland is limited to a connection with relatives; the homeland does not represent an ideal home and a “source of value, identity and loyalty” (2005:5). Some travel to visit parents or send money, which exhausts the extent of their connection. Ongoing disapproval of the state governments and their corruption deepens the alienation of the immigrants from their first homeland, often referred as politically hopeless. “The homeland is not home. It is place to care about…” as Tolöyan comments on the new diaspora transnationalism (2010:39). Their home now is diaspora. As a result, this group is less likely to maintain community boundaries that involve “the preservation of distinctive identity vis-à-vis a host society,” a feature that is often considered to be a vital characteristic of diaspora (Brubarker, 2005:6). “Diasporic multilocality” that privileges the homeland is unlikely to be

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22 The global city is characterized mainly by a concentration of economic power represented by the stock exchange, insurance houses, and banks; they are international, cosmopolitan, with a high density of professionals, and a labour market oriented to service and information employment. Toronto and Montreal are the only Canadian cities in the list of the world global cities (Cohen, 1997:165-168).

23 The homeland orientation as a central characteristic of the diaspora group is contested by Clifford (1994:305-306). The studied group confirms that their connections with the new homeland tend to dominate that with their place of origin.
embraced by the post-1990 immigrants (Tolölyan, 2010:38). Data shows that it is the church that becomes the initiator of a boundary keeping.

Consequently, the religious institution responds to a group that does not possess the natural integrating force produced by traumatic dispersal, a mythologised homeland, a desire for return, or strong ethnic consciousness. In addition, religion as an ethnic factor has a weak influence as they are not taught to go to church and be religious. This situation requires new responses by the religious institution. While the priests consider that the last wave is saving the churches, the contrary observation, that the churches are saving the immigrants’ community, is equally true. The church offers space where people are in touch with the native language, music, dance, history, folklore, and religion. Thus, the institution creates an environment that promotes an appreciation of, and learning about, and even a discovery of the ethnic culture, as in the case of presentations of the pre-Christian ritual of Kukeri.\(^{24}\) The church assumes various roles: it preserves the ethnic marks for the second and third generation of the diaspora, but offers education and leads towards of the roots for the recent immigrants. The church acts as a diaspora consolidator.

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\(^{24}\) The rituals have Thracian roots and persisted through both Slavic and proto-Bulgarian paganism in the first millennium CE and Christendom. By honouring evil spirits, the custom thereby tames their power and provides protection to their potential victims; it also makes for a good harvest (Marinov, 1994: 506-514). Today, Kukeri can be encountered as a part of festivals in villages and small towns in Bulgaria, though its distinctive costumes adorned with a collection of bells enjoy widespread popularity and have become emblematic of Bulgarian folklore along with nestinari (walking on fire) rituals.
Diaspora literature

Diaspora and the context of religion

An increasing interest in the interplay of religion and diaspora began around 1990 (McLoughlin, 2013:125-126; Johnson, 2012:95-114). Perhaps this interest arose in order to compensate for the marginalized social relevance of religion due to the dominating idea of secularization in the second half of the 20th century. Secularization is present, undeniably. Yet, the European secular model does not fit North America and some parts of the world remain increasingly religious (Norris and Inglehart, 2004). That fact, along with the rise of religious terrorism, brings new global significance into the study of religion and displaced groups. While the profile of contemporary Eastern Orthodoxy is that of a tradition that is less socially involved, more introverted, and to some extent contemplative and ‘poetic,’ in the diaspora context this strand of Christianity assumes significant social power by working on simultaneous levels to facilitate community formation. In this regard Johnson’s statement that diasporas do not exist as bio-forms but are “activated” through the agency of religion might be validated (2012:96). However, for the group under discussion, religion by itself is hardly enough to be an activator.

Religion and religious organizations are transmitters of homeland traditions and assist in maintaining ethnicity. While confirming this suggestion, my thesis focuses on the religious institution that creates an innovative social space by which the church itself becomes transformed spatially and symbolically. In terms of religion the thesis is informed by the studies of Durkheim, Eliade, Geertz, the concepts of implicit religion (E. Baily) and
vernacular religion (L. Primiano, D. Yoder), and influenced by the scientific approach to the study of religion (D. Wiebe). The orthodox theological corpus is also involved to make comparison and contrast. As the spatial component has been intrinsic to the creed in Eastern Orthodoxy, the spatial organization of churches will be closely examined. According to Lefebvre, space is more than a passive locus of relations; his three space categories include all aspects of human existence to create a production of space that is above the tangible (1991). My study explores three areas (the physical church space, institutional organization, and activities that are present in this space) that correspondent with Lefebvre’s space categories: perceived space is observable, describable and measurable, conceived space refers to the sphere of ideas and conceptualization, and representational or lived space, transcends the first and second and can even alter the relation between them. This “lived space” is ideational and at the same time constitutive of a social imaginary.25

Tweed (1997, 2006) and Knott (2005) connect spatiality (and mobility) and religion. Generally religions privilege time over space; in Judaism and Islam time is sacralised, not place. Protestantism does not sacralise church space to the extent that Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox do. Tweed underscores the role of space to reinstitutionalize traditions among Cuban immigrants in Miami, who arranged the religious space in a way that helps to make sense of themselves (1997). The data gathered in my study suggests that the church institution understood as a public organization tends to facilitate lived interactions with the community instead of being fixated on or emphasizing its transcendental functionality. Cohen holds that “religions can provide additional cement to bind a diaspora consciousness, but they do not constitute diasporas in and of themselves” (1997:189). Indeed, as I will show,

25 Social imaginary, that is, the way in which our contemporaries imagine the societies they inhabit and sustain.
the church as a social and ethnic institution (rather than solely a religious) has extended its spatial capacities to consolidate or to compensate for the weak community-forming features associated with the post-1990 immigrants. They approach the church as a lived space (‘representational space’) wherein diasporic identities are negotiated.

Producing a space of a new kind where materiality, ideas, and emotions are amalgamated by the dynamics of the resettlement might mean that the religious institution has to negotiate with traditional theological norms. Yet, much of diaspora studies tend to be framed by scholars outside rather than within the perspective of the study of religion. This thesis therefore augments the religion-diaspora discussion from a different perspective, namely the academic study of religion and theology. It engages diaspora with a particular strand of Christianity—Eastern Orthodox Christianity. Christianity, Buddhism and Islam are considered to be universal and translocal religions as compared to such other, ‘particularistic’ and ethnic religious as Judaism, Sikhism and Hinduism. Eastern Orthodox Christianity falls in-between. Like Judaism, it bears particular, local, and ethnic features, that became more pronounced after the theological separation from Roman Catholicism in 1054, and later from Protestantism. The cultural and social expansions associated with missionary zeal that the latter two underwent are unknown to Eastern Orthodoxy. It was not until the emigration movements of the 20th century that Eastern Orthodoxy began interacting outside of its original ethnic and national/state contexts.

South Slavic Eastern European diaspora groups

South Slavic migrants, and in general Eastern European groups, together with their cultural landscape and religious dynamics, have been understudied in the North American context.
This is even truer of the communities belonging to Eastern Orthodoxy. The lack of academic interest for the most of the 20th century is a result of a social attitude bordering on racism: Eastern Europeans were approached with disdain, being considered culturally backward, and belonging to a religion “barely Christian” from the then Protestant point of view. In North America the literature on Slavic diaspora church and community tends to focus on theology or history rather than on theorizing the diaspora aspects of belonging and the interactional relation between the two. Theological literature is prevalent and intended to offer understanding regarding the faith (Lossky, 1957; Meyendorff, 1962, 1974; Ouspensky and Lossky, 1982; Bulgakov, 1988) or the correct way to worship, the role of the priest, and how orthodoxy is adjusting as a denomination to the North American environment (Counelis, 1995; Schaeffer, 1994).

Historical narratives, though scarce, provide an important understanding of the establishment of Slavic immigrants in North America and Canada. Balch’s book Our Slavic Fellow Citizens (1910) presents the first academic historical, statistical, and ethnographic account of Slavic immigrants to the USA. Prpic analyzes the historical background of south Slavic groups, and especially of Croatians, in the USA (1978). Both authors offer an important and multifaceted account of the life, characteristics, and religiosity of the Slavonic groups. An insightful historical description of the spread and establishment of orthodoxy can be found in the works of Ericson (2008) and Stokoe (1995). The most detailed accounts available deal with

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26 The veneration of icons had been contested as idolatry. Orthodoxy itself went through an Iconoclastic period in 7-8 century CE, when icons were considered to be pagan images. As a result a dogmatic theory was developed in the following centuries and the veneration of icons became theologically supported.

27 The prevalence of theological literature is a result of the establishment of St. Vladimir’s Orthodox Theological Seminary in New York in 1938, which is the main academic and publishing institution in North America. The number of Orthodox Christians in the USA is about 3.5 million; according to the 2006 yearbook of churches in the USA, the Greek Orthodox are 1 500 000 and the Orthodox Church in America members are 1 064 000, showing a 6.4 percent increase (http://www.nceccusa.org/news/060330yearbook1.html, accessed on 24 October 2014).
Catholic Slavonic groups such as the Polish, Slovak, and Croatians (Alexander, 1987; Winland, 2002).

It is only in the last decade that a body of academic literature in respect to small Eastern European communities in Canada has started to become available. To name a few, Winland has done a significant research on Croatians and their identity between “home” and “homeland” (2002, 2005, 2007). Milijasevic (2006) discusses life histories of second generation Serbian-Canadians and Gobetz (1980) the assimilation of Slovenian refugees. Kostov (2010) directs attention to the Macedonian immigrant group and their identity in Toronto. Bloch (2012) focuses her study on the Russian-speaking community in Vancouver. Georgiou examines diasporic identity, reconstruction and redefinition of space within globalization with a focus on the Greek community in London, UK, and New York (2006). The latter study is informative and valuable as Greece and Bulgaria share a border, a religion, and an interwoven history which translates to their communities abroad. Unlike the other small diasporas, the Macedonian group which emerged after the mid-20th century produces an abundance of materials; but aside from Petroff’s dissertation (1983) the great majority of them are self-published or of non-academic presses and mainly in Macedonian. Perhaps the most examined group is the Ukrainian diaspora: academic literature is available on many of its aspects, including observations on its ethno-religious identity (Swyripa, 2010; Lesiv, 2013). The Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies at Alberta University, with its own publishing press and journal, provides important research on this particular diaspora group.28

The smaller Slavic groups have a scarce academic presence, a lacuna noted by Prpic in the

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28 The Ukrainian ethnic group is one of the largest ethnic groups in Canada, 1,209,085, a number close to those of Chinese and Italian groups. In comparison, the Russian group is 500,600. See www.statcan.gc.ca, Ethnic Origins, 2006 counts; accessed on 15 March, 2014.
1970s (a scholar on South Slavic immigrants to North America), which has yet to be filled (1978:20).

The literature on the Bulgarian diaspora in North America very is limited; specifically, in Canada three sources are available. Only after 1990 did academic studies in Bulgaria start to examine the diaspora and to produce scholarly works. Traikov (1993) offers a historical narrative on Bulgarian immigration to North America. Traikov and Mitev (1995) compiled a fascinating collection of documents (from 1900 to 1945) produced by the diaspora organizations of Macedono-Bulgarian groups in the USA, Canada, and Australia, showing their business, religious, and communal life, political affiliations, ethnic and national orientation. These documents are essential in understanding the history and origins of the ethnic division between Macedonians and Bulgarians followed by establishment of separate diasporas in mid 20th century. Altankov has collected statistic data and information on studies of the Bulgarian diaspora, including an entry in the Harvard Encyclopaedia of American Ethnic Groups (1979; 1980:187). Gadjev (2003) offers an extensive collection of documents on Bulgarian immigration in North America; while non-academic, these materials are very useful. The Canadian Macedono-Bulgarians and Bulgarians are the focus of three studies: Boneva and Baliksi (1993) offer ethnographic account mainly of the first wave of immigrants; Gurdev (1994) observes all organizations (cultural, political, economic, and religious) and periodic publications of the diaspora; and Kostov (2010) offers academic research on the historical emergence of the Macedonian community in Toronto, why immigrants from Macedonian areas have acquired three distinct ethnic identities (Macedonian, Bulgarian, and Greek), and the relationship they have with the Bulgarian and Greek communities. The last wave of Bulgarian immigrants is also included briefly by
Kostov and is the only available source on that group. Few personal biographies and popular books are helpful in providing an insight into diaspora dynamics. Excluding Altankov and Kostov, all the above studies (though available in Robarts library) are published in Bulgaria or in the Bulgarian language. This fact, along with the limited amount of sources, leaves practically no access to literature on the Macedono-Bulgarian diaspora in Canada and North America for academics and the general public who are outside of that group. My study is an academic contribution that analyzes, theorizes, and is guided by specific research questions. As such, it is the first to examine the role of the diaspora religious institution and its space for the ethnic community.

**Clarification of terms**

**Homeland and hostland: are their synonyms synonymous?**

Soon after I commenced the research, it became apparent that the terms ‘homeland’ and ‘hostland’ hide a problematic reference. While they are popularly accepted and used as an easy mark to distinguish between before and after immigration, homeland-hostland contains an unnecessary opposition. Homeland is a word with deep meaning and epic emotional charge that have been layered through millennia of traumatic use. However, many of my interviewees from the first generation of the second and third wave of immigrants have a strong attachment to their new place and prefer using first homeland instead of ‘homeland’ and second homeland instead of ‘hostland’. This preference signals objective and subjective changes. Georgiou in her field research among the Greek diaspora in the UK and USA also reports strong attachment to the hostland and the author uses homeland in italics to avoid
specific geographic associations, referring to it as a symbolic, ideological concept that addresses “issues of imagination, longing and belonging” (2006:135-149, 165, 2010). Globalization, new geopolitical, economic formations, and technological advancements lead to mobility which overcomes the restrictiveness of physical, mental, and emotional geographical boundaries. A positive public policy that focuses on integration and acceptance elides the binary opposition between the homeland and hostland which is significantly lessened by creating space out of choice for multiple belonging. The European Union states already produce emigrants with a redefined mindset of belonging. A new, highly adaptive generation emerges with viable possibilities to choose where and how to live. Beck describes this tendency as place-polygamy (2002: 24-26). In such a context the original notion of homeland sometimes gives rise to inadequate reflection.

‘Hostland’ when paired with homeland, also transforms its meaning. For the third wave immigrants, birth place is more a biographical fact than a nostalgic reality. While it is not entirely stripped of nostalgia and belonging, a more neutral or balanced spectrum of emotions emerges. The third wave, at the verge of the 21st century, is cosmopolitan and motivated to establish a better home and to build deep feelings with it that are often stronger than those associated with the birth place. With this wave begins an understanding of ‘home’ in its global sense that complements the local. Loss-of-home and exile can be passionately traumatic (Said, 2000:173-186), but for Eastern European post-Berlin Wall emigrants it can be a positive experience. Safran (2004:16) comments on the relativity of ‘homeland’ as an orientation. Its application is not entirely restricted to one location anymore. Used by the immigrants I interviewed, it does not always refer to the place of birth. Georgieu observes that for the Greek community ‘home’ is not a singular and fixed notion; its idealization does
not reflect the reality of modern societies and it has acquired collective and broader meanings (2010). As such the boundaries in diaspora are blurred.29

While ‘homeland’ and ‘hostland’ are terms convenient enough to distinguish between places, in the diaspora literature the use of synonyms or locutions increases. This indicates not only a search for stylistic variety but as well a tendency to relax the emotional connotation and opposition between homeland-hostland and to recognize the changes in diverse contexts. Usual synonyms for homeland are: country of origin, point of origin, sending country, natal territories, birth place, birth land, native land/home, motherland, fatherland, old homeland. Hostland encounters replacement by fewer synonyms: place of destination, new homeland and diaspora. In fact the above alternatives are not entirely synonymous, but have overlapping meanings and undertones.

For example synonyms for homeland could be divided in three groups:

a) geographical or statistical: country of origin, point of origin, and sending country are neutral and convey matter-of-fact information, devoid of emotions and connections. Point of origin is probably the most neutral of all, along with sending country which registers mainly the physicality.

b) biological: natal territories, birth place, and birth land, are less neutral but still retain the statistical fact and usually are applied to first generation immigrants. ‘Birth land’ is more emotionally charged as ‘land’ is richer in connotations than ‘place.’

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29 EU countries might also face the sense of a blurring of boundaries in terms of belonging. For example the group of third wave Bulgarian immigrants already suggests attachment to European values as part of their ethnic belonging.
c) relational: *native land, native home, motherland, fatherland, and homeland* are emotionally loaded. ‘Homeland’ and ‘native land’ express strong cultural and historic connection with the place of origin, possess a nostalgic ring, and often imply that the place of immigration is not a real home, or at least not yet. ‘Motherland’ and ‘fatherland’ are passionate and personalized words, voicing an attachment and interiorisation—‘motherland’ closer to the ethnic and fatherland closer to the patriotic strings. These expressions likely represent fixed emotional dispositions towards the country of origins.

d) chronological: *old homeland and first homeland* are perhaps the most balanced terms. Along with the admitted attachment they provide a sense of temporality and signal a moving away from one attachment and replacing it with new.

The synonyms for a new settlement are:

a) *hostland* or *host country* possess a connotation of the state of being a guest. Depending on the context, these synonyms may be neutral, positive, negative, or may express how the individual feels accepted. Throughout this study hostland will be used in its neutral application for convenience along with *new homeland*, which is the preferred expression by the group under discussion.

b) *place of destination or point of arrival* like ‘sending country’ is a descriptive term that implies movement and arrival, yet not settlement.

c) *diaspora* as a place of physical settlement is loaded with centuries-old meanings, most of which are traumatic. At its heart the idea of diapora is “an ideology of separation

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30 In Slavic languages *otechestvo* (fatherland) is the more popular form. ‘Otec’ is an old Slavonic word with wide range of references: father, godfather, spiritual leader, founder, ancestor, and etc. In the Bulgarian and Macedonian languages the words ‘otechestvo’ or ‘tatkovina’ (tatko-dad) are used.
from, and longing for return to the homeland” (Knott, McLoughlin, 2010:9). No personal attachment or acceptance is connoted.

d) *new homeland, second homeland, adopted homeland* signal attachment, establishment, and emotional acceptance of the diasporic place as a home. The role of the first homeland is admitted in a sense of building a cultural construct but a new development has taken place. These expressions equate both homeland and hostland and, depending on the context, may suggest stronger attachment to the diaspora than to the place of birth.

The group studied in this dissertation displayed a clear vocabulary preference, depending on the time and circumstances of their arrival. During the interview process people sometimes paused to choose the right word and often would offer instead an explanation of their belonging: “Canada—is my homeland too.” The table below sums up the vocabulary preferred by each of the three waves of immigrants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wave of immigrants</th>
<th>Place of birth</th>
<th>Diaspora place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First wave (1890-1930)</td>
<td>native land (as equivalent to homeland, <em>rodina</em>), native home, fatherland (<em>otechestvo</em>), motherland</td>
<td>hostland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second wave (1944-1955)</td>
<td>native land (homeland or <em>rodina</em>), fatherland, first-homeland</td>
<td>hostland, new homeland, second-homeland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third wave (1989- )</td>
<td>homeland, native land (homeland or <em>rodina</em>), natal land, country of birth, old homeland, first-homeland</td>
<td>hostland, new homeland, adopted homeland, second-homeland</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Often homeland longing is connected with nature, rather than with the state or culture. An interesting read on landscape is offered by Schma, who observes it as repose for the senses and work or “strata” of memory (1995:6-7). Landscape as an element of the cultural construct plays an important role in attachment to the place of origin.
The vocabulary shows an evolving attachment to the hostland with each wave. For the first wave the myth of return keeps the attachment to the native land; hostland is the place to wait for this return. The second wave, lacking an actual connectedness with relatives and a chance for return, accepted their new homeland as a ‘second’ homeland. Here, the appearance of homeland as “first” and “second” does not imply importance but is time descriptive. The post-1990 immigrants, who resettled by choice, invest less emotions in both. They show higher degree of detachment from the first homeland and effortless attachment to the new, adopted one. In fact, it is a process of “decoupling home and homeland” critical for deconstructing immigrants as ‘out of place’ (Korac, 2009:27). My thesis uses ‘homeland’ and ‘hostland’ in a generic way, but attends to the vocabulary preferred by the interviewees.

**Macedono-Bulgarian**

The name Macedono-Bulgarian does not reflect today’s political realities. Throughout this study names such as Macedonia, Macedonian areas, Thrace, and Thrace areas refer only to the geographical regions of Macedonia and Thrace (see Map 1). The expression Macedono-Bulgarian is explained by an interviewee: “For my grandfather “Bulgarian from Macedonia” was important and that is why the churches are named as such” (16:C1). For the first wave of immigrants and their heirs, it expresses fondness for the place of birth—theirs or their fathers’ and grandfathers’ (geographic Macedonian areas)—and their ethnic belonging (Bulgarian) by language, church, and culture. Macedono-Bulgarian usually denotes ethnic Bulgarian refugees who came from Macedonian areas left outside the Bulgarian state borders after the Treaty of San Stefano (March 1978) was revised by the Berlin Treaty (July 1878), or the border revisions following the Balkan Wars, WWI, and WWII (see Map 2 and...
Map 3). The diaspora also includes refugees from Thracian regions affected by the same circumstances. Macedono-Bulgarian is a designation chosen by the first wave of immigrants (1890-1930) and their heirs, who named three churches (1910, 1942, and 1974) as such. At the beginning of the 20th century there was hardly any ethnic and linguistic separation between Macedonians and Bulgarians. The first wave immigrants self-identify as Bulgarians as a significant part of terra Macedonia had been part of the Bulgarian state and Church for long periods since the 9th century and shared language, culture, folklore, history, kinship, and religion. Maps 4, 5, and 6 are created by scholars at the end of 19th beginning of 20th century and show ethnic composition, language spoken, and church affiliation of the population as Bulgarian. The liberating movements, wars, and the territorial redistributions associated with these conflicts resulted in a massive emigration flow and new geo-political realities.

Changes leading to internal diaspora division occurred with the territorial distributions and political dynamics of the first half of the 20th century, the formation of the Republic of Macedonia as part of the Yugoslavian federation (1944), the codification of the Macedonian language (1945), and the establishment of the Macedonian Orthodox Church in 1958 (autocephalous status in 1967). The first Macedonian Church in Toronto was established in

32 The ample collection of original documents of the Macedonian Patriotic Organization in North America produced between 1900-1945 reflect the political factors and process of this separation. See Traikov and Mitev, 1995.

33 See the collection of ethnographic documents from 4th century to 1903—Byzantine and Western European chronicles, epigraphic materials, and travel notes of Catholic missionaries—describing many of the inhabitants in the region of Macedonia as ethnic Bulgarians (Vasileva, 1992). Ami Boué, a geologist, who studied the Balkans in 19th century, presents statistics on the population and language as predominantly Bulgarian (1840:32). Another collection of documents reflects on the Bulgarian revival in Macedonia during the 19th century (Raikov, 1997). Brailsford comments in 1906 that “people of Ochrida are clearly Bulgarians” (1971:101) and his study analyzes the ethnic groups in Macedonia as Serbian, Greek, Albanian, Bulgarian, and Vlachs. These data were of crucial importance in diaspora for the first wave and their heirs during the geopolitical shifts on the Balkans at the beginning of the 20th century. Today the question of ‘who is who’ is almost of no relevance to the third wave of immigrants.
1965 and those identifying themselves as only Macedonians formed a separate diaspora group. The political currents involved largely the first wave Macedono-Bulgarians and their heirs in debates. Chapter two will provide a short historical reference pertinent to the group for basic clarity. To avoid the biased literature that proliferated after the 1950s, this study resorts to archival documents, independent academic sources, and maps from the beginning of the first half of the 20th century. These sources are closer to the original mindset and identity of the first diaspora community for which ethnic and language differences appeared later. Quite to the contrary, the third wave of immigrants grew up isolated from this discussion and has remained largely indifferent to it. In fact, they are the generation which first officially accepted the establishment of the state of Macedonia in 1992 and the right to self-identification is fully respected. In the light of the recent establishment of the former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia in 1992, it must be clearly stated that the notion of “Macedono-Bulgarian” used throughout this study does not refer to geopolitical arrangements by which Macedonia is a sovereign state and does not have political connotation.

**Method and data organization**

The research in this dissertation relies on both historical and ethnographic methods, which include examination of archival records, participant observation, and interviews. The data was obtained largely between 2004-2013. The archival records are of two types—printed data and electronic communications. Printed data includes newspapers, census data, and documents connected with the administration and functions of the churches such as jubilee books and church governance by-laws. The electronic type contains an email record of
activities announced in the diaspora community. They had been systematically collected for seven years, from 2005 to 2011. A summary of these records are tabulated in chapter five. Some data from the following two years, 2012-2013, has been additionally included in the body of the text.

The electronic record of activities is systematized into two lists, identified as List A and List B in Appendix III. List A consists only of churches announcements, a total of 146, and includes separately every one of the four churches. List B reflects announcements of diaspora groups and members not associated with any church, a total of 98 announcements. In each list the data are arranged in columns, chronologically by year, date, event, venue, and organizer. List A includes as well the language of the messages—Bulgarian or English. In the process of collecting data, the choice of language for different churches proved to be an important element of the community profile and a source of information about the role that language plays in both preservation of the ethnic culture and immersion into Canadian culture. Ethnographical description of the events and analysis of how a church functions and relates to the community are based on email data and participant observation. These events reveal the extent of involvement between the community and religious institutions and how the space of the latter is used for this interaction.

I engaged in participant observation at community events held in the churches and different venues around Toronto. Attending a variety of gatherings allows one to be a natural recipient of people’s opinions. This informality permits a sharper reflection on some critical aspects which could be involuntarily hidden by the informants. For example, in regards to space

34 The emails are disseminated through the Bulgarians in Ontario where churches, groups or individuals post their announcement. In the last several years this website became a main source of information for the community.
configuration, clergy believe that the sacred area is separated fully from the rest of the community areas of the church building. Yet this is not always the case; often informal remarks and attitudes expressed in relation to the space made it clear that many saw no sharp division between the liturgical and social space.

Interview participants belong to two groups: clergy and laity. The clergy group includes seven priests, present and former, and two deacons. All of them are male, married, and trained in Bulgaria. Clergy experience in the diaspora ranges from about thirty years to only one year; this range of experience has been of great advantage for the research. It offers a contrast of views: newly arrived clergy had a sharp eye for the differences between the two locations while others offered a deeper understanding of diaspora dynamics. Since the establishment of the first church, most of the clergy have been invited from the homeland. Although only one priest insisted on anonymity, I have not included any names in my citations.

The second group of interviewees includes 40 members of the Macedono-Bulgarian diaspora, of whom 32 are part of a post-communist wave of immigrants. The method of recruiting interviewees was random selection combined with a snowball sampling. Recruiting was performed at locations and events throughout the GTA—Bulgarian deli shops, concerts, film festivals, private and community gatherings. The interviews consisted of structured and semi-structured parts and were performed in locations and at times convenient to the participants: a nearby café shop, their homes, or at their office or place of work. Though the pool was not in

35 In Eastern Orthodox Christianity all church hierarchy are male. A requirement for a priest is to be married before he is ordained.
general concerned with confidentiality, the study was conducted according the regulations of
the Ethics committee of the University of Toronto and anonymity was kept.

Citations of the interviews are coded in the body of the thesis under a number and according
the group. For example, for clergy I use C1:10, where (C) stands for ‘clergy,’ (1) for his
number in the record, followed by the page; for interviews with diaspora members, I1:A.16 is
used, where (I) stands for ‘interviewee,’ (1) for his/her number in the record, (A.) for the part
of the questioner, and (16) for the number of question. The notes are unpublished, but this
organization was necessary for referencing in the process of writing. Both questionnaires, for
clergy and diaspora members, can be found as Appendix IV.

The site location consists of four diasporic and ethnic churches in the Greater Toronto area:
Sts. Cyril and Methody (1910), St. George (1945), Holy Trinity (1975), and St. Dimitar
(2004). The first three are designated as “Macedono-Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox” and
attendees identify themselves either as Bulgarians, Bulgarians from Macedonian areas, or
Macedono-Bulgarians. The newest church is designated as “Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox,”
and attended mainly by the post-1990 wave of immigrants from Bulgaria. All of the churches
are monoethnic. It is not clear how large their actual congregation as they are attended by
non-church members. The diaspora community is about 30,000 Bulgarians in Toronto and
the GTA. Two of the churches (Sts. Cyril and Methody and St. George) are located
downtown; one (St. Trinity) is in proximity to central Toronto, and the fourth is in Brampton.

Map 7 shows their locations. The buildings are not situated (anymore) in predominantly
ethnic neighbourhoods. Only St. Trinity is in proximity to the Greek area and an eastern
European neighbourhood that includes Bulgarians.
Plan of the dissertation

The thesis starts with a historical review of the Macedono-Bulgarian diaspora formation in Canada and a religio-cultural portrait of the group as a background. Next, it develops the concept of institutional vernacularization by examining three main areas: the functional organisation of the religious institution, the specificity of the physical building space, and data on activities showing how the church space is employed by the community.

Chapter 1 presents the history of the diaspora formation by reasons, periods, places, data, and religious outlook. Yet the approach used here is to build a portrait of a diaspora not as a whole, but rather as constructed of segment-waves. The chapter aims to stratify these waves, as the only way to explain their community forming dynamics and their relation to religion. First, it establishes a periodization of three waves based on history and the characteristics of the immigrants. As the political events in the Balkans had a major influence on the diaspora formation and its religious institutions, they will be briefly addressed, including the Macedonian question. Then, the chapter traces the religious background of the third wave, post-1990 immigrants and provides data on religiosity, Church-state relations during the communist (1944-1989) and post-communist periods, resonances of pre-Christian beliefs today, and the role of Christianity and Church as state and the ethnic consolidators. Finally, the chapter presents the establishment of the churches, how they functioned during the 20th century, and their role as diaspora centres and participants in the life of the community.

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36 The third wave immigrants come from one of the most secular states in Europe; yet 82% of the Bulgarian population identifies as Eastern Orthodox although the level of religious involvement is at 8%.
Chapter 2 focuses on an internal examination of the diaspora church in comparison to the traditional Bulgarian church. By considering its governance and the roles of the priest, board and members, as well its property and bylaws, this chapter illustrates how the institutional changes and religious leadership are part of a new communal formation and arrangement. The intensity of laity involvement is in sharp contrast to traditional clergy-driven arrangements. By proposing a new analytical category—that of institutional vernacularization—the study offers a more adequate representation of the diaspora church realities, as an alternative to secularization. This notion expands the concept of vernacular by shifting attention from the personal expression; it focuses on the religious institution and its degree of responsiveness to the community and the emancipation of the laity. Institutional vernacularization may be conceived as being incipient of a secularization which may or may not develop.

Chapter 3 examines the characteristics of the church buildings, their physical characteristics, and investigates the problematic area of reconstruction and redefinition of the religious space. The organization of space—architectural and interior design and decoration—is compared to the traditional Eastern Orthodox Church. While the latter organizes physical space as visual credo, space in diaspora is suggestive of a different approach to the building functions and it indicates a shift in the sacred space which reconfigures meanings and incorporates new relations. By introducing novel elements the buildings become instrumental in recognizing the communal factor and fulfill a meditational role in the resettlement process.

Chapter 4 analyzes the utilization of the church space and thus moves to the core of the examination of how religious space operates as a base for community and church interaction. This chapter further develops the notion of institutional vernacularization based on
ethnographical data. Through presenting and comparing data on the activities organized by
the churches themselves and by the community members, it becomes evident that the church
space and the community are interacting on a new level and are forming a new relationship
that is far less based on spirituality. Further, the data illustrate how physical space functions,
how sacred and secular parts of the building interrelate, and how the character of every
church changes depending on which wave of immigrants is dominant. This chapter includes
observations on a new phenomenon in diaspora—a blooming interest in the folklore
heritage—and on a new role of the church as an initiator and supporter of this revival.
Chapter 1
History of diaspora formation in Canada: periodization, waves, and characteristic

In the Balkan Peninsula memories live long. The centuries of Turkish rule have passed like a single night, and the previous ages have kept all the living passions of yesterday. In a land where races have perpetually overlapped and where frontiers have been seldom natural and never permanently just, a spirit of rivalry and bitterness has inevitably permeated international politics and their records far back into the past.

Runciman (1930:v)

Runciman could little have known that his observations would turn out to be a prediction for the end of the 20th century. When discussing the Balkans, historians have used phrases such as “the tragic peninsula,” “the Gordian knot,” “the powder keg of Europe,” and the Balkan “inferno,” “nightmare,” “tragedy,” or “vortex.” Bulgaria, sitting at the centre of a peninsula, has been torn by national crises in addition to the major upheavals that have shaken the European continent. Historical narratives in the study of Balkan diasporas formation are essential since the lives of the first immigrants revolved around political loyalties and homeland discourses. Currently, at the start of the 21st century, the reverberations of Balkan history and politics continue to shape some diaspora communities and their religious institutions, including those of the countries of the former Yugoslavia.

The Macedono-Bulgarian diaspora in Canada is composed of people arriving from the state of Bulgaria and the geographical regions of Thrace and Macedonia (Map 1). The fall of the Ottoman Empire and several redrawings of the Bulgarian borders resulted in refugee streams

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Terra Thrace, similar to Macedonia, is divided into three areas: Thrace—Eastern (in Turkey), Western (in Greece), and Northern (in Bulgaria); Macedonia—Western or Vardar Macedonia (today in Macedonia), Eastern or Pirin Macedonia (in Bulgaria), and Southern or Aegean Macedonia (in Greece).
from these regions, but it was not until the 20th century that North America received a noticeable influx of Bulgarian refugees. This chapter introduces the Macedono-Bulgarian diaspora in Toronto by way of its historical background, data, and religion institutions. It traces the path of the three major waves of immigration: the first, from the end of the 19th century to the 1930s; the second, from 1944 to the 1950s; and the third, from 1990 onwards. This chapter categorizes the immigrants by chronological periods based on their reasons for relocation; it observes the character of the community they formed on arrival and analyzes their relations with their religious institutions.

**Data on arrivals in Canada 1900-2014**

Statistics Canada indicates that there were 30,485 Bulgarians in the country by 2011; however, this number should be treated with caution because of problems of record-keeping and self-identification. Independent studies and the counts of diplomatic missions come up with different figures—in some cases of over 45,000. In regards to record-keeping, statistical data on the size of the diaspora for most of the early 20th century are both difficult to obtain and largely inaccurate. The statistics on emigration from Eastern Europe are scarce, owing largely to the repeated redrawing of borders. In the case of Bulgaria, the borders changed at least six times between 1878 and 1919. It was not until 1930 that the Bulgarian government started collecting consistent data on emigration (Gurdev, 1994:60).

Data on immigration to Canada are also problematic for three main reasons. One is that in the late 19th century data were organized by the ‘country of last residence.’ Thus, Bulgarians

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38 The government collected data based mainly on ‘missing from a place of residence’ and later included ‘emigration and immigration movement.’ Gurdev offers statistics data of the Bulgarian Kingdom starting from 1925.
living outside the state borders as defined by the Berlin Treaty (1878) and arriving at Ellis Island from Greece, Turkey, Serbia or Romania were recorded respectively as Greeks, Turks, Serbs, and Romanians. Many of the first wave immigrants who entered the USA and Canada before 1912 held Turkish passports (*tescere*). After the Balkan wars (1912-1913) a border redrawing resulted in new Bulgarian immigrants with Turkish, Greek, Romanian, or Serbian passports. The second reason is that by 1910 the US Immigration Office recognized Bulgarians ethnically, but continued to count them together with Serbs, Montenegrins, Russians, Hungarians and Austrians (Balch, 1910:273; Gurdev, 1994:68; Altankov 1979:11). It was not until 1920 that the US government began to count Bulgarians separately, by which time the majority of the first wave of had already arrived. Third, to complicate the data further, there was considerable underground immigration during World War I.39

Immigration to Canada and to the United States is closely connected since the US was traditionally a transit point for many newcomers. The Dictionary of American Immigration History estimates that by 1924 between 50,000 and 70,000 Bulgarian immigrants had arrived in North America (1990:95). In 1918 Gramatikov and Stefanov evaluated the numbers in the same range with the remark that at least 10,000 men had returned to participate in the Balkan Wars.40 According to Emily Balch, by 1910 there were between 40,000 and 50,000 immigrants in the USA and Canada (1910:274). Popov offers a higher estimate of 80,000

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39 The Bulgarian government restricted emigration, so people made their way to North America through neighbouring countries and consequently recorded upon arrival in the USA by the country of last residence. During WWI the US closed its borders to immigrants from Bulgaria which also led to an increased use of false documents.

Bulgarians in North America by 1911.⁴¹ For Traikov, this number rises to 120,000 by 1945 and to 130,000 by 1989 (1993:25-26). Altankov estimates are 70,000 to 100,000 (1979:14). At present, the Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affair counts 250,000 immigrants in the USA.

Canada has maintained records of Bulgarian immigrants since the early 20th century, but its count was based at first on the country of embarkment rather than on ethnicity. Again, Bulgarians coming from Romania, Serbia, Greece and Turkey were not included in the count, even though they formed the bulk of the Bulgarian diaspora. Those who resettled from the US, a common practice for the first wave, were also excluded from the statistics. From 1900 to 1944 the count is estimated at 19,955 from the Kingdom of Bulgaria, according to Gurdev (1994:67-69). This estimate is closely matched by the data of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, which arrived at the figure of 19,115.⁴²

After mid 1940s when Bulgarian borders were closed, there were only isolated cases of migration, since leaving the state without permission was treated as a crime.⁴³ The immigration count to Canada for the period 1945 to 1971 was only 1,467, an insignificant number when compared to the influx from the surrounding countries: Romania 5,054, Turkey 4,162, Yugoslavia 62,521, and Greece 108,489 (Gurdev 1994:91). However, Bulgarians from Greek Macedonia and the Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia were permitted to emigrate. After 1970, according to Prpic, around 10 percent of the five thousand immigrants coming

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⁴¹ As cited in Gurdev, 1994:23.
⁴² As cited in Kostov, 2010:125.
⁴³ In 1948 the new government instituted a law restricting travel abroad (Decree 425, Durzaven Vestnik, #69, 25 March, 1948). Amendments to this law, enacted in 1953, categorized the would-be emigrants as traitors, some of whom were sentenced to death, their property confiscated, and their relatives’ civil rights rescinded (Kostov, 2010:161). A temporary passport for traveling abroad could be obtained from the police; without it one could not leave the country. This requirement lasted until 1990.
annually from Yugoslavia were Bulgarian-speakers who identified as Macedonians and thus joined the Macedonian diaspora (1978:247-248). Based on the historical situation in the 1970s, Prpic predicted that the Macedono-Bulgarian community had little chance of survival owing to negligible levels of arrivals from Bulgaria. It was only the new wave of immigrants in the 1990s that revived the diaspora. With the beginning of Perestroika, the refugee stream to the US and Canada gained momentum and it became more active after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Since 1995 the influx has been steady, based on a landed immigrant criterion. A 2011 National Household Survey shows an increase of 3,230 Bulgarian immigrants since 2006.

In terms of numbers there is yet another accounting to consider: the Bulgarian diplomatic missions and internal community counts, which offered an unofficial but cautious and very conservative estimate for the size of the diaspora in the year 2014. Their figures were 40,000 to 50,000, distributed as follows: Toronto: 25,000, Montreal: 10,000, Ottawa: 1,000, and Calgary: 900. Vancouver, Edmonton and some other cities also contain communities, and those in Alberta have grown due to the robust job market.\textsuperscript{44} The count may be even higher, for Gurdev estimates that by 1964 in Toronto alone there were 35,000 Bulgarians (1994:87). Presently, three schools in Toronto offer Bulgarian heritage language classes.\textsuperscript{45}

\textsuperscript{44} This information was obtained from the Bulgarian embassy in Ottawa and the Consulate in Toronto in August 2014.

\textsuperscript{45} Macedonians community has two heritage language classes in Toronto. The internal community counts always need to be considered cautiously as they may be influenced by internal community politics. I cite these numbers here as they appear to be reasonable and close to the census data. In regards to the Macedonians community, the official figure from the 2011 census is 36,985 while the unofficial community estimate is between 100,000 and 150,000 Macedonians in the GTA. See L. Petroff (http://www.multiculturalcanada.ca/Encyclopedia/A-Z/m1/2), accessed on 25 March, 2014).
For the discrepancies between the accountings—Statistics Canada and unofficial—there are at least three explanations. One has to do with offspring: first-generation immigrants after 1990 have typically expressed a cosmopolitan spirit. Their children, raised in Canada, tend to consider themselves Canadian. Part of the second, third, and fourth generations of the first wave Bulgarians also count themselves as Canadians in censuses, while identifying as Bulgarians from an ethnic perspective and attending Bulgarian gatherings and churches. The same is true for Croatians and other south Slavic ethnic groups (Prpic, 1978:253). Yet it is precisely those “Canadian-by-census” groups that often play a major role in the diaspora, for example by sustaining ethnic churches and community life. Another reason for the discrepancy between Statistics Canada and unofficial figures has to do with the results of a division that occurred when Macedonia was established as a federated Yugoslavian state in 1944. Those who self-identified only as Macedonian separated and gained ethnic recognition; in 1981 the Canadian census provided Macedonians with such an option. Third, some of the immigrants who came after the WWII and during the communist period did not disclose their origins for safety reasons. The “Canadian-by-census” Bulgarians often actively attend community events, thus creating a de facto viable Bulgarian demographic that is larger than the census figures.

**Places of settlement**

In Canada the first Bulgarian immigrants settled in urban areas. Ontario seems to have been the province of choice, drawing large numbers to Toronto, Kitchener, Windsor, Hamilton, St. Catherine, and Niagara. Quebec, Montreal in particular, also attracted a sizable group; very few settled in the other provinces until 1941 (1994:69). The last wave of immigrants, from
1990 onwards, changes this pattern; recent arrivals have formed communities in Ottawa, Calgary, Vancouver, and Halifax. In Toronto, the first immigrants clustered in an ethnic neighbourhood around Sherbourne, King, and River Streets where the first two churches were built, (on Sackville and Regis Streets), only 300-400 metres apart. At present, however, Bulgarians are spread throughout Toronto and there is no tendency to seek out and form ethnic neighbourhoods.46 One exception might be the area around the intersections of Pape Street with Gamble Avenue and Cosburn Street. Some new arrivals settle there initially for the convenience of the location but usually move later to other parts of metropolitan Toronto.

Periodization of the immigration flow to Canada

This study defines the Bulgarian diaspora as been formed by three main waves of migration, each triggered by very different circumstances. The three-wave periodization, although naturally aligned with time frames, is based on a number of factors: major political events in Europe, reasons for migration, and attitudes towards both homeland and hostland. The combination of these factors greatly affects the way in which immigrants constitute a diaspora, connect with each other as a community, relate to the religious institution, and shape the church-community relationship. This three-wave periodization departs from accounts provided by Traikov, Baliksi and Boneva, Altankov, and Gurdev.

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46 The first significant settlements of Bulgarians in North America were in Philadelphia, Steelton, Ohio, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Granite City, Madison, St. Louis, Toledo, and Detroit. Some immigrants were following the construction of the “Great North” and “Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul” Railroads. In Montana, Bulgarians numbered 25,000 which, according to the 1910 census, was the highest number of Bulgarians in the US (Altankov 1979:18-23). The first immigrants established their own cities named after Bulgarian kings (Ferdinand, Simeon, and Krum) or towns (Varna, Macedonia, Voden, Plevna, Balkan, Sofia, Sophia, Trojan, and etc.). For detailed information on places of settlement, see Altankov, 1979:19-20.
For Traikov the periodization of migration waves is based on historical events that provoked the sizable arrivals. Accordingly, immigration to North America consists of several flows: pre-1903; 1903 to 1913; 1913 to 1919; 1919 to 1944, and post-World War II (1993:14-27). However, some of these groups are connected by a similar mindset that became formative for the diaspora. Baliksi and Boneva distinguish three periods: from 1890 to 1918; between WWI and WWII, and post-WWII (1993:27). Altankov (1979:1-7) and Gurdev (1994:10-108) divide the movement into two main streams, pre-WWII and after-WWII, which reflects many of the common features of the groups. Understandably, none of these accounts considers the arrivals commencing with the end of the Cold War. A study that briefly addresses these is Kostov (2010), but only as an aside to his main focus on discussions between the Macedonian, Greek, and Macedono-Bulgarian communities in Toronto. Each of the above authors offers valuable, often first-hand, information. Building on their work and on my research, in order to adequately portray the constitution of the community, I divide the group into three waves: a) first wave, 1850s-1930s, including three sub-periods: 1850-1903, a pre-diaspora; 1903-1912, consolidating the diaspora; and 1913-1940, building a solid diaspora group with community organizations and religious institutions; b) second wave, 1944-1950s, a short, more or less one-time event starting with the end of WWII and the establishment of the Communist government in 1944; and c) third wave, since 1990, a regular trickle that continues to the present.

The first wave: a displacement of political misfortune

The first wave formed a diaspora in its classic sense and its nucleus as community continues to be powerful today through its heirs. Factors that precipitated this emigration included the
advance of industrialization and numerous, tragically turbulent and complicated political events. While the industrialization of the country was an impetus to new economic endeavours and discovery of the world, it was the devastating results of liberating movements and wars that led to mass migration. As MacMillan comments “What made the Balkans so dangerous was that highly volatile situation on the ground mingled with great power interests and ambitions” (2013:446). Although these words refer to WWI, their insight extends to the preceding and succeeding events of the 19th and 20th (and even 21st) century which affected European geopolitics in general and the Balkan diaspora in particular.

Two streams, one from the liberated Kingdom of Bulgaria and the second from the territories of Macedonia, Thrace, and Dobrudza left outside of the borders of the Kingdom, made up the first wave of migration. These two streams were driven by different motivations; those coming from the Kingdom were mainly economic immigrants, while those from the areas outside resettled as a victim group. By the time of the Balkan wars (1912-1913), the ratio of Bulgarians from the Kingdom of Bulgaria to those from outside the borders in the Macedonian, Thracian, and Dobrudja areas was 1:3 (Altankov, 1979:9). Unavoidably this study touches on the history of the Macedonian Question which is of little concern to the third wave of immigrants; however, it is at the very bottom of the diaspora formation, inter-Balkan-diasporas affairs, and diaspora-homeland relations for the first and second waves. The leitmotif of Macedonia for the first and second wave would echo through the generations with deep love and pain.
1850-1903, pre-diaspora period

Before 1850 only sporadic Slavonic immigrants were registered in North America, but their number began to grow after 1880. They were migrants from Bohemia, Poland, Austria, Russia, and Hungary. The Southern Slavs, Bulgarians included, became noticeable in North America from about 1890 onwards (Balch, 1910: 205-237). The first Bulgarian immigrants were primarily students, businessmen, and visitors. This period has also been called “Protestant”, because missionaries in Bulgaria sent many young students and preachers to the US (Gurdev 1994:11, Traikov and Mitev, 1995:85, Prpic, 1978:212-213). Initially there was no cohesive diaspora group, but some evidence of diasporic activities can be observed. Bulgarian student groups in the US formed a society called “Bulgaria” in New York in 1890 (Traikov, 1993:16). Ethnic settlements began to emerge in big cities such as Washington, Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, and New York with their own newspapers. One featured the efforts of a chieftain to organize immigrants into a movement to liberate Bulgaria from Ottoman rule (circa 1869); another reported the participation of Bulgarians in the American Civil War.

After Bulgaria was liberated (1878), imports to the USA of rose oil and textiles increased as a result of more retailers coming to North America. The first small group of

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47 In the mid nineteenth century American Protestant missionaries became very active in the Slavonic provinces of the Ottoman Empire (Prpic, 1978: 213-214). Missionaries were much respected for their high integrity and devotion. In the 19th century they founded and maintained colleges in Plovdiv (then Philippopolis, Bulgaria) and Istanbul (then Constantinople, Turkey), and numerous other schools in the country, thus providing children with access to better education than they could obtain under the Ottoman rule. The schools already available were mostly Greek with instruction in the Greek language, while the Protestant missions provided education in the native Bulgarian language, thus helping the population in its national and cultural struggle for independence.

48 A travel novel by A. Konstantinov, To Chicago and Back, written in 1893, offers an account of the Bulgarian migrants in USA at the end of 19th century.

49 These publications are cited in Traikov, 1993:15. The authors of the articles are Paprikov “Galab voivoda-one forgotten Bulgarian patriot” in newspaper Borba; and Yovechev, “Bulgaria and America” in newspaper Napredak, X, #69 of 22 Nov., 1875.
immigrants, escaping dangers in their homeland, came from Lerin, Kostur, Pirot and Zajchar, (still under Ottoman rule), and arrived in Canada between 1898 and 1900 (Traikov, 1993:10, 18).  

1903-1912, from the Ilinden-Preobrazhenie Uprising to the Balkan Wars

During this period the diaspora was shaped. The beginning of the 20th century witnessed a sudden influx of Balkan immigrants resulting from political upheavals, economic changes, and advances in global transportation. The accessibility of travel, particularly steamship travel, is a factor that is sometimes underestimated in discussions of migration to North America. Steamship companies from England, German, Italy, and North America undertook massive advertising in the rural Balkan areas, with alluring promises of a better life abroad. Contractor agencies like Canadian Pacific and the Dominion Iron and Steel Company offered jobs (Gurdev, 1994:36-38). The golden aura of America—freedom and wealth—resonated deeply with the deprived population. The campaign resulted initially in a stream of temporary, economic immigrants but those who were successful brought their families from overseas and established a life in North America.

The first stream, the economic migrants with elements of an adventurous disposition, consisted of single individuals rather than groups. They came from different towns and villages of the autonomous Kingdom of Bulgaria, which was partially liberated in 1878, then united in 1885 with the south part of the country left under Ottoman government, and finally gained full independence in 1908. Emigrants to North America consisted mostly of single

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50 At present the towns Lerin and Kostur are part of Greece, and Pirot and Zajchar are in Serbia.
males who undertook the journey out of economic necessity and/or a newly born spirit of adventure to discover the world. The popularization of America or the New World, driven by the promise of a dream life propagated by the steamship companies, attracted thousands. The liberation of Bulgaria created a momentum for growth in all areas: architecture, arts, education, agriculture and industry. The society became more egalitarian than authoritarian, with considerable political, social and religious freedom. Cultural and business ties with central European countries were strong. Prpic observes that people in Bulgaria, Serbia, and Croatia were living fairly good and prosperous lives in comparison with those from the Montenegro, Macedonia and Slovenia areas, who lacked arable land and were “neglected, illiterate and without hope for the future” (1978: 9). However, some regions in the northern part of Bulgaria faced economic hardship caused by the incorporation of industrial patterns into an agrarian economy and increased state taxes. People from these parts found recourse in temporary emigration. Also, the booming birth rate outstripped the economic development of the country; in the space of about thirty years after liberation (1878) the population increase was close to 50 percent. Concerned by the rising numbers of emigrants the government enforced a decree in 1906 to halt the outflow of the workforce and, as a result, illegal emigration and the production of false documents flourished (Gurdev, 1994:18). By 1907 there were 21,372 Bulgarians in North America, of which only 28 were women; during the following years, from 1908-1912, an additional 18,653 people left the country (Traikov, 51


The statistics show that the population in 1887, ten years after the liberation, increases from 3,155,000 to 4,337,513 by 1910, and doubles to 6,077,939 by 1934. See Appendix I.
1993:21, 23). Economically motivated, individuals from Bulgaria proper intended only a temporary immigration.

The second stream, a tragically driven exile, arrived in North America as compact groups and almost entire villages which formed a strong diaspora centre. Pushed by harsh political conditions combined with poverty, these groups were mostly refugees with lesser number of economic emigrants. After the defeat of the Ilinden-Preobrjenie Upraise in 1903 for liberation from Ottomans, people fled from the geographic territories of Macedonia and Thrace. While they were liberated in 1878 as part of Bulgaria by the San Stefano Treaty (March 1878), these regions were returned to the Ottoman Empire by the Berlin treaty (July 1878) thus taking away almost two-thirds of the Bulgarian territories (see Map 2). By undoing the San Stefano Treaty, and returning massive territories with Christian inhabitants to the Ottoman Empire, the Berlin treaty rendered the Balkans a “powder keg” of Europe for years to come. Local revolts, the Balkan wars, and the Bosnian conflicts connected to World War I stem from this decision. According to the Canadian diplomat and history professor Schurman, “Had the Treaty of Berlin sanctioned instead of undoing the Treaty of San Stefano...the result would certainly have been better for all the Christian inhabitants of Macedonia as well for the Mohammedans” (1914:31-33). Map 2 shows the borders of the two treaties; maps 4 and 5 capture the ethnic composition and language of the population as Bulgarian at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century when the first wave of immigrants arrived. One of the consequences for Bulgaria was the loss of the Macedonian and Thrace territories, a significant part of which population identified itself as Christian and

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53 Its reverberations are discernible even today in the Macedonian Question, relations between Balkan states, the war in the former Yugoslavia, and multiple ethnic conflicts. Maps 4, 5 and 6 capture the changes in terms of lands and population.
ethnic Bulgarian. Their liberation was the reason for the formation in 1893 of the Internal Macedonian-Adrianopol Revolutionary Committee, later the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Committee (IMRO). The IMRO would have strong influence in Balkan and even European politics, and its ideas shaped diaspora organizations, church and community life, and interpersonal relations for the first wave of immigrants and their offspring.\textsuperscript{54} The organization continues its existence in diaspora as MPO (Macedono Patriotic Organization).

Multiple small revolts led by groups of revolutionaries preceded the 1903 Uprising and continued thereafter through the first decade of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century. More and more people were fleeing for life. Turkish archival documents of that time illustrate the scale of the conflict. Their meticulous records provide astonishing details of every fight between the Turkish soldiers and revolutionary groups (chetas) in the territory of Macedonia from 1903 to 1908: place, date, names of the cheta leader, ethnicity of the cheta, size of the cheta, casualties of both sides, wounded of both sides, enslaved, arms and explosives used (and how many were taken). Additional notes comment on how long the fight lasted and whether (and to what extent) the village was destroyed. Accordingly, for just the first five months of 1903, before the actual uprising, Ottoman soldiers and the chetas were involved in 49 fights with a loss for the latter of 354 killed, 67 wounded, and 178 enslaved (Todorovski, 2007).\textsuperscript{55} After the

\textsuperscript{54} Later this organization became a powerful secret society torn by internal rivalry among its leaders and resolved by numerous murders. The main leaders of the organization were Ivan/Vanche Mihailov and Todor Alexandrov. At first the goal of liberation of these lands was seen through the lens of the San Stefano Treaty—belonging to Bulgaria; but by the beginning of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century the aim evolved of attaining political autonomy as the only possible result that could be accepted by the European Powers. A firsthand account of the organization until 1931 is offered by Londres (1931), who had a chance to meet with its leaders. By this time the IMRO had become feared for its numerous political assassinations (in Bulgaria) and among its members. Londres’ account, \textit{Terror in the Balkans}, is very informative about the roots of the “Macedonian question,” which continues today.

\textsuperscript{55} The numbers are five month summary starting from the first recorded fight, January 1903 in Ohrid, to May 1903 in Tikvesh.
Uprising was defeated the Ottoman army intensified its actions and the population endured severe danger and poverty, their villages largely destroyed (2007; Altankov, 1979:7). Thousands of people from Thrace and Macedonia, sometimes whole villages, emigrated to Bulgaria, Central Europe, and North America.\(^{56}\) Many refugees to Canada came from the Bitola, Lerin, Kostur, Prespa, Prilep, and Ohrid areas, which were severely affected.\(^{57}\) By immigrating in groups, they naturally transferred already existing communities to the new homeland, continuing their relations and forming the nucleus of the diaspora. The first Macedono-Bulgarian church in Toronto, Sts. Cyril and Methody, was founded by these groups in 1910.

Unfortunately the Uprising was just one of the continuing calamities on the so called “tragic Peninsula.” The next refugee cluster was provoked by the Balkan wars, which were a preamble to WWI. In the Balkans, the continuing escalation of tension “mingled with Great power interests and ambitions” (MacMillan, 2013:446). The First Balkan War, 1912, allied Bulgaria, Montenegro, Serbia and Greece against the Ottoman Empire to redeem their ethnic population. Victorious, the Balkan League terminated the centuries-long Ottoman rule over the Balkans. By the terms of the London Treaty of May 1913, Bulgaria enlarged its territories with Moesia, Thrace and an outlet on the Aegean Sea. However, the Macedonian territories were not reassigned, a political Pandora’s Box which caused the second Balkan war of 1913. The then Bulgarian King Ferdinand turned against his allies, but lost as Romania and the Ottoman Empire took advantage of the situation and also announced war against Bulgaria. The Bucharest Treaty of August 1913 divided terra Macedonia mostly between Greece and

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\(^{56}\) Over 100 000 moved to Bulgaria in a very short period according to A. Avramov in his article “Macedonian immigrants in USA and Canada,” Macedonia, #1, January 1932 (in Traikov and Mitev, 1995:191-195).

\(^{57}\) For an extensive list of places of emigration see Traikov, 1993:30-35.
Serbia and took away a significant part of Bulgaria’s southern territories, though the country retained its outlet on the Aegean Sea.\(^{58}\) Later, driven by a hope of regaining the Macedonian territory, King Ferdinand I participated in WWI and lost extra land.\(^{59}\) Many immigrants returned to participate in the Balkan Wars and WWI under the flag of the Bulgarian army, and some sources estimate their number between 10,000 and 40,533 or almost half of the North American diaspora, so the rate of departure exceeded that of immigration (Traikov and Mitev, 1995:88; Prpic 1978:222; Gurdev 1994: 44, 49; Altankov, 1979:12).\(^{60}\)

1913-1940s, after the Balkan Wars and WWI to the beginning of WWII

During this last sub-period the first wave achieved not only identifiable status but also consolidated around the goal of helping the homeland by influencing major European political decisions and gaining government and international support. This created a strong diaspora presence in North America. The Balkan Wars (1912-1913) and World War I (1914-1918), meant borders thrice redrawn, massive resettlements, and more refugees to North America; Bulgarian ethnicity was now divided among four states: Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece, and the Ottoman Empire/Turkey. A forced exchange of population between the countries broke the spirit of the inhabitants in the disputed areas and triggered a second peak of immigration with the main mass of immigrants arriving in North America before the First World War (Traikov 1993:21; Kostov, 2010:125). Their plight united them with those

\(^{58}\) Many of the immigrants who came back to Bulgaria to participate in the wars returned to North America and continued their work for an independent Macedonia.

\(^{59}\) Ferdinand I was Austrian born with strong German ties.

\(^{60}\) The United States Department of Immigration lists 40,533 as “departed” by 1950. As cited in Altankov, 1979:12.
already in North America, who rallied behind the new arrivals with material aid and community support. Hope for unification was largely lost in Bulgaria and the state was too weakened economically and politically to care for its subjects. In addition, the country was prevented from participation in the Peace conference. However, the young diaspora summoned its organizations for ardent, sometimes naively courageous, efforts to help their natives in the homeland.

The diaspora community was determined to influence the outcome of the Peace Treaties and agreements that followed WWI by sending letters to the US president Wilson and the Great Powers. It was a long, almost ten-year period. The entire Macedono-Bulgarian diaspora in Canada and the US—its community organizations along with the churches and priests—was galvanized by a nationalistic spirit and lobbied at the government level for the independence of Macedonia and the rights of ethnic Bulgarians. The British Foreign Office records from 1913-1915 confirm the problem with the division of terra Macedonia and the substantial non-Serb population in the lands newly acquired by Serbia: “a certain injustice was done to Bulgaria in the settlement of the Macedonian question in 1913,” and there was a need for this failure to be compensated (2008:161-162). Hoping for this compensation, the diaspora summoned a congress in Chicago, December 1918, the protocols of which illustrate the scale of organization and the involvement of US government figures (Traikov and Mitev, 1995: 53-81). The size of the endeavour remained unmatched in the diaspora. The churches were an active, if not a leading, part of this movement. In fact, the chair of the congress was Reverend Nakov. Many religious figures gave speeches, including American Protestant missionaries working in Bulgaria and contested areas. Before the beginning of the Paris Peace

Conference, the Bulgarian priest in Indianapolis made a patriotic appeal to the immigrants (Traikov and Mitev, 1995:90-94). The congress in Chicago considered the historical facts, the possible post-war results for either the autonomy of Macedonian areas or their annexation to Bulgaria and voted for the annexation: “With our arguments we will convince the Peace conference [Paris] in our just cause” (1995:70). The congress sent a petition with the results to the then USA President W. Wilson asking him to influence the decision of the Great Powers in favour of the Bulgarian Macedonians.  

In fact, the US opposed the decision of the Paris conference which took Thrace from Bulgaria and gave it to Greece thus depriving Bulgaria of an outlet to the Aegean Sea (Roucek, 1948:75). The attempt was in vain, though the Neuilly agreement (1919) included a clause that could help to solve the Bulgarian problem (alt.48), guaranteeing freedom and access to Aegean Sea. However, the following conferences of Sevres (1920) and Lausanne (1923) left little hope for ethnic Bulgarians from Thrace and Macedonia. The freshly-formed Nation Organization promised rights for all minority groups but the aftermath of the war—years of treaties and conferences discussing the borders—left the population unprotected against local violence. The repercussions of WWI for the Balkans were prolonged.

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62 Along with the collection of documents by Traikov and Mitev (1995), another archival document is available on internet (http://www.promacedonia.org/bugarash/bginus/mbinus.html) both in English and Bulgarian with photographs of the Macedono-Bulgarian Congress, December 1-6, 1918, pictures of passports of immigrants and their ethnicity. Included are many business advertisements which describe the business, the name of the owner, and his village in the homeland. Accessed on 8 Jan. 2015.

63 Diaspora activities in this regard must be understood through the documents and maps from this period, including the British foreign office information on the population in Macedonian areas (Evans, 2008:106), which showed that the majority was Slavic of Bulgarian ethnicity. See footnote 66.

The diaspora did not give up and continued advocating for their homeland natives at all levels—inter-communal (churches included), governmental, and international. The records of the diaspora documents for the years up till 1944 show a period of intensive political engagement (Traikov and Mitev, 1995). In 1922, the immigrants formed the Macedonian Political Organization (MPO, later “Patriotic”) with multiple branches in USA and Canada to work for the independence of Macedonia and to represent the diaspora officially in defense of the Macedonian Bulgarians in Serbia and Greek proper.\(^\text{65}\) A document of the British Foreign Office comments on the “heavy-handedness” of Serbian officials in ‘serbizing’ the Muslims and Bulgarians after the Balkan Wars in 1913: “In Serbian Macedonia it is shared by the Muslim, Bulgar, Grecoman, Vlach and Jewish subjects… a State [Serbia], which, [is] indifferent to present and future suffering of a new colony….to an extent unknown in the blackest days of the Turkish regime” (British Foreign Office, Evans, 2008:106).\(^\text{66}\) By 1927 conditions had worsened and a diaspora document protested the murders in Belgrade, Zagreb and Serbian Macedonia, as well as the lack of basic rights for “all Macedonian Bulgarians, Vlahs, Turks… and all non-Serbian people” (Traikov and Mitev, 1995:132). The diaspora

\(^\text{65}\) At this point the Bulgarian ethnicity and language of the population in Macedonian areas is not contested and has not yet become an issue. This can be seen from the documents of the diaspora and the Macedono Political Organization for the period before 1944 (Traikov and Mitev, 1995). In 1952 the organization changed its name to the Macedonian Patriotic Organization, which still exists today.

\(^\text{66}\) British Foreign Office FO 371/1748/57490 (Skopje, 14 Dec 1913) and FO 371/1748/55169 (16 Nov 1913) as cited in Evans, 2008:106. The population of Macedonian areas was predominantly ethnic Bulgarians. Lamouche (1928:12) and Weigand, (1924:81) are giving the following numbers: Bulgarians 1,179,000; Turks 498,000; Greeks 225,000; Romanians 78,000; Albanians 125,000; Jews 70,000; Gypsies 55,000; others 22,000. See also maps 3 and 4. However, after the Balkan Wars, to avoid an ethnic specification all Slavic population in Macedonian Serbia were called South-Slavs. Officially, it is after 1945, with the formation of the Yugoslav federation, that Macedonian as an ethnic rather than a geographical category first appears. Yasmee observes “…it was widely anticipated that the Macedonian Slavs would continue to evolve as an integral part of the modern Bulgarian nation, and that, in the event of the Ottoman Empire's demise, Macedonia would be included in a Bulgarian successor-state. That these anticipations proved false was due not to any intrinsic peculiarities of the Macedonian Slavs, setting them apart from the Bulgarians, but to a series of catastrophic events, which, over a period… diverted the course of Macedonian history away from its presumed trend” (1995:132-133).
sent a petition to the US State Secretary in Washington seeking “protection …human rights and freedom.” The letter offers a concise account of the history and nature of the Macedonian question starting from the San Stefano and Berlin Treaties and continuing with examples of suppression and denationalization:

 Especially for us, the Macedonian Bulgarians, the conditions are horrible…. Under the Turkish regime we had …1373 schools, …1331 churches, 294 chapels, 273 monasteries with 7 Metropolitans, newspapers, journals, and libraries. Today we have nothing …; our libraries and Bulgarian books are burned and nothing published in Bulgaria is allowed to enter in the country. It is forbidden for people to speak their native language and it forced us to change the endings of our names to Greek or Serbia endings.” (1995:143).

Further, the letter cites the case, which became internationally known, of “50 students in Serbian Macedonia who were arrested and tortured to death for having Bulgarian literature in their possession” (1995:143). Prpic also comments that “in Macedonia the long Turkish oppression was exchanged for Greek and Serbian oppression” (1978:222, 226-227). Soon all Slavs including ethnic Bulgarians from Macedonia became Slavophones in Greece and South Slavs in Serbia (Yasmee, 1995:121-132). The petition also comments on the results of the Peace Treaties and concludes that the lack of tolerance by Greek and Serbian governments could “threaten to break the future peace in the Balkans and, as a result, in Europe” (Traikov and Mitev, 1995:144), an insight that was substantiated by the wars of the 20th century. Moreover, this 1927 letter shows that diaspora efforts to retain ‘bulgarianness’ had been in clear discord with the growing communist influence and the Comintern’s strategy for the Balkans, which will be discussed in the context of the second wave.
However, while the political fervour and devotion to the cause was a force in diaspora, the government of Bulgaria was inadequately unsupportive. At this time the state began to be perceived as having betrayed the interests of ethnic Bulgarians, in and out of the country. Left with impossibly heavy reparations and losses in land and property, the state was financially weakened, politically vulnerable, and overwhelmed with its immediate survival.

It was hardly able to care for the migrants. The refugee stream from Eastern Thrace (Turkey) and Greek Macedonia to Bulgaria took a toll on the country and on peaceful coexistence between the states. Milletich documents in 1913 the ruin of the Bulgarian population in Thrace (2003 [1918]). Some scholars consider the events as a genocide preceding that of the Armenians. Hundreds of thousands of the surviving refugees moved to Bulgaria with an estimated loss of 10 million dollars (around a billion today) in land and housing, a problem that remains unresolved between Turkey and Bulgaria (2003:vii, 420-433). In regards to refugees from Greece, the 1927 Caphandaris-Molloff Agreement established that the Greek government would pay the Bulgarian government for the properties—churches, schools, and cemeteries in addition to the houses—left behind. To members of the diaspora this agreement was a betrayal of national interests, for it amounted to erasing their ethnic


68 This historical moment still needs more research and scholarly attention. Miletich witnessed and described firsthand the ruin of the Thracian Bulgarians and his book includes statistics and documents. Prof. Dimitrov and S. Raichev express an opinion that the available documents reveal another 20th century genocide (in Miletich, 2003: xii-xv, 401-433).


70 Here is a link to the agreement accessed on 23 March 2014: http://www.worldcourts.com/peji/eng/decisions/1932.03.08_greco_bulgarian.htm
The diaspora, including the churches, erupted in protest and wrote to the US President asking him to intervene against the agreement (Traikov and Mitev, 1995:129).

The archival documents reveal that activity in support of the Macedonian cause continued in the 1930s in the form of disseminating information and lobbying at the community and government levels, both in North America and Europe. A campaign by the diaspora and Macedono Political Organization in 1930 drew attention to the continuing repression of their natives in Turkish, Greek and Serbian territories and to the propaganda presenting the population of Macedonia as Serbs or Greeks (1995:167-169, Yasmee, 1995:123, Atanasoff, 1938). The 7th congress of the MPO defended Croatian and Macedonian rights and argued that Serbian policies were harmful for all ethnic groups (Traikov and Mitev, 1995:150). The diaspora sent another letter in 1932 to the United Nations asking for an investigation into assimilationist politics in the Balkans, describing the method of denationalization as “terror” and “worse than that in the Inquisition” (1995:144, 162; Atanasoff, 1938). One of the diaspora leaders developed relations with diplomats and senators which helped to alert American politicians and recruit them for the cause of an independent Macedonia.

71 The immigrants accused the Bulgarian government of betraying their past and future: ‘with the liquidation of these properties a knife is cutting up the nerve that most strongly and deeply connects us as a nation—with our past and our future.” An article in Macedonian Tribune, “Questions about our church and school properties in Macedonia,” 9 June 1927, (in Traikov and Mitev, 1995:131, translation from Bulgarian mine.) A socio-anthropological study on the population of Greek Macedonia between 1870-1970 was published by Karakasidou, under the telling title Fields of Wheat, Hills of Blood (1997), with the aim of clarifying the identity debate in Greek Macedonia.

72 After 1990 state records in Bulgaria became accessible and the ancestors of those refugees could locate, and even in some cases recuperate, their grandparents’ properties in Greece. From my own encounters with refugees from Greek Macedonia I have learned that they had two options—overseas or Bulgaria. Moving to Bulgaria was more acceptable for many of them as they are extremely bound up with their extended families, often living together for a few generations. Even today one can observe in the residential district Kichuk Paris (Small Paris) of Plovdiv where the refugees settled, buildings with 8-10 apartments belonging to one extended family.
Sadly, the leitmotif of the homeland-betrayer persisted in the diaspora for years to come. In the subsequent political period the state and diaspora grew apart and the immigrant community’s sense of having been orphaned deepened. The Kingdom of Bulgaria, financially exhausted after the war, was negligent in establishing its representatives in North America. The first Bulgarian Embassy opened in 1913 in New York followed by a consulate in Washington, but this was insufficient for the multiple and sizable communities the USA and Canada. The first Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Diocese was instituted in 1938 only to become defunct shortly after 1944 even though many diaspora churches were thriving in the USA. Compared to the strong diplomatic and ecclesiastical presence of the Greeks and Serbians in their communities, the Macedono-Bulgarian diaspora was mostly on its own. By the 1930 the identity issue started to ferment in the diaspora, though it was already widespread in Macedonian areas. Londres comments that “we all know families in which one brother declared himself as a Serb, the second a Bulgarian, and the third... a Greek” (1935:35). The same author alludes to the increased communist influence and Comintern relations (Moscow) with the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (1935:44-45). During the 1930s the number of new arrivals was insignificant due largely to the Depression. The longing for return of the first wave arrivals was gradually extinguished.

The second wave: a displacement by political persecution

With the establishment of the communist regime in Bulgaria in 1944 and once again redrawing of borders after WWII, a new wave of emigrants fled to Central Europe, Australia,

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73 Londres comments on the connection of the “red brothers” with the leader of the IMRO, Todor Alexandrov. After 1990, with the opening of the archives, the important role of the Comintern in Balkan politics and the strong connection between the Macedonian Question and communist parties surfaced. See Palmer and King, 1971; Poulton, 1995.
The second wave, one of political immigrants, was shorter in time and smaller in numbers than the other two waves. It included refugees from the border lands in Greek Macedonia and Thrace who had joined the emigration movement. By the 1950s, emigration was impossible as the Bulgarian borders were tightly shut in the wake of amendments to the Penalty Law restricting travelling (March 1953). Around 8,000 people managed to leave after World War II, and by 1964 the diaspora was estimated at 40,000, of which 35,000 were in Toronto (Gurdev, 1994:79). Only the Jewish and Armenian populations were allowed to leave the country on a family reunion basis. For the Toronto diaspora the period 1950-1990 was marked by shrinking numbers and a distancing from the homeland. During the Cold War era arrivals of Bulgarians in Canada were isolated cases.

The second wave of migration differed substantially from the preceding one by its socioeconomic characteristics and attitudes to the homeland. Many were skilled workers and professionals coming from urban areas, and therefore had less difficulty in adjusting to a city like Toronto. They were mainly young, single males, for the most part escaping as political migrants. Those coming from Bulgarian proper scattered over Toronto and mostly did not pursue contact with other diaspora members. The refugees from the Greek parts of

During WWII parts of Thrace, Aegean, and Vardar Macedonia were under Bulgarian administration (1941-1944). King Boris III joined the Axis, led by the irredentist impulse (Thrace and Macedonia). However the ‘foxy’ King Boris managed to remain neutral: he did not send a single soldier to fight on Hitler’s side and saved all the Jewish population in Bulgaria (50 000). Yet close to 9000 Jews living in Thrace and Macedonia were sent to camps. When the Bulgarian army occupied the territories they were met as liberators as anti-Serbian and pro-Bulgarian sentiments prevailed (Poulton, 1995:100-102; Danforth, 1995:41). In the span of three years the population changes governments between Serbian, Greek, and Bulgarian. Sadly, the population in these areas once again endured political changes and tragedies.

The law against emigration was strictly executed. See note 8. To travel abroad one had to be assessed as a ‘reliable’ person who would return. A preferred way to guarantee return was to allow only part of a family to travel. During Perestroika the rules were less strict, but some consequences for the families left behind continued to be implemented. An example from personal encounters is the case of an acquaintance who was fired from work when his brother emigrated to Austria. This situation lasted until 1990.
Macedonia and Thrace formed closer connections with the first wave immigrants. Being political immigrants, members of the second wave were non-returnees and were thus unlike those of the first wave, who were haunted by the idea of return.

Further, the second wave held a distinctly negative attitude towards the homeland, its members having been considered traitors by the communist government, while they in turn accused the Bulgarian communist government of treachery against the national interest. Resentment towards the homeland swelled up in the following years to the extent that relations between the two sides ground to a halt, which had the effect of bringing the two waves together. A critical break in relations with the homeland occurred in the mid-1950s when the idea of Balkan federation was finally implemented and the nationality of the population of the Pirin area (the Bulgarian part of terra Macedonia), as recorded in their passports, was changed from Bulgarian to Macedonian. The concept of an autonomous Macedonia within the Balkan federation, along with the creation of Thracian and Dobrudjan nations, had been the official line of the Comintern since the 1920s (Poulton, 1995:94-99, Rothschild, 1972:126). Assuredly, this Balkan federation was Soviet and engineered by Stalin. The idea was supported by the communist party leaders, Tito (Yugoslavia) and Dimitrov (Bulgaria), as well as by the Greek party which was currently engaged in a civil war and could not attend to the practicalities of the federation. Dimitrov, as a true believer in the doctrine that the only identity one can have is a political, class-based one, was in favour of forming the Thracian, Dobrudjan, and Macedonian nations as part of this federation by

76 Their families in Bulgaria were subject to continuous repression.

77 In 1934 the Comintern’s Executive committee in Moscow simply stated: “It was concluded that the Macedonian nation exist” (Vlahov, 1970:357). According to the author the resolution was based on scant knowledge of the problem and is an example of Stalin’s methods of rule.
dividing Bulgarian proper (Dimitrov, 2003: 394-402; Kostov, 2010:96; Gibianski 1999:250). As a first step, the Bulgarian (Pirin Area) and Yugoslavian parts of Macedonia (Vardar area), and potentially also the Greek part (Aegean), were to be united. An apparent problem, however, was that no census in Bulgaria had ever recorded Macedonian ethnicity in Pirin. Stalin’s response was “that a Macedonian consciousness is not yet developed among the population is of no account,” and he proceeded to provide supporting examples drawn from his experience (in Kostov, 2010:97). Stalin proved to be right: the census in 1946 produced 169,544 Macedonians. According to the memoir of Pando Mladenov, one of the active members of the diaspora, this episode can be described as a “coercive census” (2005:11). In addition Bulgarian communist government, under the Soviet pressure, was willing to cede territory for the formation of an independent Macedonia (Roucek, 1948:165). The federation was never implemented as a means of Balkan ‘sovetizacija’ as planned by Moscow (Gibianski, 1999:203-204). The relationship between Tito and Stalin staled. Dimitrov realized that he was on a path to losing independence as Tito was aiming to include Bulgarian and Greek Macedonia in his Serbian federation (1999:248-252). For the

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78 See also Georgeoff, 1981:68; Barker, 1950:99. This historical episode was relatively unknown until recently. The Diary of Dimitrov (2003) and Comintern documents published after 1990 reveal the role of Stalin’s guidance in the creation of a Balkan federation. Gibianski states that the federation project and Macedonian issues are diligently avoided in publications and academic studies: Soviet historiography mentioned it indirectly only once in a 1982 article by Gibianski; Yugoslavia had one document published in 1983 by Z. Avramovski, and in Bulgaria was cautiously dosed only in research works. (1999:254-255, notes 8 and 9).

79 See the national statistics of Bulgaria http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/11223/statistical-data, accessed on 14 June 2014. All censuses preceding 1946 show a lack of ethnic Macedonians in Bulgaria. However, following Stalin’s suggestion, the censuses of 1946 and 1956 suddenly show 169,544 and 187,789 respectively. After the Balkan federation idea was rejected, these numbers declined to 1,000-3,000 on subsequent censuses. See note 28, documents of the Foreign British Office.

80 This was achieved by altering the ethnic and ‘nationality’ status in passports from Bulgarian to Macedonian and modifying the census results. Two of my interviewees mentioned that their fathers had been subject to the pressure of changing their ethnic identification in the passports from Bulgarian to Macedonian.

81 Roucek presents a sharp political account on Bulgarian and Macedonian history, Pan-Slavic idea, and the
Bulgarian state this was a bizarre, reprehensible period, but it lasted only few years, as the passport and census changes were reversed by the end of the 1950s. In a span of these several years the Bulgarian government implemented schooling with a literature in the newly created (1945) written Macedonian language in Yugoslavia, and imported teachers from there to Bulgaria to develop a new national consciousness. But soon the same government revised its politics and thereafter forbade any signs of Macedonian affiliation towards Yugoslavia (Poulton, 1995:148).

The majority of the immigrants were deeply hurt. This incident was never forgotten in diaspora; it was considered to be one of the gravest betrayals in the national history. Many of the first and second waves who came from the contested areas had defended their Bulgarian ethnicity against Islamization during the Ottoman rule, as well as against Hellenization, Serbianization and throughout the internal discords in diaspora over Macedonian issues. Discontent with the homeland deepened with the refusal of the communist government to accept refugees who identified as Bulgarians from Greek Macedonia. As a result of these

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relations between Tito and the Soviet government after the WWII (1948:43-77, 147-166). He concludes that “…Macedonia had become, by 1948, a pawn in the game of power politics, as it has been at the time of the Congress of Berlin” and that “a renewed dispute over Macedonia would seriously strain not only European but intercontinental world relations” (1948:166).

Poulton’s study offers an important contemporary insight into the ethnic and politic dynamics in the Balkans, and specifically into the Macedonian question. However, he attributes this sudden drop in the numbers of ethnic Macedonians in Bulgaria to pressure from the government based only on the census numbers of 1946 and 1956 (1995:148) and without considering the censuses before 1946. Most likely it was due to lack of sources which became available later: for example the Diary of Georgi Dimitrov were published in 1997 in Bulgarian and in 2003 in English, and Comintern archives were also partly researched. See footnote 44.

One interviewee recalls that her father was listening at that time very quietly to Macedonian folk songs. Again it is a bizarre moment as these folk songs had been part of any kind of gathering, especially around the table, and to people they were part of the traditional folk tunes.

The unsettledness of this period is recollected in the memoirs of Mladenov who was a refugee from Greek Macedonia persecuted for insisting on being ethnic Bulgarian, then jailed in Bulgaria for the same reason as he refused to be considered Macedonian, before immigrating to Canada (2005:5-116). With the Balkan
episodes, many in the diaspora opposed the traditional raising of the Bulgarian flag in the churches (Kostov, 2010:163). A recent collection of documents captures the emotions of first and second waves from this period in its subtitle “Bulgaria – our Stepmother” (Gadjev, 2006).\textsuperscript{85} A further problem with the relationship between the diaspora and the place of birth was the lack of Bulgarian diplomatic missions.

The diaspora focus in Toronto shifted from homeland politics to internal Balkan-diaspora relations. Now the Macedonian identity became a source of discord among the Greek, Serbian/Macedonian and Bulgarian diaspora groups, resulting in increased competition for new members. Before the 1940s, those arriving from Greek Macedonia generally identified themselves as Macedonian Bulgarians. After World War II, some arrivals began to self-identify as Slavophone Greek or simply Greek and they joined the Greek diaspora and its churches. Those from Yugoslavia who self-identified as Macedonians or Macedonian Bulgarians typically joined the Serbian or Macedono-Bulgarian diaspora groups (Kostov, 2010:157-160).\textsuperscript{86} After 1944, immigrants from the Yugoslav Federative Republic Macedonia at first joined the Macedono-Bulgarian and Serbian churches. The competition for customers was mainly between the Greek and Serbian/Macedonian communities; their churches relied on active diplomatic and financial support from Greece and Serbia respectively. The Macedono-Bulgarian community counted only on its internal resources and the two churches that represented its diaspora at this time. The diaspora was in survival mode, though its

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\textsuperscript{85} The word used for stepmother in the subtitle is ‘mashteha’ which has the negative connotation of an uncaring stepmother.

\textsuperscript{86} Choosing one’s belonging was a straggle for some families where siblings (from one set of parents) would identify differently, for example one brother as Greek and the other as Macedonian or Bulgarian (Vereni, 2000:47-67).
existence grew more assured in 1966, when diplomatic relations between Canada and Bulgaria were re-established, and when a Bulgarian Consulate opened in Toronto in 1976.

The considerable shrinkage of the diaspora between 1944 and 1990 had three main causes. First, there was the negligible number of new arrivals, a consequence of the closed borders. In comparison, the influx from Yugoslavia and Greece remained significant (28,214 and 67,168 respectively in the period 1944-1964 [Gurdev, 1994:87]). Second, a division of national and ethnic identity took place with the establishment of the Socialist Federative Republic of Macedonia as part of the Yugoslavian federation in 1944. In 1959 the church of the SFR Macedonia became autonomous from the Serbian church and in 1967 proclaimed itself autocephalous. The first only Macedonian church in Toronto was built in 1965. Those who identified as Macedonian separated from the Macedono-Bulgarian, Serbian, and Greek churches and joined the new one. In 1981 the Canadian census officially recognized Macedonian ethnicity.

The third cause of the group shrinkage was the unfavourable political context for the diaspora due to Bulgaria’s membership in the Eastern Bloc. The diaspora could not avoid the results of the Cold War; in North America the activities of Slavic groups were watched closely and often with suspicion. On the one hand the Macedono-Bulgarian diaspora stood against the political state of Bulgaria and was anti-communist; on the other hand it sought, understandably, to defend its people and their ethnicity in the rivalry between the Balkan diasporas. The Canadian authorities supported the Greek and Yugoslavian communities since Greece was a NATO member and Yugoslavia, though socialist, was playing ‘between the camps,’ while the Macedono-Bulgarian group was approached with caution. Lester Pearson (then Canadian external affairs secretary) advised C. Henry, a Toronto MP, in regards to his
friendship with Rev. Mihailov, a priest at the St. George Macedono-Bulgarian Orthodox Church: “We would not wish to appear to show friendliness towards a group which, though apparently anti-communist, is pro-Bulgarian and hostile to Greece, a country with which we maintain the friendliest relations and with which we are allied in NATO, and Yugoslavia….”

The church aligned for the defense of human rights with the Macedonian Patriotic Organization (anti-communist but ethnically pro-Bulgarian) which filed a complaint to the United Nations in 1952 about the forced repatriation by Greece of political refugees from communist Bulgaria even though it was well known that jail or execution awaited them.

The homeland’s political misfortune haunted the diaspora, as a group and individually. Exogamous marriages increased significantly. The community was growing weaker; its ethnic institutions, newspapers, and activities declining. Some of the political refugees were concerned about being monitored by the Bulgarian secret service and avoided community gatherings of any kind. Churches and diplomatic missions were suspected of being used for monitoring purposes. Consequently, the situation continued to undermine any manifestation

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87 LAC, ‘Archives of Macedonians in US and Canada in Connection with the Disorders in Greece (1949-1954),’ RG 25, G2, Vol.3349, File 9606-A-40, Pt. 1. (As cited in Kostov, 2010:167). Pearson was proved to be right in encouraging the exercise of caution. In 1958 the Canadian Labour Minister Michael Starr attended an annual congress of the Macedonian Patriotic Organization (part of the Macedono-Bulgarian Diaspora) and in his speech exhorted the MPO to “be staunch, and [to] work with sincerity and firmness for the liberation of Macedonia.” As a result, the Canadian embassies in Belgrade and Athens were imbued with protests and the Greek media demanded the cessation of diplomatic relations with Canada. Canada had to apologize. LAC, “Archives of Macedonians in US and Canada-Treatments of Macedonians in Greece and Yugoslavia (1954-1963),” RG 25, Vol.8287, File 9606-A-40, Pt. 2 (As cited in Kostov, 2010:168).


90 Recently opened dossiers reveal that eleven of the fifteen metropolitans before 1990 were listed as part of the secret services, including the North American Metropolitan. See the list in newspaper ЦЕИА, #4293 (13), 17 Jan 2012. http://www.segabg.com/article.php?sid=2012011700019985026. Accessed on 24 May 2014.
of ethnicity, promoting an unwillingness to declare Bulgarian identity and a preference for voluntary assimilation. Suppressed ethnic pride kept the diaspora group soft-voiced and overshadowed by the strong ethnic identity of its Balkan diaspora neighbours. By the 1980s the churches were near the point of liquidation for lack of members.

The third wave: a displacement of longing

Commencing with the collapse of the communist system in 1990, the third wave continues to the present. This latest wave differs from the previous ones in regards to its voluntary resettlement, motivation, political disengagement, inexperience in affiliation with religious institutions, underdeveloped ethnic assertiveness, and distant relationship to the first homeland. Yet, the third wave impacted both the diaspora and the first homeland intensely. The immigrants had witnessed one of the most substantial political experiments in human history and its aftermath shapes the choice of cultural and communal expression in the diaspora. Since 1990, the population of Bulgaria has dropped by approximately two million due to emigration and a negative birth rate (Galabov, 2005:178).91 In contrast, the diaspora thrives and "the new immigrants saved the churches and community," as noted by a senior clergy (C9:151). In ten years, for example, the number of Bulgarians in Canada doubled—from 15,190 (2001 census) to 30,485 (2011 census). The third wave, which represents the greatest voluntary emigration flow in the history of the Bulgaria, could be expected to play a

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91 This is considered to be one of the fastest depopulations in recent world history with a decrease of 13.2 %, or 1.2 million, in 15 years, 1989-2003. See also Norris and Inglehart, 2004:239. The scale of this depopulation exceeded all known demographic losses in the history of the Bulgarian state, including losses from ‘blood taxes’ during Ottoman rule, multiple internal revolts, and the casualties from the five wars affecting Bulgaria from the last quarter of the 19th century until the end of World War II (Galabov, 2005:39-45, 69). The only positive population growth can be seen among the Turks and Roma ethnic groups (2005:170).
major role in the development of diaspora with a magnitude probably equal to that of the first wave.

Two streams, refugees and landed immigrants, comprise the third wave. The stream of refugees started with the beginning of Perestroika (circa 1986) when travel regulations were loosened, lasted until the mid-1990s, and gradually disappeared by the end of that decade. This group has been labeled ‘adventurers’ or ‘bogus refugees’ because their various allegations of persecution rarely reflected the true reasons for their migration (Kostov 2010:164, and interviews). Their claims were a result of the implementation of new immigration rules: when Bulgaria opened its gates after 1990, the accepting countries tightened their visa regulations. The refugee route to Canada was usually through flights to Havana with a stop in Gander for refuelling. After a few years living in Newfoundland and obtaining landed documents, the refugees typically moved to the main Canadian cities. This stream was comprised mostly of single people of both genders, aged twenty to thirty-five, and mainly urbanites. Those who were married brought their families over after settling. This group varied in skills, adaptabilities and preparedness for the new life.

The landed immigrant stream started after 1995 when the Canadian government changed the procedures applicable to the former communist countries. It was the first time that immigrants from Bulgaria had entered the country under the Canadian point system. The strict selection process (around 3 years long) has resulted in the arrival of highly skilled individuals, usually relocating en famille. Typically they are aged between 30 and 45, university educated, with a good command of French or English. Most are socially and

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92 I personally encountered two cases of diaspora members, ethnic Bulgarians, who pretended in front of the Canadian authorities to be persecuted Roma.
financially mobile before relocating and strive to achieve the same status in Canada, confident that the country will benefit from their high social capital. The landed immigrant stream continues, but has slowed down since Bulgaria joined the European Union in 2007. The preferences of people are changing, many opting for seasonal, temporal or even permanent jobs within the EU due to the greater convenience of travel within Europe. As a result the necessity for permanent relocation is diminished.

Both streams of the third wave of emigrants to North America and Australia are strongly motivated by personal choices beyond the economic. Before 1990, their limited opportunities for self-realization created a sense of apathy and disconnectedness which rapidly gave way to euphoric hope following the collapse of the Berlin Wall. Regrettably, the tension between the old mentality and the new democratic institutions persists. The existential anxiety and chaos of the prolonged transitional period has led to insecurity; while non-life threatening, it does affect basic social and individual moral and economic values. As a transitional generation, the émigrés internalized enormous disappointment towards their first homeland. This disillusionment coupled with reverence for western democratic and cultural standards and a desire to achieve their personal potential, are behind their solid establishment in their new homeland.

The third wave eludes the classic characterization of a diaspora group applicable to the previous two. Personal narratives rather than the force of external circumstance motivate the resettlement decision, which dramatically alters their behaviour as a diaspora group. The first wave is clearly a victimized one with some economic/labour factions and it exhibits all the classic diaspora features, such as traumatic dispersal, strong ties with the ancestral home to the point of mythologizing it, devotion to its restoration which may include considering a
return, and a lack of full acceptance in the hostland. The second wave had already partially departed from these standard characteristics of diaspora by severing the connection with the homeland and by its tendency to full integration and assimilation. The third wave challenges the classic characteristic of diaspora with its almost full departure from the typical. Even within the generalized and more inclusive features listed by Brubaker—dispersal, homeland orientation, and boundary-maintenance (2005:5-6)—the new group finds a loose fit under the classification. Aside from its dispersal, the connection with the birth place (now unobstructed) and level of preservation of a distinctive identity are ambivalent. De-emphasizing a homeland orientation and aspirations to return to it have been identified by Clifford as part of the process of globalization (1994: 302-338) and the third wave of the diaspora seems to be consistent with this trend. Its voluntary resettlement as a search for wellbeing is less concerned with economic motivations, though this impetus is never entirely absent. For the third wave, resettlement is largely an emotional choice, coinciding with and influenced by the evolving era of globalization. At the very beginning of post-Wall emigration, Tölölyan foresaw that the process of de-territorialization, transnationalism, cultural hybridity, and an evolving sense of multiple belonging would lead to new theoretical challenges in defining diasporas (1991, 1996). The new realities are giving rise to “new forms of migration, mobility, and mediatisation” (Quason and Daswani, 2013:2-21).

The homeland and the prospect of return, are hardly objects of idealization for the post-Wall immigrants. Disappointment and disapproval of the state often prevail. While many maintain contact with families left behind and support them, this relationship is primarily one of

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responsibility and care. One interviewee explained that, while the years lived in Bulgaria cannot be erased and must be valued, “this [Canada] is what I call a home at the moment” (I7:A.8). Many confirm a feeling of appreciation and connectedness with the nature, history, and culture of their birth land, but the failure of the country as a political state seems to overshadow their natural attachment to it. This resonates in comments such as “I don’t feel nostalgia, not for ‘that’ country [Bulgaria]. Communism was a cancer; now what we see is the metastasis” (I10:A.9). This denial of nostalgia may be related to the experience of having lived in exile in their birth country.94 Another interviewee shared that a return is not in people’s minds: “The political [immigrants] never returned and died here, and the new immigrants also do not care to return; an acquaintance of mine hasn’t been to Bulgaria since 1990” (I4:A.11). Sixty percent of the interviewees do return for short periods to look after parents and relatives, but they appear to have transferred their positive sentiments to Canada, and to view it as a new homeland: “My relationship with Canada is as parent-child. Canada accepted me unreservedly and I am accepting her unreservedly” (I11:A.10). The latter comment is an indication that boundary maintenance as a distinctive diaspora feature is also likely to become less pronounced. Everyone needs a place to call home even or especially in the state of increased mobility and connectedness brought by the 21st century. ‘Home’ for the diaspora group is (or will be) possibly a personal construction of choice and not particularly related to ethnicity or bound to the land of their birth. The familiarity of Canadian culture and appreciation of its values are additional elements that may smooth boundary-maintenance away.

94 For some people “the most painful immigration is the one in the native country...who are closed away from the world and rejected by their own state....” (Mastagar, 2001:52)
Further, the political indifference of the new arrivals removes the binding common-cause typical of previous waves. Their interest in politics, Bulgarian or Canadian is insignificant. Only half of the respondents in this study indicate that they read Bulgarian newspapers, and one third that they participate in elections. In comparison, descendants of the first wave continue the involvement started by their parents in regards to politics, community, homeland, diaspora and inter-diaspora issues. One of these descendants, a church board member, stated: “We, MPO [Macedono Patriotic Organization] people, who are born here [in Canada], believe in politics” (I6:A.16), a sentiment that translates into caring for the church membership and defending Bulgarian ethnicity and language.\(^5\) Another interviewee from the second generation of the first wave commented that he was displeased that “the University of Toronto offers a program of Macedonian language, codified in 1945, but Bulgarian, which is the first written Slavonic language from the 9th century CE is not. I want to see that changed” (I12:A.11) Here the point of division between the previous waves and the post-1990 arrivals is apparent: the third wave are uninterested in debates about Macedonia (Kostov, 2010:166 and personal conversations); they accept and support the status quo. An interviewee, from Bulgarian part of terra Macedonia who is a friend of a Macedonian from Macedonia shared: “When we get together I refuse to speak about history or language and say ‘let’s leave it and enjoy the party.’” Cosmopolitan in attitude, the last wave respect the choice of self-identity and affiliation; belonging to the EU has reinforced that outlook. The recent arrivals do not

\(^5\) The same interviewee is a chair of a church board and is involved in publishing the newspaper *Macedonian Tribune*, Toronto Chapter. The newspaper supports independent Macedonia and advocates for Macedonia in Canada and USA, but in regards to the language, ethnicity, and shared history it is pro-Bulgarian. In Toronto the *Macedonian Tribune* is published in Bulgarian. The interviewee’s grandfather came first to Canada and being Bulgarian from Macedonia was treasured “I believe in Macedonia, but I am Bulgarian.” He explains: “To me the notion of being Macedonian is similar to the notion of being Canadian. Who is ethnic Canadian? There is no such thing as an ethnic Macedonian” (I6: Conversations).
believe in politics and have developed a more self-centered stance. A corollary of this may be indifference towards diaspora community affairs.

Furthermore, on matters of religion and its institutions the third wave as a whole lacks sensibility. The immigrants of this wave were born and raised in an environment devoid of religion and dominated by an ideology that installed the values of a communist class over ethnic, religious, traditional, and even national values. The Church and folklore traditions were marginalized if not obliterated in order to permit a proper coherence between the political goals of the state and the mindset of its citizens. New rituals and practices were implemented at every level—including celebrative yearly cycles and passages of life—to replace the old customs. A five-point star (a symbol of the new society) often replaced the traditional cross on graves. All celebrations of the passages of life usually performed in a church—Christening, marriage, and death—were transformed into civil rituals performed in newly designated buildings. New celebrations became popular, and some of them were adopted in the second homeland—like Child’s day, June 1st. Atheism replaced Eastern Orthodox Christianity. Churches and monastic buildings were reduced to tourist attractions and museum monuments. The World Way Survey (1981-2001) confirms that in regards to religious beliefs and church participation Bulgaria is now one of the most secular countries in the world (Noris and Inglehart, 2004:60, 68). The level of religious revival (values and participation) in Bulgaria remains the lowest among the post-communist Eastern European countries (2004:123-124). The following section will discuss in detail the peculiarities of the third wave relationship with religion.

Along with religion, folklore traditions also diminished due to the intense process of urbanization and industrialization and the institution of new social-ideological values. There
was a tendency to look down on folklore songs, dances, and rituals as being remnants of a past, ‘peasant’ ethos, and they were marginalized from daily life routines. The entertainment industry preserved part of the tradition in the form of ‘exotic’ performances as tourist attractions. Some smaller villages maintained part of the folklore cyclical rituals, but according to the folklorists A. Ilieva and A. Sctarbanova, these were extinct by the last quarter of the 20th century. Still, echoes of Thracian, proto-Bulgarian and Slavic gods, mysteries, and rituals persist today, for example in the names of public places and in songs, dances, and stories. Christianity did not succeed in eradicating them but rather incorporated some of their elements. One example, already mentioned, is that of Budni Vecher (Christmas Eve), which is a redressed pagan ritual honouring the Sun.

**Third wave: religious background**

The third wave was raised in a society in which religion was shaped by Marxist-Leninist ideology manifested in the Denominations Act of 1949. The Act affected the role of religion in all areas of life—social, educational, personal—in the state as well as in the diaspora. Religion, priests and churches were considered ideological enemies of the newly

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96 Performances of walking on fire were part of some restaurant attractions on Black Sea resorts packed with foreign tourists.

97 Personal communication. For more information on folklore rituals see Ilieva, Racheva, and Zaharieva, 1998. However, superstitions continued to thrive: bad eye, breaking spells, remedies and fortune-telling, among many others, persist as part of the everyday life of people who claim to be atheists. In my interaction with newcomers I have observed that their vocabulary often relates to the folklore world of spiritual mysteries and magic. After around two years the references almost disappear.

established order and the regulations sought to abolish their influence. The Act authorized the government to endorse all appointed clergy, to pay their salaries and dismiss them if they contravened civil and social arrangements or were “working against the democratic structures of the state" (art.12). The Act established the right of state authorities to fully control religious institutions and legally intervene in church affairs at all levels. The Church was prohibited from opening missions, performing charities or any kind or community activities (art.23). Clerical education was impoverished, the clergy undermined and disempowered, and the population alienated from religious institutions.

The clerics have traditionally been among the most educated and socially engaged people in Bulgaria, leaders of spiritual and national political events. Pre-1944 clergy typically held secular and religious degrees from prestigious European universities. An example was Metropolitan Boris, who spoke 13 languages and held degrees in law, economics, pedagogy and theology; his father was a participant in the Ilinden Uprising. Another was Metropolitan Stephan, who held PhDs in philosophy, literature and theology; together with Metropolitan Kiril they became the main leaders of a national movement that saved the entire Jewish population of the country (50,000) from deportation. Unlike immigrants of the third wave, those of the first and second wave had the chance to witness similar individuals, spiritually and civically inspired leaders. Under the communist regime, church employees and their relatives were prohibited from holding any official positions and a range of secular jobs,

99 Both Stefan (Sofia’s Metropolitan) and Kiril (Plovdiv’s Metropolitan) are named “Righteous among the Nations” at Yad Vashem Memorial. Every year, on March 10th, an Israeli state delegation visits Bachkovo Monastery to commemorate their memory and lay flowers on Kiril’s tomb. However, the fact that they (together with the Bulgarian people) had saved the Jewish population was hidden by the communist government and has been largely unknown even to the Bulgarians. Only recently, this heroic act started to gain popularity and has drawn the attention of many authors. See M. Bar-Zohar, 1998; Boyadzieff, 1989; Documentary “The Optimists,” directed by Jacky and Lisa Comfo, among much media attention; and Izvorska, 2006:144.
which further restricted their contacts with the population. As a result priestly interaction with the people, including congregations, diminished. Restricting education was crucial for disempowering the clergy. On the one hand, education abroad was not allowed; on the other, domestic universities did not offer religious studies. The existing Faculty of Theology at Sofia University was excluded from the state university structure and turned into a small separate college; its academic standards were compromised by reduced funding and a lack of professors. Very few students (sometimes below ten a year) were willing to undergo the close monitoring by state security or risk the likely repercussions that attending the faculty would entail.\textsuperscript{100} The Church was fading from the everyday life of the people and was forced into a dormant state, a state from which it has been difficult to emerge since 1990.\textsuperscript{101}

The Act ensured that children were alienated from religion and religious institutions. According to the Act, the upbringing of children was confined to the state and was beyond “the scope of the activities of the denominations and their clergymen” (art. 20). Religious education ceased to exist in any form in schools, churches, or other places. The Bible and other religious works were not to be found in bookstores or libraries; literature was purged of references to religion along with words like “saints” and “god.”\textsuperscript{102} People were strongly advised to avoid going to church under fear of reprisal. This applied to all celebrations and rites: civil ceremonies and designated assembly places replaced the rituals traditionally

\textsuperscript{100} Many were forced to collaborate with the Secret services, especially the academic staff. See Nikolchev, “Agenturnata deinost na Darjavna Sigurnost v Duhovnata Akademia, pogled ot vutre” (The State Security agent activity in the Theological Academy, look from inside”) \url{http://www.praovslavie.bg}. Accessed on 4 April, 2013.


\textsuperscript{102} Some of the libraries in the largest cities kept copies of the Bible but access to them was only with permission and for research purposes.
connected with church. Christian symbols were erased from daily circulation and replaced with new ideological icons. Religious culture therefore declined drastically with the generation born in the 1930s and almost disappeared with the following one. Only the elderly could be seen in churches—those against whom actions by school or workplace authorities would be ineffectual.

Finally, the Denomination Act of 1949 had implications beyond the state borders, for the diaspora churches could make contact with homeland churches only through the government (art. 9). A specialized government body was assigned to: (a) supervise the communications and documents of all churches (art. 15); (b) grant permission to every church to contact organizations based abroad (art. 22); and (c) allow or deny the receipt of donations from religious institutions abroad (art. 24). In short, it was the government that communicated with diaspora churches. Understandably, such a relationship with the homeland was distrusted abroad, especially by the second wave of political immigrants.

The first data on religiosity in Bulgaria was produced in 1992 by the World Value Survey (WVS). The data, analyzed by Norris and Inglehart, gives a quantifiable and overall picture of post-communist levels of religious involvement and behaviour (2004). The most secular states in the world today are Denmark, Iceland, Finland, Norway and Sweden, along with the post-communist countries, whatever their main religion: Christian (Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant) or Muslim (Azerbaijan). Among the post-communists countries, Bulgaria (along with the Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia) is the most secular. The figures suggest that supply-side religious market theory (Finke and Stark, 1992), while possibly valid for the USA, is of limited help in understanding the post-soviet bloc countries (Norris and Inglehart, 2004:127). According to the supply-side theory that religious freedom and
pluralism lead to increased level of religiosity, does not apply. The release of the religious spirit from the ideologically sealed bottle did not occur in the post-soviet regions in the way that the theory would predict. Given the lack of data in the post-communist countries for a longitudinal comparison, WVS uses age-related religious participation to measure religiosity. The generational comparison shows a clear decline in religiosity. For example, Poland, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, and Slovakia show steep declines in religious engagement, suggesting that the older population is more religious. However, in the case of Bulgaria the older generation is, surprisingly, mostly secular. This is so as well for the Czech Republic, the former East Germany, Estonia, Latvia, and Russia. Each shows a similar pattern, with slight differences between the older generations and younger cohorts (2004:120-122). Norris and Inglehart interpret the data as evidence of "a long-term decline of religiosity across succeeding generations in post-Communist Europe" (2004:122).

Seemingly contradictory, in the light of the above conclusion, the 2001 census shows that 82.6 percent of post-1990 Bulgarians declared themselves to be Eastern Orthodox. Appendix I presents data by denominations from 1887 to 2001 with a gap from 1946 to 1992, when information on religious adherence was not collected. According to the 2001 census, 83.3 percent of the population considered themselves Christians and 98.6 percent of those, Eastern Orthodox. However these figures do not represent actual religiosity, which is considerably lower: Bulgarians self-describe as being religious, 9%; regular churchgoers, 8%; active members of a religious institution, 0.8%; non-active members, 2.3%; and non-members, 96.9% (Kanev, 2002:89-90). Of the non-members, 30.5% never go to church and the same percentage report that go only on major celebrations (2002:90). Another study finds that only 10 percent of Christians would follow Church prescriptions, with 49.3% considering
themselves to be religious in their own way, and the remainder stating that they are not religious (2002:91). Moreover, a survey by Gallup International on confidence and trust in political and religious leaders conducted in 68 countries shows that only 4% of Bulgarians believe in their religious leaders. The average number for all countries is 34% and for the US it is 50%; in general Protestants and Muslims are more inclined to believe in their religious leaders.

The contradiction between the high percentage of self-designated adherents of Eastern Orthodoxy and low levels of actual religiosity is a result of a close, centuries-long connection between official religious institutions and ethnic and national identification. Christianity and Church institutions were foundational for ethnic, national, and linguistic unity, and hence for the consolidation of a state, helping to ensure its survival through 1300 years of existence at a major crossroad in the midst of the Balkans. The First Bulgarian Empire (681-1018) undertook new, critically important steps to unite three ethnic groups—Thracians, Slavs, and proto-Bulgars: it was the first Slavonic country to accept Christianity (865) as a state religion, and the first to grant a European Christian Church independence on national basis. The Church featured the first new Patriarchy (927) after the great Pentarchy (Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antiohia, and Jerusalem); and it was the first to provide

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105 For a comparison: Serbia accepted Christianity in 879, became autocephalous in 1219 and established patriarchy in 1349; Russia accepted Christianity in 988 and gained its own patriarchy in 1596; Romanian patriarchy was established in 1925.
services in the vernacular language of the country.\textsuperscript{106} Old Church Slavonic was sanctified as holy, along with Latin, Hebrew and Greek—the only liturgical languages at that time. Byzantium conquered Bulgaria between 1018 and 1165, leaving only the Church independent but as an Archbishopric.\textsuperscript{107} During the Second Bulgarian Empire (1165-1396), the Patriarchy was restored and from then until the 15th century church leaders developed a literary school which brought the level of works up to the best Byzantium standards. It was the most developed school of Slavonic literature and it became an important cultural center of the then Slavic world. Patriarch Evtimii initiated language reform in Old Bulgarian Church Slavonic texts and standardized them; his influence reached as far as Serbia, Walachia, Moldova, and Russia (Petkova, 1992:12, 379-416).\textsuperscript{108} The Ottoman rule (1396-1878) destroyed the culture and the educated elite and clergy escaped to other Slavic countries. For five centuries Bulgaria was isolated from the rest of Europe, its national consciousness and historical memory almost annihilated.\textsuperscript{109} Appendix II provides a history of the state and Church at a glance along with the immigration waves.

\textsuperscript{106} See Runciman on the history of the First Bulgarian Empire, 1930.

\textsuperscript{107} Basil II (976-1025), known as Bulgaroktonus (killer of Bulgarians) for defeating Bulgarians in 1018, removed the Patriarchal status of the Bulgarian Church, but saved its independence as Ohrid Archbishopric.

\textsuperscript{108} The arts were also developed to levels equal with European Medieval achievements. One example is the Boyana church on the outskirts of Sofia, built between the 10\textsuperscript{th} and 13\textsuperscript{th} centuries, the frescos of which are an important part of Medieval European art. The frescos date from 1259 and bear resemblance to the proto Renaissance style which appeared later with Giotto (1266-1337). See Mavrodinov, 1943.

\textsuperscript{109} In 1762 Paisii Hilendârski (1722–1773) wrote a history of Bulgaria, \textit{Istoriya Slavianobolgarskaia}, to remind the people about their past and in doing so he became a key figure in the country’s national revival. The history shows the extent to which the national consciousness was suppressed (2004; Berend, 2003:76.). The Canadian professor and diplomat Jacob Schurman writes about the Balkan nations under Ottoman rule: “For these nationalities had been completely submerged and even their national consciousness annihilated under centuries of Moslem intolerance, misgovernment, oppression, and cruelty. [...] none suffered worse than Bulgaria, which lay nearest to the capital of the Mohammedan conqueror (1914:140).
The history of Bulgaria illustrates how the religious institution and a unified language based on the vernacular dialect, became instrumental for ethnic and national formation. But more importantly, this combination contributed to ethnic preservation by acting as a shield against the multiple cultural and political assimilations that swirled through the country between the 10th and 19th centuries: Byzantium and Rome, each with its imperial cultural design, Ottoman rule and Islamization, all combined with the ongoing Hellenization of the Church and population.\textsuperscript{110} The country had no political existence during the Ottoman rule yet the Church was preserved: the autocephalous status of the Ohrid archbishopric remained until 1767 and the Church institution continued to function with increased Greek influence under the jurisdiction of Constantinople Patriarch.\textsuperscript{111} Thus resistance to external forces relied principally on local religion and language.\textsuperscript{112} In this unfavourable situation Orthodox Christianity was opposed to Islamization, while the vernacular local Christianity, together with the language, confronted the penetrating Hellenization.\textsuperscript{113}

\textsuperscript{110} As Roucek comments “As early as 19th century Bulgaria had almost been wiped from the memory of Europe by centuries of Turkish oppression” and the dominance of the Greek Church—“its cultural tyran” (1948:44).

\textsuperscript{111} After Basil II conquered Bulgaria, he deprived the Bulgarian church of its Patriarchical status but allowed it to maintain an independent status as an Archbishopric with a seat in Ohrid. At first the archbishops were Bulgarians but soon Constantinople started appointing Greeks (Angold, 1995:158-160). The independent status of the Ohrid Archbishopric was respected by Ottomans as well until 18th century.

\textsuperscript{112} The Ottoman policy of assimilation proceeded with varying levels of intensity from the 15th to the 19th centuries. It met with resistance, in which religion appears to have been the most important in that it marked the division between the two cultures and their values. According to D. Petkanova, the patriotic tendency was an essential component of Christianity in the 9th century and it continued to evolve through the 14th century. This patriotic tendency is preserved as a main theme in folklore and literature (Petkanova, 1992: 13-15).

\textsuperscript{113} It was the Church that resisted and insisted on replacing the Greek clergy and Greek language service with Bulgarian local priests and native language services. Greece itself was liberated earlier from Ottoman rule in 1832 and it promoted its religious influence over the unliberated surrounding areas. See Sampimon, 2003:6-7; Daskalov, 2004)
Whereas in this context Christianity played a protective role, its official and local forms were not identical, which is a key element in understanding the peculiarity of the status of religion in Bulgaria—then and now. Orthodox Christianity in its official form was epitomized by the national Church and its representatives. As such it was the leading institution for cultural and political survival through the centuries. Its local expression was a more vernacularized version of Christianity combined with enduring mainly Thracian and Slavic, and some Proto-Bulgarian practices. The Thracian belief system was once well developed with an established priestly class, open religious societies—Dionysiac mysteries were democratic—and secret religious societies based on Thracian Orphism, or Orpheus mysteries (Marazov, 1992, 1994). When the Slavs started to invade the Balkan Peninsula from around the 3rd century CE they brought an elaborate pantheon of deities. The pantheon was comprised of three levels: first, the supreme god Perun, along with Bialbog and Chernobog; second, home-keeper spirits; and third, the richest, which included mythological creatures like vampires, wood-nymphs, dragons, woods, rivers, navs (human souls as a creature of death) and many more. The Slavs worshipped statues, trees, and stones and consecrated grounds for offerings (Panchovski, 1993); many of the third level deities persist as mythological creatures in folklore. Some of the main gods have been re-devoted to Christian saints (Georgieva, 1993;

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114 On Thracian mythology and culture see also Marazov, 2005; Marazov and Fol, 1977, 1998; Kitov, 2005. According to Herodotus “The Thracians are the most powerful people in the world, except, of course, the Indians; and if they had one head, or were agreed among themselves, it is my belief that their match could not be found anywhere, and that they would very far surpass all other nations. But such union is impossible for them, and there are no means of ever bringing it about. Herein therefore consists their weakness.” (Herodotus, 1962, book V (5.2-8). Homer also mentions the Thracians in the Iliad, especially King Rezos, who participated in the Trojan War (Homer and Chapman, 1956: XIII, 1-7).

115 The Slavs’ resettlement started around the 2nd century CE and became more active after the 3rd century. According to Jordanes, around the 4th century Slavs were divided into three factions: Venethi, western Slavs; Antes, east Slavs; and Sclavini/Sclaveni, south Slavs (Jordanes, Getica, 2010: 123). Procopius, a 6th century historian, offers a record of Slavic deities and auguries, but concludes that they honoured only one god—the creator of lightning (Procopius, De Bellis, 7.14.22-28 ed. Wirth, 1962-1963).
Stoinev, 1988). Compared to Olympus, torn by enduring fights between the gods, the Slavic pantheon is peaceful and democratic. Proto-Bulgarian gods were less enduring, except for the god Tangra, unlike the Thracian and Slavic folklore rituals, a mixture of which persists today. The endurance of oral traditional culture and rituals as an ethnic differentiator was, so to speak, a solid shield by means of which Eastern Orthodoxy resisted Hellenization backed by a strong Greek Church.

The change of the political system in 1990 in Bulgaria brought a return of folklore. By then folkloric traditions, rites and music were fading away, considered out-dated and pertaining to the peasant, as opposed to the urban and industrial, way of life. Yet the vernacular beliefs persevered and witchcraft, fortune telling, magic, spells, healing, etc. remained popular. The clergy interviewees confirmed this from their experience and one of them spoke of “inherited pagan genes” (C2:A13). With the collapse of the Berlin Wall, folklore and Christian rites started to return. Folklore music exploded in the social media; partly authentic tunes but more as pop-versions, which created a new genre. Rites, such as christening, marriage and the sanctification of buildings, appeal to most of the population, secular or religious, for their elaborate and solemn ceremonies.

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116 The god Perun is recognized in St. Ilia, who is rain-bearer and lightening maker and has a golden chariot similar to the Thracian image of Zeus; the cult of St. George is influenced by the Thracian horse-rider; St. Vlas is connected with Volos; St. Marina is a successor of Bendida-Artemida and has been observed until recently with nightly processions similar to those performed for Bendida as St. Marina; St. Triphon reflects the Dionysius cult; Sts. Constantine and Elena are celebrated with Nestinar ritual dancing on fire (Georgieva, 1993:232-242).

117 The reading of the Cyprian prayer against spells is very popular.

While the existence of the Church was hushed under the communist government, the role of religious leaders in the past remained well known. Though education was cleared of religious references, the study of history perpetuated, to some extent, respect for these leaders as leading educators, writers, and national heroes; their patriotic role was recognized, if not explicitly. Moreover the alphabet, almost divinized, along with the names of its inventors and propagators—all of them saints—had always been held in very high regard. Thus in this secular society, with its openly anti-religious ideology, the notion of religion as a form of national expression persisted.

The third wave of immigrants, a significant portion of whom arrived in the 1990s and the first decade of the 21st century, had received an upbringing devoid of religion and folklore practice. However, in diaspora they began to attend churches and they occasioned a folklore revival. Not only have existing churches thrived but two new ones (in Brampton and Montreal) have been established. The discovery of authentic folklore in the Toronto diaspora from around 2005 was the most unexpected and surprising element in the research for this study. Currently several vocal and dance groups which draw on the folklore tradition are functioning both in the churches and beyond them. Rituals, village-related and long defunct in urban Bulgaria, have reappeared in cosmopolitan Toronto. The pagan Kukeri ritual (Thracian), along with Koledari, Lazaruvane and others, are now yearly traditions in

119 Cyril and Methody and their immediate students Sava, Naum, Angelarii, Clement, Gorazd, and Konstantin who came to Bulgaria in 866. They became the first Bulgarian archbishops and translated the liturgy from Greek to Old Bulgarian/Old Church Slavonic. All of them have been pronounced saints. On their literary works see Petkanova, 1992:135-192. The oldest sources for the life of Klement (Clement) are from the Ohrid archbishops Demetrius Chomatian (1216-1234) and Theophylact of Ochrid, 11th century. In Theophylactus, Chomatianus, Demetrius, Milev, 1966.
One clergy commented in this regard that there is a “revival of the pagan superstitions...as the new immigrant people are less spiritual” and he rejected the Kukery ritual as “pagan savagery” (C3:58). Another observed that the old immigrants have lost their superstitions in Canada (C2:35). This revival might not be connected with actual superstitions, but with the communicative characteristics of the folklore which, for a short period, became a significant element of diaspora life. The initially small folkdance troupe “Igranka” has rapidly gained recognition for its popularization of rituals; it performs for the Canadian public in large multicultural festivals. Toronto is, in fact, the only city in the world outside Bulgaria where Kukeri and other rituals are regularly performed. The communication potential of traditional Bulgarian folklore dances, rituals, and music is very strong and has a record of attracting people internationally.\textsuperscript{121} The replanting of folklore traditions in Toronto is a recent occurrence and requires further observation.

\textbf{Religious institution in Diaspora}

Historically, the first religious centres to congregate the Macedono-Bulgarian group were Bulgarian Protestant missions, which played a role equally important to that of the Orthodox churches well into the 1930s. The missions responded to both social and spiritual needs by opening centres for learning English and providing translation, employment and educational services (Altankov, 1979:107-108). The first Bulgarian mission was established in Madison and Granite City in 1907 by Pastor T. Bagrianoff of the Illinois Presbyterian Synod. By 1913 there were five missions in the US and three in Canada, one in Montreal and two in Toronto,

\textsuperscript{120} The origins of Kukeri rituals can be found in ancient Thrace culture and Dionysius mysteries (Fol, 1991; Kolev, 1995).

\textsuperscript{121} On the communicative potential of Bulgarian folk music see Peicheva, 2008:529-537; Moreau, 1990.
with members mainly from the Lerin area of Greek Macedonia (1979:108, Gurdev 1994:224). The missions were very popular and gained trust by their full-hearted support for the immigrants.\textsuperscript{122} They kept the American public informed about the diaspora group and the harsh conditions faced by the Bulgarian-speaking population in Greece and Serbia between the world wars (Prpic, 1978:226). The protestant missions helped in the formation of the group as a diaspora along ethnic/national lines, which obviated potential affiliations with the well-established Russian, Greek, and Serbian churches. By 1930 the role of missions had begun to decline (Altankov, 1979:109) and the number of Bulgarian Orthodox churches increased to 15 in USA, and one in Canada. Some of the missions continue to exist today.

Due to political circumstances, the diaspora church in North America found itself more or less orphaned, but the lack of support from the homeland church and state was compensated by local assertiveness. The political vortex of events summarised earlier in this chapter caused an unintended rift between the homeland and diaspora. Neither diplomatic missions nor ecclesiastical representatives were available for long periods in the USA or Canada. The unsettled relations with the homeland institutions, and especially the lack of connections with the communist government, marked a period of fluidity in which the churches sought ecclesiastical help from established organizations such as the Orthodox Church of America.

At present in the USA there are twenty Bulgarian churches which exist under the aegis of OCA, Bulgarian diocese. Some of the churches have changed their adherence through the years depending on the political circumstances. For example, one of the churches featured in this study, St. George, was a member of OCA and returned to the Bulgarian Patriarchy only

\textsuperscript{122} Bagrianoff raised funds to support immigrants and found jobs for about 1500 Bulgarians (Altankov, 1979:62).
in 2010. Another Bulgarian church, St. John Rilski in Niagara Falls, still belongs to OCA. Holy Trinity church was initially with the Russian Orthodox Church in Exile but returned to the Bulgarian Synod in 1982 (Kostov, 2010:176). In each of these cases it was the congregations that chose the ecclesiastical membership for their religious organizations. In North America the churches were the first to respond to the needs of the immigrants, the first, for example, to represent the Macedono-Bulgarian group, often confused with other, older and stronger Balkan communities; the first to organize them in a validating way and to help them to assert a visible presence. In fact, initially the churches did not have any actual hierarchical administration to guide them. The folk proverb “god is high, king is far” alludes to a lack of supervision, a situation in which diaspora churches were growing by means of personal knowledge, faith, and ethno-communal consideration. They survived and developed under the closest authority—that of the community.

At present in Canada there are six Eastern Orthodox churches serving the Macedono-Bulgarian diaspora. In the order of their establishment the churches are: the Eastern Orthodox Macedono-Bulgarian Church Sts. Cyril and Methody, later a cathedral (1910, Toronto); the Eastern Orthodox Macedono-Bulgarian Church St. George (1943, Toronto); the Eastern Orthodox St. Ivan Rilski (1963, Niagara Falls); the Eastern Orthodox Macedono-Bulgarian Church Holy Trinity (1974, Toronto); L’Eglise Orthodoxe Bulgare, St. Ivan Rilski (2002, Montreal), and the Eastern Orthodox Bulgarian Church, St. Dimitar (2004, Brampton, GTA). There are also two missions in Ontario: the Holy Transfiguration, Huntsville, and Orthodox Mission, Richmond Hill.¹²³ Church-like groups, which function on a regular basis, have been formed in Vancouver and Ottawa by third wave immigrants. In Ottawa, one group attends

¹²³ Both missions are part of the Bulgarian Diocese but serve congregations from other ethnic groups.
Ukrainian church services and hires its hall for separate church celebrations. The following chapters focus on only four churches which encompass the main body of Toronto and GTA diaspora members and their activities: Sts. Cyril and Methody, St. George, Holy Trinity, and St. Dimitar.

The role of the religious institution was influenced by the first and (partly) the second wave’s political engagement with the homeland. The echoes of Balkan politics mixed with ecclesiastical voices to form an antiphonic line of this story. Thus the four churches in Toronto and GTA were established by splitting from each other on the grounds of personal-political disagreements (C5:95b; 2010:176-177). Until 1944 the community focused its attention on natives left in Thrace and the Macedonian regions, and often the activities of the Macedono Political/Patriotic Organization engaged the church. The 50th anniversary almanac (1910-1960) of the first church, Sts. Cyril and Methody, documents the religio-ethnic enthusiasm and political endeavour of the time. It uses the old orthographic script of the pre-1945 Bulgarian language reform, thus making both a strong political and cultural statement of ethnic belonging. The protocols of the inaugural meetings in 1911 reveal that the committee was all male, aged 21 to 30, and selected from delegates representing the village

124 This information was provided in a conversation with the Bulgarian embassy in Ottawa, August 2014.

125 Antiphonal or responsorial singing is a base of the Eastern Orthodox liturgy. From the Greek ἀντίφωνον, ἀντί "opposite" and φωνή "voice." The ancient Greek tragedy (6th to 5th century BCE) is antiphonic where the actor and chorus are engaged in dialogue. The Christian Orthodox liturgy resembles the style of classic Greek tragedy; it is a responsorial kind of chanting between a choir, priest, or congregation, singing alternate phrases.

126 The Bulgarian language was an important statement for the congregation as the listed villages of the church founders are from the Greek and Serbian part of Macedonia (after 1944—the Federative Republic of Macedonia as part of Yugoslavia, after 1992—an independent state Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, FYROM). In the mid-1950s there began the formation of a separate diaspora community based on ethnic self-identification as Macedonians, and the Almanac as a whole uses direct and indirect statements to underscore that the identification of the church and its congregation is Bulgarian from Macedonia by ethnicity and language.
of emigration.\textsuperscript{127} The villages are listed, along with their donations. The preface of the almanac starts with the reason for establishing the church: it owes “its inception to Macedonia where the struggle of our people against Greek clergy for religious freedom and against the Ottomans for political freedom was in effect” (Almanac, 1960:8). After a concise historical reminder of the role of the Church through the ages, the preface concludes, “this, in short, is the unfortunate fate of our people in Macedonia and constitutes one of the primary reasons for the formation of the Church community in Toronto” (Almanac, 1960:8-9).\textsuperscript{128} The first priest, Dr. Malin (Theophilact), was a former revolutionary for the liberation of the Macedonian land (Traikov, 1993:189), and many of the subsequent priests up to the present

\textsuperscript{127}“Each village with 10 members shall have one delegate; from 20-40 members, two delegates; 40-60 members, three delegates.” Almanac (1960:23)

\textsuperscript{128}The histories of the Macedono-Bulgarian and the Macedonian diaspora share the same almanac information. See the Encyclopaedia of Canadian’s People, (for Macedonians: http://multiculturalcanada.ca/Encyclopedia/A-Z/m1/9/; for Bulgarians: http://multiculturalcanada.ca/Encyclopedia/A-Z/b8/5). Both accessed on 6 June, 2014. The article on Macedonians, Religion, omits to mention that the churches had been named Macedono-Bulgarian by the first immigrants. Each diaspora history refers to the three churches studied here (Sts. Cyril and Methody, 1910, St. George, 1941, and Holy Trinity, 1974) as their own. However the Almanac conveys a clear statement of Bulgarian ethnic and language belonging. For this reason the preface further mentions the return of all eparchies to the Bulgarian exarchate by the Sultan in 1870 and the loss of Macedonian areas resulting from the Berlin Treaty. These churches and their priests have always been related to Macedonia as a geographical entity while holding allegiance to the Bulgarian church and identity. One example is the priest Mihailoff, who established St. George (1941) and Holy Trinity (1974) churches and was born in Butola, today FYR of Macedonia. He states in an interview that 99 percent of his parishioners were Bulgarians from Macedonia, including second, third, and fourth generations (interview by Irene Markov in Kostov, 2010:177).

In short, the ethnic division in diaspora appeared in stages: 1. The churches were initially formed by refugees from terra Macedonia, who considered themselves ethnic Bulgarians. 2. Later, in the 1930s, they separated into two factions: one adhered to the idea of joining Macedonian areas to Bulgaria, according to the historical border of the San Stefano Treaty and the Bulgarian Church dioceses. The second lobbyed for independence from all (Serbia, Greece, and Bulgaria), a project taken as a result of understanding the unfavourable political realities (Mitev and Traikov, 1995:68). For this second faction, a separate Macedonia meant an independent state, but the Bulgarian language, culture, and ethnicity were not questioned. 3. With the emergence of new political realities, a third faction appeared, one that supported the independence of Macedonia as a separate state and ethnicity. (These factions are the same as those which divided the Internal Macedono Revolutionary Organization.) At present the three churches in question are used by those who consider themselves ethnic Bulgarians from Bulgaria and terra Macedonia. They accept and respect the new state of Macedonia as a national and ethnic group with separate churches but claims from the Macedonian community over the three churches are not accepted.
day are connected to the Macedonian freedom movement.\textsuperscript{129} The Almanac registers the establishment of a separate Cultural People’s Centre (1927), adjacent to the church, intended to host non-religious activities (1960:47-61).

Nevertheless, while political engagements were strongly expressed the spiritual grounds of the churches have rarely been questioned. The first immigrants arrived accustomed to traditional church life experience, which was ingrained as a need in their weekly and yearly life-cycle. The establishment of Sts. Cyril and Methody was a reflection of this need. The first immigrants and their descendants remain the foundation of the churches today (C1:16; C3:64). The new immigrants call them “people of high morals and quality” (C7:148). In fact, their motivation, though political and secular in its essence, together with their shared traumatic emigration experience and strong sense of religious belonging, has been for generations the force behind the coherence of the community.

Somewhat lacking in those binding ties, the post-1990 immigrants present a challenge for the churches. Although the membership figures are favourable, a point of coherence needs to be discovered. In this search the religious institution moves to the periphery of its tradition. The churches face a mass of people who, while ethnically solid, are deficient of a traditional

\textsuperscript{129} Rev. Boris Drangov, who retired in 2010, has strong ties with the Macedonian revolutionary movements. His grandfather was one of the main figures of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization, along with Todor Alexandrov and Ivan Mihailov. In an interview with the \textit{Makedonska Tribuna} Rev. Drangov shares: “All my ancestors from four, five, six, seven generations were Bulgarians. Many of them fought for the freedom of Macedonia and some of them died.” He explains that when the communists came to power, “all my father’s friends who worked for the liberation of Macedonia were killed at the request of Tito and the order of Stalin because they did not agree to declare themselves as Macedonians. If they had agreed they would not have died.” Further, Rev. Drangov expresses the belief that everyone has the right to declare their nationality/ethnicity as they choose, but nobody has the right to change the nationality/ethnicity of someone who is dead, referring to back-dated claims of the Macedonian state on shared national heroes (interview with Drangov: \url{http://www.makedonskatribuna.com}, accessed on 4 Aug., 2014)
sense of community and less inclined to maintain a group on the basis of ethnicity. The religious institutions of the first and second wave focused on continuing traditional practices but for the third wave they appear to be a way of teaching and creating community. Church buildings are typically the only diaspora space available and are often regarded as a place for every kind of activity: “consolation, healing and hope,” “meetings with other natives and listening to the native language,” “finding a job” (C2:32). According to one post-1990 immigrant, the third wave is composed of adventurists, careerists, opportunists, and dreamers who are not religious (I12:B7). Yet, the clergy approach the present situation as an opportunity to “ignite an interest and attract people, so our efforts are towards the new immigrants (C5:108). The churches appear to have shifted their emphasis towards education in religious practices, ethnic values, and cultural symbols as a base for consolidation. They provide possibilities for becoming acquainted with the cultural heritage, including traditions that are catalytic in forming community.

These introductory remarks on the characteristics of the three waves of immigrants provide a spring-board to the next stage of the study, which observes how the church functions as an adaptive mechanism while still having reasons to consider itself a church. In that adaptive role it appears as a force for community on multiple levels and as a promoter of group ethnic identity. The next three chapters examine the organization of the churches as an institution, their architectural and interior design, and the activities taking place on their grounds.
Chapter 2
The governance of diaspora churches: new roles for clergy, laity, and community

This chapter introduces the notion of institutional vernacularization as an analytical category in the discussion of the transformations that the religious institution undergoes in diaspora. With a focus on the internal church constitution, the present chapter analyzes the governance and the roles of the clergy, board, and members in this governance to illustrate how institutional changes and religious leadership are part of a new communal arrangement. Laity-driven, administration and leadership have taken a direction divergent to that of the church in the first homeland, which is clergy-driven and includes laity only marginally, mostly pro forma.

A short outline of the traditional hierarchical structure and governance of the diaspora church will provide a background for comparison on the extent of changes. This is followed by an examination of other aspects of church existence in diaspora: bylaws, property, membership, regulations governing the clergy’s role, and relations between the clergy and the community and church board. The observations rely on documents and interviews and conversations with clergy—seven priests, present and former, and two deacons were interviewed.¹³⁰ The intensity of laity involvement and the acquiescence of the hierarchy to this involvement may indicate aspects of secularization. While considering such a possibility, this study focuses on

¹³⁰As a reminder, citations of the interviews with clergy are coded as C1:10, where (C) stands for ‘clergy,’ (1) for his number in the record, followed by the page. These notes are unpublished. Diaspora members’ citations are coded as I1:A.16, where (I) stands for ‘interviewee,’ (1) for his/her number in the record, (A.) for the part of the questioner, and (16) for the number of question. Both questionnaires, for clergy and diaspora members, can be found in Appendix IV.
how local circumstances affect the presentation of the authentic traditional institution, its organization and functions. The suggestion here is that the transformations identified are best considered as institutional vernacularization.

The concept of Institutional Vernacularization

The secularization thesis refers to the decline of religion, specifically in regards to its diminishing influence on our social and civic activities. This decline can be portrayed as well by the degree and persistence of religiosity, which can be measured by three parameters used by Norris & Inglehart: religious participation, religious values and religious beliefs (2010:57-58). The more secularization occurs, the greater the decline of those measures in the life of individuals in a community. Or, for Bruce, institutions and decisions in society become increasingly less reliant on a transcendent power; secularization is a decline of religion in the operation of social and economic institutions and the extent to which people engage in religious practices, display religious beliefs, and conduct their lives in accordance with these beliefs (2002:5). In both cases, the influence of the sacred becomes less pervasive in the lives of communities and individuals. In reality, secularization is less than a straightforward line of development. While ceasing to be significant, religion is not eliminated in the process of secularization (Wilson, 1982:8, 149).

Whilst in the first homeland secularization is indeed a fact—the social role of Eastern Christianity and its institution is insignificant—in diaspora the religious institution is a laboratory for creating dynamics of all sorts. Some of these are religiously based and some are quite the opposite. The migration of a religious institution does change its complexion. But it is noticeable that the social role of the churches is predominant in the new homeland.
Is this a sign of religiosity? Hardly, and is seemingly contradictory with the third wave of immigrants who are an example of a generation uninfluenced by religious norms. At the onset of the research for this thesis, the secularization of the religious institution seemed to be self-evident, but soon my observations brought perplexity. The roles of the community and churches and their mutual influence produce a new order of cultural norms and practices which changes both parties. These practices and transitions are best explained by the notion of vernacularization. Despite the fact that secularization is a valuable point of reference, this thesis focuses mainly on institutional arrangements vis-à-vis vernacularization.

To most scholars the term ‘vernacular’ belongs to the realm of folkloristic research. In folklore studies ‘vernacular’ is equivalent to “folk religion” and “popular religion” and stands in contrast to officially organized religious practices (Yoder 1972: 2-11). As a received concept, vernacular is opposed to official religion with its well-developed dogmatic articulations; it stresses personal and lived experience as part of the dynamic process of religiosity. Yoder argues for a dynamic relation between folklore beliefs and institutionalized Christianity (1972:14). His follower and former student L. Primiano, proposes the term ‘vernacular religion’ in his seminal essay and argues for emancipation of its meaning (1995). Primiano offers a different and much broader conceptualization; rather than contrasting ‘official’ and ‘vernacular’ he argues that religion is more than the manifestation and perspectives found within religious institutions: it also includes expressions outside of the institution. The essay argues that “Vernacular religion is, by definition, religion as it is lived: as human beings encounter, understand, interpret, and practice it” (1995:44). Further he elaborates that “Vernacular religion is a way of communicating, thinking, behaving within, and conforming to, particular cultural circumstances” (1995:42). In short, the notion of
vernacular religion encompasses all kinds of belief, transcending the official-unofficial dichotomy, and allowing for a new perspective on the religious experience. This two-tiered model of official and unofficial religious practices, along with the values of ‘authentic’ and “true” religion, is dissolved by the term “vernacular religion.” Vernacular focuses on individual expression and erases the negative evaluation of personal religious practices by offering their full emancipation with organized religion forms.

The term ‘vernacular’ attempts to “avoid gentrification” and schematization of personal belief and praxis (Primiano, 2012: 384). It sanctions research that is “inductive, taking into account the perceptions, believes and behaviours of those practicing it” (Bowman 2004:127). It often includes the world of folklore and implies non-institutionalized private beliefs. Panchenko observes that on the one hand folklorists and ethnologists prefer to discuss ‘vernacular’ (Primiano 1995) or ‘local’ religions or ‘religious praxis’ (Panchenko 1998, 2002), and on the other “norms, institutions and other forms of representation and legitimization of power and social authority in the religious domain” (2012:43). Primiano warns that vernacular is not a “dichotomous or dialectical partner of ‘institutional’ religious forms” but shifts the focus from the abstraction of ‘religion’ and ‘belief’ to that of the interpretation of people (2012:384). Yet by keeping the focus solely on people, ‘vernacular’ still opposes the institutional or official by omitting to include in its perspectives the institutions themselves while, undisputedly, doctrinal/official religion is a factor in the equation. By empowering personal experiences, the concept leaves religious institutions outside the discussion.

This study, however, applies the notion of ‘vernacular’ to a non-folkloric area—that of the official representatives of religion. It expands the concept from its personalized meaning and
considers the religious institutions as an object of vernacularization. To conceive ‘vernacular’ religion as elevated/emancipated to the ‘official,’ either in terms of power dynamics (leadership vs. laity) or in spatial terms (what happens inside the church vs. what happens outside it), is to approach the “official” and the “church” as static entities against which personal vernacular expressions are articulated. However, in diaspora fluidity is a modus operandi and there is no stasis; both church and church-goers are naturally subjects of a new environment that provokes new reflections.

Based on my observations, I argue that the official institution accommodations a new body of ideas and cohesion in its diasporic re-planting in North America (given the specific circumstances accompanying that process for most of the Orthodox Church on the continent). To avoid narrowing the study to the stream of secularization, I looked for further options to approach the transformations. For that purpose, I am exploring the concept of the vernacular and expanding its application to the official religious institution. Vernacular in this context is freed of its often vexing connotations. Habitually, vernacular is synonymous to popular and folkloric. However, here it is employed in a similar way as a dialect (in linguistic) or domestic and functional (in architecture); the diaspora church to some extent is a functional religious dialect.

Hence, I propose the term “institutional vernacularization” as an analytical category, aiming to parse the data and detect the syntonic approach of the churches, or the extent of their capacity to attune to the needs of the diaspora community.\textsuperscript{131} This syntonic approach refers to

\textsuperscript{131} The term \textit{syntonic} is used in the areas of: 1) Electricity, where it relates to two oscillating circuits having the same resonant frequency; and 2) Psychology, where the term is used to characterize a high degree of emotional responsiveness to the environment. From Greek \textit{suntono}—highly attuned, and \textit{sunteinein}—
the way that the religious institution practices its tradition by communicating, responding, reflecting, and conforming to the communal agent or new cultural context without changing its dogmatic basis. Thus institutional vernacularization reflects a state of negotiation and accommodation to new cultural norms. In other words, the concept allows and includes a response to the needs of the community without contesting possible alterations in the theological essence of the official church institution though its actions appear to be increasingly secularized. There is interactivity between the horizontal and the vertical, the populace and the hierarchy, which is different from the traditional mother-church relations. Therefore, we can expect the “outer” or social, non-doctrinal layers of the official religious institution to be altered, and the practices of the diaspora churches to be re-authenticated. Vernacularization in this sense is used to examine inclusivity: domestic factors inspired by vox populi, the voice of ordinary community members. The institutional arrangement described below, this chapter contends, is suggestive of vernacularization rather secularization. Institutional vernacularization is used as a strategic term to deal with the church as a provider of community forming resources and its tolerance to diaspora dynamics, including electronic connectivity at the turn of the 21st century.

In comparison, doctrinal vernacularization is reserved for the changes or activities that impinge on doctrinal or creedal matters or the core beliefs of institutionalized religion. It refers to the ‘contamination’ of official beliefs and practices with ‘native’ or ‘folk’ beliefs which results in a hybrid, syncretistic expression in place of (or together with) the official, orthodox form of belief. At this point this thesis is not concerned with the process of
to draw tight. Here the term is used in its meaning of a strong capacity to attune oneself to the environment and to respond to it.
doctrinal vernacularization. The concept is introduced here simply as a reference point to help us understand institutional vernacularization in perspective. It may map further, future possible developments arising from diaspora dynamics. Relations between the post-communist wave of Eastern European immigrants and their religious institutions are at an early stage of development. Whether those institutions will expand to include doctrinal vernacularization remains to be seen. Some customs reminiscent of various pagan traditions are not considered here as doctrinal deviations as they have become part of the traditional fabric. For example the coin hidden in the round bread on the Budni Vecher. Some pagan customs has been so well rooted in the institution of the church through the centuries that they have become “Christian” by sheer repetition (praxis) and through popular understanding. However, when considering institutional vernacularization our focus will remain on the contemporary dynamics of diasporic practice and will not explore changes that might develop as doctrinal. The thesis hypothesis is that the religious institution remains much the same dogmatically while its actions appear to be increasingly vernacularized.

In his latest essay, Primiano, while further clarifying the term ‘vernacular’ coined by him, comes to the realization that the contemporary state may induce new developments in the field of religious studies. He anticipates that the next step may be “the discovery of mixed genres and new religious genres not yet known” (2012:388). In addition he stresses that contemporary religions are in a state of constant contestation that may produce new understandings of religion (2012:388-390). In this vein, the proposed term of ‘institutional vernacularization’ is exactly this—a new look at the religious institution and its ‘hybrid’

132 Both Christmas Eve (called Budni Vecher) and Christmas, called Koleda, illustrate a mixture of Thracian, Saturnalia, and Slavic pagan elements; or Trifon Zarezan—reminiscent of Dionysius celebrations. Chapter one commented on the transformation of some pagan images into Christianity.
reaction to its location and situation, especially in diaspora where all experiences are contextualized. The new term allows an examination of the standardized religion institution not only on the path of history and theology but on its local lived experiences. In addition, it allows the theological approach, while typical in the area of religious studies, but less popular in an ethnographic (and folkloristic) context, to be combined with the latter.

An 'institutional vernacular' approach would respect the right of the church to absorb, change, and appreciate the local dynamics. It personalises the churches instead of categorizing them; observes them in a creative momentum instead of in their role of preserving tradition. Scholars of vernacular religion resist references to ‘official religion’ as it implies that vernacular stands for ‘unofficial’ and of lower quality. In the case of institutional vernacularization, referencing the ‘official’ often implies the homeland tradition; many religions and their official institutions have in fact two versions or existence: one in the homeland and one in the adopted homeland. When seen with respect to the homeland existence, there are elements in the diaspora that become more intelligible and shed light on the extent to which changes occur.

**Governance of the Church: tradition in Bulgaria**

The administration and leadership of the homeland church is organized clearly on the axis of synod-metropolitan-priest. All aspects of the church’s institutional existence, practical and spiritual, are regulated by the clergy. The Statute of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, on which all parish arrangements are based, is written and formulated by clergy. It structures the priest’s duties, finances and property management, and the responsibilities of the church board. Clause 135 of the Statute lists the obligations of the priest: to conduct the liturgy, the
daily church rituals and sacraments; to preach; to educate parishioners in God’s law, and to assist in their spiritual development. The priest follows the orders of his spiritual superior, the metropolitan, and receives a monthly stipend from the Synod. Accordingly, cl.134 indicates that it is the metropolitan who nominates and appoints a priest to a parish and determines his remuneration. The Statute does not record any involvement of the congregation in this process.

Financially, parishes are not self-supporting but rely on assistance from the state, synod, and the Metropolitan along with an income from donations, the sale of candles, taxes, church farms, etc. (cl. 229). The Statute defines a church as a “local unit of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church—the Synod and the respective metropolitan” (cl. 140-2). As such, church property belongs to the organization of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, which is also a juridical person (cl. 13). Often, as the priests remarked, state support is the main regular source of income. This Church-State arrangement is similar to that of Russia, Greece, and Slovakia, to mention a few (Alexander 1987:49; Schaeffer 1994:303).

A church board is led by the priest as the chair and is his assistant. It consists of four to six members, nominated by the parishioners and elected for a period of four years (cl.145). Their election must be affirmed by the Metropolitan. The role of the board, de jure, is to take care of financial matters, the building, the acquisition of new possessions (icons, for example) and the hiring of deacons, singers, and maintenance personnel. The obligation of the board is to support the priests morally and financially in their activities (cl.154). However, the reality is that leadership is executed solely by the priest. Clauses 140 and 141 underscore the role of

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the priest as a chair “by right” who “opens, leads, and closes the board meetings” (cl. 155). One clergy shared in an interview that in practice it is the priest who takes the decisions (C3:46) and that his vote counts for two (C5:90). *De facto*, the role of the laity on the board is minimal; the priest selects the board members and suggests their names to the congregation for validation. According to another clergy, “[i]n the homeland everything starts and finishes with the priest. He is responsible and he is guilty if something goes wrong” (C1:3; C4:67). The priest appears to be independent of the board. Moreover, the property responsibilities are the priest’s, according to clause 215, which stipulates that he “bears the property responsibilities for harms caused to the church.” Thus, the priest appears to be accountable for all financial matters. One clergy commented: “I needed to be a good administrator and to watch the accountant. If the accountant made a mistake, I was responsible” (C4:77). As a result, the priest is in full charge of the local religious unit, balancing all sacred and secular tasks. The Statute, with its 263 clauses, mentions the word “community” never and “parishioner(s)” only rarely.

Eastern Orthodoxy offers a theological rationale for the role it assigns to the clergy based on the image of Christ as the head of creation, while the body, the believers, is the Church (Ephesians 1:22-23, 1 Corinthians 12:12-31). The Church is the place where God’s plan is brought to the people who are growing up to be the embodiment of divine love (1 Corinthians 3:7-10, 14-21). Through the succession from the apostles, the clergy possess the gift of building up the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 4:11). The early church did not define the extent of clerical authority—in fact, there is no evidence of a formal clerical structure in the first century—but Eastern Orthodoxy adheres to the belief that the priesthood is a sacrament passed on by the apostles. Speaking theologically, Patsavos draws a distinction
between clergy and laity which is not a social division but rather a “living expression of divine and human elements in the Church,” one that grants a different quality of authority to priests (1982:14). Another (theological) way of seeing the arrangement is that believers are guardians of the faith and the episcopate their teacher and leader. “First and foremost, it must be clearly understood that the governing of the Church is exercised by the bishop in Christ’s name—not in their name or in the name of the laity” (1982:20). Orthodoxy is fond and proud of its authenticity, and priesthood is one of the areas where respect for authority comes with the position.

Many authors have discussed the clergy-lay relation in terms of a balance of responsibilities. Meyendorff writes that power and authority belongs only to Christ and that no individual or group can monopolize the power that come from the Church as the Body of Christ: “We cannot break the common life of the whole Body and pursue the particular interests of the “clergy,” of the “bishop,” of the “laity” or of our parish without losing sight of what the Church is all about” (1987: 157-158). The Church as Eucharistic community is fundamental to the understanding of Orthodoxy. Broadly put by S. Harakas, the church is “characterised by corporateness, community, and unity experienced in and by the Church” (1982:49, italics mine). Despite the discussion regarding the balance of responsibilities in church, the theological accounts of governance and empirical observation suggest that in the homeland the synod-clergy axis does monopolize power in the church, and that the laity functions as essentially passive. Historically this understanding is connected with the Church role. The Church in the West developed as an institution of power, while in the East it was primarily a “sacramental (or “mystical”) organism, in charge of ‘divine things’ and endowed only with limited institutional structures” (Meyendorff, 1983:215).
Governance of the Macedono-Bulgarian churches in Toronto and Greater Toronto Area

The diaspora religious institution is far from mystical and otherworldly. Each of the four observed churches functions under its own bylaws and financial organization. These arrangements, which stand diametrically opposed to those of the motherland church, affect the whole governance of the diaspora churches, including the membership, the degree of laity involvement and the role of the priests, and reflect the new relationship between the church hierarchy and the laity in diaspora.134

Parish bylaws

Each of the churches observed follows and functions under its own independent regulations even though, de jure, they abide by three documents: the Statute of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church (BOC), the Diocesan bylaws and the local church bylaws. The three documents are not quite in accord. In reality, the Statute is clearly unsuitable and inapplicable to North America, the Diocesan bylaws are not popular, and therefore the church’s own bylaws are de facto the main regulative guide.135 Given the intense dynamics of the diaspora church, compared to the slow and predictable pace of the homeland one, functioning under its own parish regulations is expected.


135 Only one of the priests had the Diocesan Bylaws available. Another priest, with long years of service in diaspora, shared that he has never used the Diocesan bylaws as a reference (C2:156).
The process of establishing bylaws for each church consists of three stages and relies fully on the involvement of the laity with final approval provided by the Metropolitan. First, a draft is prepared by a member of the community, and in consultation with the Metropolitan. For example, St. Dimitar Church’s bylaws are written by a doctor and Holy Trinity’s by a lawyer. Second, the draft is presented to the general Assembly of the church for corrections and approval. Any disagreement between the Metropolitan and the Assembly over the document is dealt with at this stage. Third, the Metropolitan approves the final draft before it becomes an official document. In Canada, however, the Macedono-Bulgarian churches are registered as independent charitable organizations and are governed as such. Spiritually, they are members of and belong to the BOC, but physically a church is a Canadian charitable organization that belongs to the community. Consequently, the laity has accountability and obligations that surpass the responsibilities of priests and metropolitans in the homeland.

Diaspora churches are not sheltered by the Synod organization and are rather accountable directly to Canadian laws. While the official duties of the Metropolitan follow tradition, in practice his focus becomes limited to matters of credo as opposed to administration. Well-tuned to the dynamics of church life in North America, the Metropolitan typically reacts only to obvious breaches of faith, but otherwise accepts community decisions with snizhojdene, or benevolence (C5:90). A priest, responding to the question of whose voice or vote is stronger, pointed unhesitatingly to members of the assembly and board rather than to the Metropolitan (C3:157). In the homeland there is a close subordination of the priest to bishop and synod (cl.4), but in diaspora the distance between the hierarchical levels is not proportional and a church is a relatively independent organization. Being thus accountable secularly to the state
and spiritually to the Metropolitan, a religious hierarchical institution must be skilled in compromise and maintaining equilibrium.

**Property**

As a physical property a church belongs to the community of its members, who are legal owners of the building and the land, and church solvency is entirely their responsibility. In Bulgaria, a church is the property of the Metropolitan; in diaspora the owner is the organization of people who established it; “it is a corporation” (C5:90; C6:120). There is no subsidy available from either the Bulgarian state or the Synod. The budget is shaped by the following sources of income: remuneration for performed rites, including some of the sacraments (baptism and weddings), candle sales, membership remittances, other donations, and rentals. Support from well-established individuals and families have long provided significant sustenance for Holy Trinity and St. George Churches. St. Dimitar Church, for example, is sometimes known as “Kanev’s church” following the name of its main founder, donor, builder, and perpetual supporter. Rental earning is another large source of income for St. Cyril and Methody, with its spacious and well-equipped banquet hall. Holy Trinity Church accommodates a kindergarten. A variety of cultural events organized or hosted by the churches bring in additional income. The yearly budgets are prepared by the church board and voted on by the general assembly. At St. Cyril and Methody’s Church, a building rich in activities, the financial standing is reported to the general assembly every three months. St. George’s board reports semi-annually. Usually, church-boards have a limited amount (up to $5,000 at St. George) which can be allocated to maintenance or other purposes; expenditures above these amounts must be submitted to a vote at the members’ assembly. Not only are the
churches self-financing; the metropolitan institution in New York itself relies on regular contributions from the diaspora churches (a kind of church tax). Therefore, with solvency being a civil matter, independent of the Metropolitan or Patriarchate, church governance is likely to be adjusted to a new model.

**Membership**

Because of the power of church governance and decision-making generated by the members’ vote, membership takes on crucial importance in the new home setting. Members form the Assembly and, as one clergy explained, “In Canada the Assembly is the most important governing organ which votes for the board as an executive body and that is why existing members are afraid to accept new members” (C5:100). To become a member is a process of careful selection. It requires an application form signed by two existing members as guarantors. Then follows an assessment by the church board, which brings completed applications to the assembly where they are voted on. In the homeland, by contrast, parish membership status is neither required nor regulated; in fact, the concept of membership does not even exist. “Membership” refers only vaguely to whoever lives nearby and attends church. The term ‘membership’ is, for the most part, not even part of the discourse of churches.\(^\text{136}\) Parishioners are approached by priests every four years for board elections, in which process the priest takes on a leading role.

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\(^\text{136}\)The boundaries of a parish are delineated between certain streets; whoever lives in between these boundaries is considered a member. It is the metropolitan or patriarch institution that draws the boundaries of the parish. Usually in Europe, and especially Central and Eastern, in territories where the dominant religion is Catholic, Anglican or Orthodox the population is divided on a geographical principle. In diaspora this principle does not apply.
In Toronto, current members approach the church with care as it is their inheritance and possession (C1:17). For the members of the three Toronto churches—mainly the second or third generation of the first wave of immigrants—the establishment of the church is their fathers’ achievement and they feel a personal responsibility to protect and preserve its tradition for subsequent generations. The process of selection of new members is careful to the point of over-cautiousness. Compared to the place of birth, the membership of Toronto churches is no longer a passive and indifferent mass of people who follow and support the clergy. Members provide financial guarantees, exercise responsible administrative leadership, and are the caretakers of the memories and inherited tradition. Although the churches thrive on new immigrants, there is no clear imperative to increase the size of their membership. Stability, rather than growth seems to be the imperative. However, St. Dimitar, a relatively new church, is very open to welcoming new members, including those from outside the ethnic community.

The sense of personal connectedness with the church as a physical place is a strong motivational factor. The executive energy of church leaders is directed beyond the day-to-day administrative cycle of sustaining the religious needs of members to the long-term goal of ensuring the physical existence, solvency, and well-being of the church as a community organization and tradition for future generations. In this regard, the attitudes of first wave of immigrants and their heirs differ from those of the second and third wave. St. Dimitar, the church of the third-wave community of post-communist immigrants, experiences difficulties in developing long-term responsibility in its members. One clergy commented that members

137 This attitude is validated by a case in Chicago where a Macedono-Bulgarian Orthodox church was gradually overtaken by Protestant members and was turned through a vote into a Protestant church (C5:100).
lack initiative and expect the founder, Mr. Kanev, to keep supporting the church (C6:120). A contrasting and moving comment was offered by the board chair of one of the first-wave established churches: “I feel like my parents and grandparents are here, I feel their life and hear the story of the building. I am doing everything that my children will feel the same one day” (I6:B.13). For the most part, the third wave immigrants are yet to develop a feeling of belonging to and ownership of the church.

**Church board**

The church board takes on a leading role as a regulative body of governance elected by the general assembly. Unlike in the homeland, where the church board only supports the priest, in Toronto the board has an obligation to ensure the existence of the church and its smooth functioning. As formulated in the Diocesan bylaws, “All civil and administrative business of each parish in the Diocese must be in accord with the laws of the country in which the parish is located” (Art. II-2). The board hires and fires personnel, enters into agreements, raises funds, and takes care of the building as well as most of the events and activities that take place in it. Article VII-3 requires the church board or Board of Trustees to deal with all affairs of the church. With this statement, the diocesan bylaw transfers responsibilities from the priest to the laity, in effect annulling Cl. 215 of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church Statute (see also cl. 154 of the BOC Statute). An example of the protectiveness, responsibility and power of the church board is the reaction of one chair to my attempt to arrange interviews: upon his strong advice a board member cancelled her scheduled interview. Later, the chair himself agreed to participate, but only unwillingly and under the condition that the questions

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138The diocesan bylaws are not available online or in the libraries. It is a small, unpopular booklet distributed to the churches.
were sent in advance and that the board could inspect and approve of his answers. He explained: “It might seem overcautious, but I need to be sure that my answers will not put our church in a position of disadvantage or be used against us. Now is not a good moment, especially when St. Cyril and Methody Church has problems.” This case illustrates both a thoughtful care and decisive power executed by the laity board.

A church board consists of 12 members who are elected yearly by the Assembly as their executive representatives. In Bulgaria four to six members are elected for a period of four years to help the priest. Although in both places the election requires approval by the Metropolitan, in diaspora he would rarely exercise a veto. Yet sometimes the Metropolitan does play an actual role, as in the case of a disagreement which arose in 2012 at St. Cyril and Methody. Also, bylaws require a protocol of the assembly to be sent to the Metropolitan, but this does not always occur. One priest commented on his communication with the Metropolitan: “After a while I started letting him know on the phone. If there was something inconsistent with the statute we would need to schedule another assembly” (C6:154) In principle, protocols must be approved by the Metropolitan, but “not all the churches are sending protocols and, in practice, things get mixed up” (C6:154).

The Metropolitan is a mentor and authoritative figure in the hierarchical structure of governance. De facto, in a free religious market the most important goal for the Metropolitan is to keep the existing churches under the jurisdiction of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church.

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The assembly was divided and elected two separate boards: one board and a part of the membership voted for the priest to stay and the second board and the other part of the membership voted for the priest to be fired. Though the priest was supported by the metropolitan, the matter was taken to court. After two years, the matter was still unresolved, and the metropolitan sent on 22 Sept., 2014 a Declaration of Canonical Disorder removing the authority of the previously elected executive committee and appointing a new one. This is a rare case of metropolitan involvement in church affairs, but it is used as a last and perhaps only resource.
(BOC). An example is St. George Church, which was under the jurisdiction of the American Orthodox Churches (OCA) until 2011 when it returned to the BOC. The relation between the diaspora churches and the Metropolitan is best captured by one priest who commented wryly, “Vox populi, vox dei” (C3:154) Not surprisingly, the lack of agreement at St. Cyril and Methody reached the court-room instead of the bishop's desk. This case demonstrates that in a moment of crisis, when the survival of a church is at stake, members exercise the option of accepting the Metropolitan's guidance. In diaspora, people can choose to honour the bishop, who in turn applies maximum diplomacy to avoid conflict.

A keen sense of independence has accompanied the establishment of Macedono-Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox parishes in North America since their first appearance on the continent. The state of independence resulted by circumstance and is similar to most of the Eastern Christians coming from Poland, Hungary, Belarus, Moldova, and Ukraine who founded their parishes in North America with laymen governance and without formal approval from any hierarchy (Erickson, 2008:42-43). Some other churches, for example the Slovak Catholics in Pittsburgh, accepted the bishop’s authority in the diocese because they brought to their new home their pre-migration respect for clerical authority (Alexander, 1987:XX). The Bulgarian Diocese of North America was formed in 1936, twenty-seven years after the first church was established and discontinued its work due to the political situation during WWII. With the communist regime lasting from 1944 to 1989, communication between the mother-church and diaspora was almost non-existent. It was obstructed by the new government which
observed all relations with churches abroad. Thus hierarchical relations did not have a chance to develop.\textsuperscript{140}

\section*{The role of the priest in diaspora}

The status of the spiritual leader in North America inevitably undergoes transformation as a result of arrangements concerning financial support, building ownership, church-membership and clergy-laity dynamics. The strong, almost autocratic power of the parish priest in the homeland shifts more or less into subordination to the Assembly. Church regulations and members' expectations reflect a new reality which forms a basis for priest-church board relations and spiritual leadership of a new type, one that is dependent on and open to the needs of the community.

\section*{Regulations}

The Diocesan Bylaws provide guidance for a democratic foundation of clergy-laity relations. The document's vocabulary already signals changes by invoking words such as “community” and “social activities” as being relevant to the priest’s role. The community is emancipated not only as a recipient of proper faith but also as a participant in this process of reception by choosing its priest and modifying his duties according to its needs. By endorsing the Diocesan Bylaws the Bulgarian Synod shows flexibility in dealing with the churches

\textsuperscript{140} Another underlying historical factor affects the development of the hierarchical relations. During the Ottoman rule, which lasted for almost five centuries, from the 15th to the 19th, the churches were surviving locally. The patriarchic institution was destroyed, and the metropolitan was under the Greek patriarch. The situation was similar in the neighboring countries of Serbia and Romania. See Chapter one.
The Statute of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, for example, exhibits a strong, even feudal hierarchical structure which serves to preserve the credo, faith, and institution of the church itself; parishioners are assumed to be, at most, grateful and passive recipients of spiritual services.

The election of a priest and the determination of his sphere of activity is the responsibility of the church-board and its members. The church-board searches for appropriate candidates and offers the selection to its members: “The regular members gather ... [and] decide which of the candidates is desired by the parish as their priest” (Art. IV-1). The priest holds his position for a period voted by the parish, in contrast to the first homeland, where it is a non-elective job. In diaspora, the Metropolitan can recommend candidate(s); in any case he will be kept informed and asked to bless the chosen individual, though this often appears to be kind of post factum ritualistic act. The subsequent article, IV-2, comments further on the regular spiritual duties of the priest, prescribing that he “shall be under the canonical supervision of the Metropolitan.” But the very next sentence stipulates triple supervision: the priest “shall abide by the canons of the Holy Eastern Orthodox Church, observe the Constitutions and Bylaws of The Diocese, and the Constitution and Bylaws of his parish.” As already mentioned, there is an obvious discrepancy arising from the fact that Diocesan bylaws and the Statute of BOC are not popular as regulative documents. Asked to comment, all responding priests stated that they abide by the parish bylaws. This fact places the priest in a form of subordination not known to the clergy in the first homeland.

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141 36th Annual Diocesan Convention held on 16 July, 2011 in Boston, Massachusetts. It is a 24 page booklet for internal circulation.
The obligations of the priest are not confined to the area of religious duties. He becomes a leader of the church Community, assisting the church administration in “guiding and coordinating all church activities” (Art. IV-3, italics mine). The capitalization of the word “community” in the text stresses its importance and signifies an expansion of the common conception of the church as a Eucharistic communion only. The Sts. Cyril & Methody church bylaws of 1959 spell out this broader understanding clearly: “In addition to his spiritual duty, the parish priest is obligated as well to work for the religious, social and national-cultural advancement of the church Community” (Art.107). A bylaw of Holy Trinity Church likewise addresses the religious, moral and social duties of the parishioners and the organization of the church. These statements expand the position of the clergy to include serving the community in a socially comprehensive way, unlike the role they have typically been trained to fulfill. Thus the clergy's attention is split between attending to the spiritual and social requirements. Some of the priests disagree.

**Priest-church board relations**

The relationship between church boards and priests is essentially one between employer and employee. The Assembly and the Board jointly select, hire, pay, and sometimes dismiss their priests. The tenure status resulting from hierarchical appointments enjoyed by priests in homeland is replaced by flexibility and uncertainty. St. George Church has changed its priest three times in the last three years (one retired, and two new); St Dimitar Church, twice since 2005; and Sts. Cyril and Methody has had the same priest for more than ten years but is in the process of replacing him. Holy Trinity’s priest has occupied the position for more than twenty years. Overregulation by church boards seems to be a leitmotif in the responses of the
six interviewed priests, current and former. One clergy reflected that “everything starts and finishes with the priest in Bulgaria. In Toronto, the church starts and finishes with the Board”(C1:3,19 ). Another priest commented on the lack of regulations pertaining to the period of election: “it is up to the Board and its members to decide. They are my employer and I am hired to help them” (C3:55).

The administration of the churches is entirely managed by the Board. The priest is not a member of the Board and thus does not have a vote in the decision-making process. Sts. Cyril and Methody Church’s bylaws list the positions of the board-members and the priest is not among them (Art. 23). He or the metropolitan are approached for advice only on spiritual matters (Art. 27). Holy Trinity bylaws are less unequivocal, allowing the guiding role of the priest with “the advice and consent of the Parish Board” (Art. IV-I). The role of the priest in Board meetings is confined to opening them with a prayer. In comparison, All Saints Greek Orthodox Church grants its priests a higher standing: “ex officio [he is] one of the Board members” (Art. 30-a). This position is adopted by the new church, St Dimitar, which likewise includes the priest as a member of the Board. The incumbent of St Dimitar commented that “my word is heard and I am both employee and employer. Spiritual and social activities are my responsibility; the rest is up to the Board” (C4:76). Most of the priests I interviewed were concerned that their churches were governed and administered in a secular manner. One explained that he understood that sustaining a church in diaspora is a worldly undertaking, but that he had difficulty accepting that “the governance is secular, and [that] it is not necessary for the Board and its members to be curkovnik [one who has the church spirit]”( C5:95-95b). Harakas describes similar dynamics polemically in some Greek
parishes in Australia, where priests are “carefully shut up inside the temple while strongly unchristian forces in the laity control the life of the parish” (1982:54).

Observations on the degree of lay involvement in churches have been registered from the time of the first immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe in North America. Most national churches, such as the Russian, Bulgarian, Romanian, Serbian and others, were established by the community, on a wave of ethnic enthusiasm; they were self-financed and at arm’s length from the mother-church hierarchy. The extent of lay participation in these churches varies. Slovak Catholics from the start of the 20th century retained their well-cultivated respect for hierarchy and, though they adopted the trustee system, their priests remained president, a position that was superseded only by the bishop (Alexander, 1987:47-66). Greek Orthodoxy in North America achieved a balance between well-structured hierarchies on the one hand and lay inclusion and joint administration on the other (Counelis, 1995:73). In many cases, the churches were “independent of ecclesiastical assistance … [and] even formal hierarchical approval” (Stokoe and Kishkovsky, 1995:25). This assessment holds notably in regards to the establishment of the Macedono-Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox churches in North America. The mother-church was unable to provide for regular ecclesiastical assistance due to domestic political upheaval for much of the 20th century. The churches survived by finding their own way; the laity became the sole sustainers of the churches. A study of ministry in America ranks the Orthodox clergy second to last among all churches in the expectation that they initiate community service (Harakas, 1982: 48). Priests are seen as being distant from social activities, a perception which is likely connected to the fact that clergy were intentionally kept away from social exposure during the communist regime. This assessment is not entirely true of Macedono-Bulgarian churches. In the setting
of diaspora, priests naturally become participants in the life of the community beyond the church, and they tend to be popular within that community.

**Approaches to clergy leadership**

The laity and clergy are involved in dynamics which differ from the tradition. In diaspora, clergy functions encompass social along with spiritual leadership, which produces various levels of clergy involvement in the four churches. This study observed three broad types of clergy leadership roles and responsive attitudes.

The first type is that of the traditional homeland clergy leader. His focus is on the spiritual well-being of the community, deepening religious understanding, and leading them as a congregation of believers. This type of leader is often freshly arrived in Toronto and to some extent at odds with the status quo of the diaspora church. Between 2005 and 2010, two very knowledgeable, experienced, high-profile and spiritually devoted priests left their positions after two or three years of service. One of them shared his disappointment: “I do not see my role clearly. What I can give, they [the Board and assembly] do not need. They want to train me and form me as a priest according to their preconceived notions” (C1:12). He went further in comparing the church to a “countrymen association of fellowship,” referring to the circumstance that the church had been established by people from one region and still governed by them. The priest respectfully remarked on the full-hearted care taken by the Board and members, and noted that this is unusual in the homeland. “The first immigrants built the church and their heirs guard it as the apple of their eye. They conduct the church as a personal belonging” (C1:17). Yet he considers that this level of care hinders priests from
implementing a proper spiritually-organized government: “My position is that of a social organizer in cassock,” he concluded (C1:12).

The second type of clergy believes in the traditional role, one that stresses spirituality, yet has developed a balanced understanding of the nature of the new homeland church. This type of clergy occupies their positions for long periods. While admitting their subordination to the Board as employees, they are very conscious of their role as spiritual facilitators: “we are guests in dedo Gospod’s (grandpa God’s) home, and as a priest I am here to ask for His help. This is dedo Gospod’s home. I approach people as Gospod’s folks and I am happy to be of assistance with words and deeds” (C3:63). Certainly, these priests are not entirely satisfied that their views are consulted only “sometimes” and they are nostalgic for the power they once held in the old homeland. But they weigh the circumstances. In Bulgaria, once a church is built it stays somewhat protected—there are no sales of property. In diaspora, changes occur regularly and vigilance is a must. Thus, the priests look on their relationship with the governance as an attempt at synchrony that ensures continuity: “At the end of the day, they [the Board] work to preserve the church for generations to come” (C3:63).

The third type of clergy splits their energy between ecclesiastical duties and community service, recognizing that new perspectives and opportunities arise in diaspora. For them the traditional arrangements are ideal, but diaspora poses real demands. Priests of this type constitute a new generation clergy who have dealt extensively with the latest wave of immigrants and associate themselves with this group. They adapt in stages. Upon arrival, the clergy experience initially disappointment; they are unfamiliar with the dominance of the Assembly and Board and react with bitterness: “The priest is only called a leader. In fact, he does not have rights” (C5:100). Later clergy discover a strong community presence and
unforeseen possibilities for leadership. The post-communist wave of immigrants are religiously naïve and untrained, without developed community skills; they thus gravitate randomly towards the church. The relationship between priest and people is undefined and includes variable levels of interaction: “people approach me for everything, documents, work, air tickets, housing, and so forth. The new immigrants connect first with me” (C2:28). As a result, priests shift their familiar orientation feel personally engaged with the broader public rather than with just the regular congregation. In the absence of ongoing social activities in Bulgaria, the clergy pointed out in interviews, the focus is on the spiritual, and from this perspective the work is more satisfying. Yet this statement is coupled with the general observation by all interviewees that people in the homeland who go to church do not establish contacts; they approach the church solely for their religious needs, and then leave. Consequently, the church responds to the spiritual quest of individuals and feels no obligation to build a community. In stark contrast, those who come to a church in Toronto do not leave, but stay for a variety of reasons. This difference demands a fresh understanding of the role that institution and clergy play. One explained: “here, in Canada, the church is undergoing a rebirth, it is a vuzrojdenska – it is a school and community centre, along with being a spiritual place” (C4:72). Because of this arrangement, the churches are in constant accretion and offer many opportunities. Asked about the importance of social activities, the same member of the clergy suggested a balanced viewpoint: “Though the Eucharist is central, a church without social activities is without deeds” (C4:72). However most of the clergy I interviewed stressed that a balance is not easily achieved and that social necessities of the community often prevail.
With the addition of social functions, the gamut of the priests’ involvement expands and they report an increased work-load. In lieu of the full-day religious services and church management in the homeland, there are community activities to administer. The requirements of this role are unspecified—they involve “all church activities,” including the “social and national-cultural development of the church community” (Diocesan bylaws, Act IV-3; Sts. Cyril and Methody bylaws, Art 107). Consequently, a clergy in diaspora finds himself at the centre of the community regardless of the governing arrangements. The next chapter observes how the space of the religious institution, its halls as “community temples” and its sanctuaries, compete with one another for attention. Similarly, the position of the priest entails simultaneous attention to both religious and community activities.

The role and involvement of the priests varies among the four churches. St. George and Holy Trinity churches are less socially oriented. Sts. Cyril and Methody and St. Dimitar are significantly community oriented and clergy are subject to increasing demands: “usually a priest serves God; here he serves the community,” remarked one (C2:32). Support for this statement is found in the information about the St Dimitar community available on the website of the Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Diocese of the USA, Canada and Australia. The article details a mix of religious and social activities: Biblical courses, theological discussion groups, youth committees, social gatherings, movie nights, a library, piano lessons etc. With more than fifteen such activities listed, the social appears to prevail. It is significant that most of these provide the priest’s email or phone number under the contact information. The next chapter discusses how these activities relate to the priest, the religious institution and the community.

Curiously, the lay governance always selects and hires priests from the homeland. None of the priests and bishops is Canadian-born. Stokoe and Kishkovsky, in their study on Orthodox Christianity, observe that ethnarchy is characteristic of most Orthodox parishes in North America and is connected with the “preservation of the Orthodox faith by means of ethnic identity, and the preservation of ethnic values by means of religious faith” (1995:75-76). Despite the secular tendencies in the mode of governance—modifications and transformations, and the “socialization” of the clergy’s role—the members display a strong impulse to tap from the “pure” source as an assurance of authentic ethnic faith. While on the surface the demand for a strong community centre prevails, the authentic tradition continues to be important.

**Observations on the services**

All the priests interviewed insisted that the sacramental domain remains unchanged and that the diaspora church as an institution is in full accord with the canons, doctrines and rituals of the mother-church. They consider the preservation of tradition to be essential for historical continuity and for the integrity of Eastern Orthodoxy. As this subject would require separate detailed research, this study does not challenge the clergy’s statement. In fact, one of the interviewees was both a priest and scholar of liturgy and his opinion is highly valued. Nonetheless, some permeation does arise from the adaptation of the religious institution to the new homeland; in diaspora, although the religious and ethnic constituencies might be the same, the communal dynamics are of a different order. A few elements amenable to an

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143 To do so the researcher needs to be an insider, maybe a clergy who perform the service. A significant part of the liturgy occurs in the altar space behind the iconostasis, which is out of reach for female researchers.
outsider’s observation show that liturgical services do not remain unaffected. Some initial reflections on the service, sermons, office of confession, and language of the Torontonian churches witness that vernacularization affects the institution in its community relations.

**Liturgy, sermons, and structuring the congregation**

The first thing to notice about the four Toronto churches, is the shorter length and lesser frequency of their services. Usually, they are held once a week on Sundays and on major festive days. In the homeland, urban churches typically offer a daily liturgy, with additional services spread throughout the day, while in rural churches the liturgy is generally performed once a week. The clergy were cautious in addressing this topic, since shortening services without episcopal approval is considered to be a deviation. One of them admitted that the duration of services varies, but noted that the clergy refrain from discussing the matter even amongst themselves: “I would be glad if we could talk and agree between us on what to reduce and when. The services are written by monks” (C4:78). Reductions of the duration of the liturgy by means of partial omissions seem to be a matter of personal choice based on circumstances, such as the number of people in attendance (C4:78). One priest explained that in the homeland there is usually an hour-long service before the liturgy, which itself lasts an hour and a half (C5:101). The other priests state that the service is in full accordance with the protocol. Eastern Orthodox services, composed originally by medieval monks, reflect the monastic ideal of serving God as a priority. A diaspora priest is obliged to take into consideration not only the theological reasoning behind services but also the realities of the communal life. In this instance, if a priest takes a liberty with adjusting services, it might be
portrayed as care, sensitivity, and respect for the community, rather than as divergence from the canon.

Sermons take on an enhanced significance in diaspora. Comparing their experience, the priests noted that urban churches in the homeland can rely on only a small number of regular attendees, and that most of those present are passers-by who do not stay until the end of the liturgy. Sermons, consequently, have a general addressee in view and priests do not enjoy the comfort of holding a “continuing conversation” with their congregation through preaching. A formal and edifying monologue-type of sermon prevails, “underestimated and viewed just as part of the service structure,” as one priest put it (C2:31). In contrast, “we have more sermons here [in Toronto], lighter and shorter, but very useful, non multa sed multum” (C3:57). The groups addressed by the priests in diaspora tend to be compact, with a shared range of life experience, expectations and endeavors. Congregants may arrive well after the start of the liturgy, but they usually remain until the end, and clergy report a sense of “continuous conversation, dialogue and sharing” with them (C6:114). Priests are no longer dignitaries who disappear at the end of the service, as in the old country; dialogue with attendees generally continues afterwards in the church hall. That is why, as one priest reported, “my sermons are short, unintrusive, with questions that we can carry on talking about later on around the table in the hall. These conversations are related to our daily lives” (C3:57).

A structured audience, sitting on pews instead of standing and walking around, is an apparent distinguishing feature of the services in diaspora. Maybe this mode of organization could be seen as unrelated or superficial to the religious experience, and simply shaped by the expectations of the North American church-going public. It features a style and attitude that people find comforting; they sit relaxed, often with friends and family, listening, and
sometimes interacting. Yet, this organization affects the mood of the audience. In comparison, at a homeland church worshippers wander around, unattached by any order, which provides a very specific ambiance for the services; it encourages an intimate level of individual connectedness with the spiritual realm rather than with others in attendance and renders the religious experience more focused, private and unidimensional. The next chapter discusses in detail how the newly adopted mode of structured audience coheres with the spatial design, decoration, and functions of a church to create better community ambience. People who have been regular church-goers before immigration find this ambience meaningful and part of their religiosity. One interviewee commented: “In Bulgaria I feel I am in God’s temple and the connection with God is sincere. Here, it is less God’s temple because the accent is on the community present and the connection with God is more formal; the liturgy unravels without touching me” (I7:C.11) Another interviewee went further: “The liturgy is different here; in Bulgaria the feeling of being alone with Gospod is so strong, you can abstract yourself from everything around; here you are not alone, this is so important [to be alone]” (I8:C.11). The structured sitting of the congregation is found to be “obtrusive” by Counelis (1995:74), but it does reflect a form of special and visual unification of the community. Hence, the adoption of a new style constitutes a gesture of responsiveness and sensitivity towards the community; it offers earthly comfort that promotes greater mutual interaction both among congregants and between congregants and clergy. It reflects a form of belonging or ownership quite distinct from the traditional ethos.
Confession and communion

Regarding the office of confession, the difference in practices between the place of origin and the diaspora is significant. Although not many undertake this sacrament in Bulgaria, those who do generally follow the rules in their entirety. Confession and communion are personal religious experiences, linked to the sequence of the liturgy. Confession has two parts. One is preparation, or a recollection of and meditation on personal transgressions, which requires three days of fasting and abstinence (the day of confession and communion included). Menstruating women may not take communion (Chiflianov, 1996: 285). Another is individual confession before the priest who reads a prayer, covers the head of the confessor with his stole, and gives (or not) his blessing and absolution; in rare cases priests may impose a penance that does not permit communion. In any case, it is the priest who decides whether or not communion should be received (1996: 286-289). Usually confession is scheduled just prior to the service so that the newly absolved can participate in the liturgy and take communion.

Given the level of involvement required by this sacrament, it is rare for people to take communion in Toronto. For those who do take it, confession is perceived as optional; as an unspoken agreement it is not an integral part of the communion. What takes place is a public formulaic absolution through a prayer delivered by the celebrant. A priest new in Toronto expressed surprise: “In Bulgaria it is mandatory; if I suggest to a person, even one who comes rarely to church, to take communion, he or she will do what is prescribed. Here the answer I am getting is ‘you cannot tell me what to do, I will decide.’” (C5:101). The same

144 The level of religiosity in Bulgaria is very low—8% with only 2% regular church goers.
145 John 20:21-23. In Orthodoxy, the priest does not claim to forgive sins by his own power.
priest believes that it is a question of educating people, for recent immigrants simply lack knowledge about the sacraments. Another priest agreed: “people do not confess and take Holy Communion, because they do not understand it” (C1:14). Clergy with long overseas experience show a higher level of tolerance: “it depends on the person’s wish. Our society in Canada is liberal” (C8:143). Another added that “though mandatory, I do not force people to confess—they are their own masters. Our conscience is the unbribed judge” (C3:60).

In Orthodoxy sin is a result of individual moral choice, and so is never a collective failing. Confession itself is sacramental and obligatory for the faithful, part of the true following of the scriptures. Yet, none of those interviewed, clergy or laity, felt that they belonged any the less to the Orthodox tradition because of their diminished commitment to the rite of confession. One regular communion-taker from the third wave immigrants refuses to undergo confession as she feels uncomfortable sharing intimate details. In the same vein, another faithful individual says that she does not trust the priests’ oath of silence; in a relatively small community, rumours are easily spread (I9:B.14). It may be a carryover from the suspicions that the priests were informants for the secret security in Bulgaria, which was a serious issue for the second wave of political immigrants. The second and third generations of the first-wave immigrants seem to have become used to the new mode of communion; the latest wave

146 Matthew, 12:35-37.

147 D. Nikolchev comments: “It appears that the spiritual leaders of our orthodox immigrants were active agents of State Security, one of them, in his double life and role as metropolitan and on a pay-roll as officer of First Division of State Security [Simeon, metropolitan of Bulgarian Orthodox Church in Western and Mid Europe]” (http://desebg.com/religia, retrieved on 30 June, 2013, translation mine). The title is: “Зад всеки агент на ДС стои един Нерон, гонител на Църквата, преоблякал се днес от вълк на агне” (Behind every agent of DS stays one Neron, persecutor of the Church, disguised today from wolf to lamb”). Further Nikolchev asks the question whether clergy in diaspora “has been in service to the church or was a political secret service to the regime.” He concludes that at this time a division between Church and State practically did not exist and that the government of the Church was entirely under the control of the State Security. In 2008, the present metropolitan of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church in North America and Australia who is on the list, published a letter to the diaspora members asking them for forgiveness.
are simply unaware of the sacrament. The new generation of priests has set out to educate the flock about the confession-communion relationship and its meaning, and they report a slightly increased interest.

Language

Old Church Slavonic, or Old Bulgarian, is the liturgical language of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church.148 In Canada the service is in a trichotomy of languages—Old Church Slavonic, modern Bulgarian and English—in varying combination. This mixture of languages expresses three important ties, respectively: tradition and national pride, ethnicity and identity, and adaptation to (and adoption of) the new homeland identity. In Bulgaria there has been an ongoing dispute over Old Church Slavonic versus modern Bulgarian for the last twenty years with strong support for both camps.149 Some language specialists and clergy consider the spirit of the service to be inseparable from Old Church Slavonic. Despite the natural evolution of language, the literary language remained closer to the ecclesiastical language until the beginning of the 20th century; it was understandable for the generations born up to the 1940s and first wave of immigrants were familiar with Church Slavonic.

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148 Old Church Slavonic is also called Old Bulgarian, as the first translations of the Christian Bible in the 9th century represent the Slavic dialect, vernacular for the southern areas of the then Bulgarian Empire. Old Church Slavonic, as used in churches, is a late Russian version of Old Bulgarian from the 17th century (Dimitrov, 2005:99). Today, Old Church Slavonic is used in the American Orthodox Church, Russian, Serbian, Macedonian, Ukrainian, Belarusian, Czech, Slovak, Montenegro and Croatian Orthodox Churches, including some Romanian churches.

149 This debate is reflected by the articles: Dimitrov, 2005:96-106; Enev, 2006; Popov, “Premahnem li Curkovno-slavianska kato bogosluzheben ezik, vse edno da se otkazjem ot svoeto minalo” (“If we remove the Church Slavonic as service language it will be equal to reject our past”) at http://pravoslavieto.com, accessed on 15 March, 2013; Antonov, 2000, “Na kakuv ezik se moli bulgarinut,” Journal Kultura. A discussion on the use of modern Bulgarian in the churches was introduced in 1997 during the Fourth Church Convention (Curkovno-naroden sabor). Art. 21 of the convention decisions support the use of the modern Bulgarian in churches. See “Reshenia na IV Curkovno-naroden subor, 2-4 July 1997” at www.pravoslavieto.bg. Retrieved on 15 March, 2013.
Although it is only for ecclesiastical use today, not enough time has passed for the language to be fully removed from contemporary culture. The last language reform was introduced in 1956 and is still controversial.\textsuperscript{150} An example of the persistence of Old Church Slavonic is the memoir published by a diaspora member and the newspaper \textit{Makedonska Tribuna}, which uses some of the letters (part of Old Church Slavonic) removed by the reform. Often the replacement of Old Church Slavonic in churches is viewed as tantamount to a rejection of the millennial history. But in diaspora the choice of language is determined simply by the comfort and ease of communication and there has been no debate on the issue.

In Toronto, the three languages are used in varying proportion, from church to church and even from liturgy to liturgy. The constitution of the Holy Trinity Church stipulates “[the] use in religious practices and services as languages Church-Slavonic, Bulgarian and English”\textit{(Art II-c)}. The attendees of Sts. Cyril and Methody Church are mainly second and third-wave settlers from Bulgaria and the services are entirely in modern Bulgarian. St George Church is attended by descendants of the first wave of settlers who have limited understanding of their parents’ native language and the liturgy is mainly in English. Holy Trinity congregants are second and third-wave immigrants with a strong presence of descendants of the first wave: the liturgical languages are modern Bulgarian and English. St. Dimitar Church community encompasses mainly third-wave immigrants and the service is performed in modern Bulgarian. However, when English speakers—non-ethnic Bulgarians who find Eastern Orthodoxy appealing—attend the church, English is used as a courtesy. The priests confided that they often choose the language for the liturgy on the spot depending on the mix of

\textsuperscript{150} Some letters as й, Њ, and Ї, were removed; this reform was considered to be a politically reasoned rather than a linguistic need.
people present. The choice of language thus varies, with the needs of the congregation apparently being the determining factor.

As compared to the other two languages, Old Church Slavonic is honoured with a special status. It is featured at major celebrations and when the metropolitan is a guest. In regular services it is used by priests only for quiet prayers or readings, while the parts of the liturgy involving participation by the congregation are read in Bulgarian or English. Chanting is always in Old Church Slavonic, however, because of the deep symbiosis of music and the melody of the language. When Cyril and Methody obtained sanctification by Pope Adrian II in 868 C.E. for the translation of liturgical texts into Slavonic, they were not aiming to create quadrinomial sacred languages but rather to bestow the right to perform the liturgy in an understandable tongue. While neither canon nor dogma, the tradition of Old Church Slavonic recognizes that it is the historical internalization of a language which has been lived as the form or medium of religion. It was projected as sacred similar to Latin, Greek and Hebrew.

Old Church Slavonic presents realms of meaning dear to all waves of immigrants, connecting them emotionally no matter what their level of understanding of the language.\(^{151}\) It was not until the 20\(^{th}\) century that modern developments, including the two language reforms (1923

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\(^{151}\) Old Church Slavonic was vernacular in the areas between Thessaloniki and Balkans in the 9\(^{th}\) century. Born in Thessaloniki, a border area between Byzantium and Bulgarian Empires, Cyril created the Glagolitic alphabet reflecting the particular Slavic dialect and characteristic sounds spoken by the population at these regions. According to Theophylactus (1966), Clement, a Methodius student who worked in the Bulgarian towns Pliska, Preslav and Ohrid (at that time on the borders of the Bulgarian empire) later authored the Cyrillic version of the Glagolitic alphabet. Since then Bulgarian Orthodox Church has used Old Church Slavonic. During the first three centuries of Ottoman rule (15-17 c) the thriving literacy production was annihilated and men of letters emigrated. The population was deprived of access to literacy and education. Whilst the everyday language was developing the liturgy language was not. The only place that some literature production was kept was the churches. Around the 17\(^{th}\) century the only available books were those coming from Russia and today’s Old Church Slavonic is a Russian version. During the Bulgarian Renaissance in the 18\(^{th}\)-19\(^{th}\) century the churches were the main educational institution. Thus the literary and liturgical languages were very close.
and 1956), introduced a deep hiatus between the church version and the literary one. As a consequence, the generations raised after the mid-20th century do not fully comprehend the liturgy. But for the first-wave immigrants (and to a certain extent for their children) Old Church Slavonic came naturally. Chapter one comments on the multiple meanings and roles that the language has taken on through the ages. First, it is considered to be the traditional mother tongue: Old Church Slavonic, known as Old Bulgarian, was initially a vernacular dialect (9th century), later a literary language (14th-19th centuries), and then ecclesiastical (20th c. to the present). Second, the language is envisioned as an ethnic saviour: it played a crucial role in national formation (9th-10th c.) and acted as a shield against political, ethnic, and cultural assimilation by the Byzantine (9th-13th c.) and Ottoman (14th-19th c) Empires as well as by Greek clergy until the start of the 20th century. Third, there is the element of pride: it was the First and Second Bulgarian Empire that nourished, developed and spread the Slavonic alphabet and liturgical texts through the Slavonic Orthodox Churches. All these considerations persist in the new homeland; they illuminate and infuse the church setting with living memories which hold the past and present together.

The mix of languages in the diaspora church corresponds to different identity messages. Some church-goers, from all waves, confided that they are very fond of listening to Old Church Slavonic and that they value the memories it evokes, despite their lack of competence in following it. Fishman points out that “the language is not only a vehicle for the history of nationality, but a part of history itself” (1972:44). Old Church Slavonic, for the diaspora group is not only a part of history, but is itself the national history and contains an element of sacredness. The Bulgarian past, including the 20th century, holds strong ethnic and political expressions and ties with the language. The use of three languages in diaspora supports
different identity marks. English is the language of social mobility and a symbol of the newly adopted Canadian identity. Modern Bulgarian responds to the ethnic identity. Old Church Slavonic is a tradition respected by all.\footnote{152 See Jule, 2007, on language, gender, and religious identity.}

One issue that diasporic priests brought up in interviews was a concern about losing spoken modern Bulgarian rather than the liturgical language. A telling example is the comment of a priest who had favoured preserving Old Church Slavonic as the liturgical language in Bulgaria, but had shifted his focus in diaspora to cultural integrity: “The immigrants are losing their language; services are in English and this is the first compromise. They would prefer to become part of the surrounding environment. In comparison, the Greeks are teaching their children to hold on to their native language” (C1:14). Indeed, Art. 2(a) of the bylaws of All Saints Greek Orthodox Church aims “to preserve the Greek language … and to uphold it through proper instruction to the members of the Parish and their children,” and Art. 2(d) affirms the need for “preservation and promotion of the Greek culture and language.” The priest’s comment reflects a concern less for the faith tradition than for strengthening ethnicity and identity through language. For the time being, this issue is dormant due to the influx of third-wave immigrants, but as the rate of immigration slows down the choice of language will again become problematic for the churches.

**Summary and conclusion**

The table below summarises the observed changes in comparison with the traditional homeland church.
The table shows a significant transformation of church functions in diaspora. While belonging to one Synod, the homeland and diaspora religious institutions differ from each other. The Bulgarian Orthodox Church retains the millennial traditions, referring to them as a mark of closeness to the original practices. The diaspora churches have developed on their own under new vital dynamic forces; they have adapted in accord with, and in response to, the goals of their community. Their effective functioning arises from communal responsibility for solvency, which stands in contrast to the slow and inflexible ecclesiastical administration of the homeland church. Diasporic Eastern Orthodoxy is relatively new and has undergone intense development in search of a vital form capable of implementing its

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<td>2. Property ownership and financial support:</td>
<td>Belongs to the metropolitan or Synod</td>
<td>Belongs to the community and responsibility for its solvency is upon the members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Statute/bylaws:</td>
<td>Formulated and written by clergy</td>
<td>Formulated and written by laity members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Priest:</td>
<td>Appointed and paid by the metropolitan; not evaluated by laity members; holds a tenured position and governs all functions of the church</td>
<td>Chosen and paid through an assembly vote; evaluated by the laity members; not tenured; a limited participation in the governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Board:</td>
<td>Assistant to the priest and passive</td>
<td>Regulative body along with the Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Membership:</td>
<td>No formal concept of membership</td>
<td>Very important, articulated rules of membership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Laity:</td>
<td>Not included, non-democratic</td>
<td>Laity-centered, democratic practices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

153 Similar comparison about Greek churches is commented by Counelis, 1995:163.
faith values. The increased number of post-1990 immigrants in North America intensifies the need to harmonize the intrinsic faith core with community values broader than religion. A study on Greek Orthodox churches in the United States concludes that there is little that has not been “touched and transmuted into an American form” (Counelis, 1995:74). What would this transmutation mean for the diaspora churches?

To entertain the idea of secularization, suggestive signs would include the transfer of power of leadership from clergy to laity, the ownership of church property, and the priest’s role. The observations regarding governance, organization, and adjustments to liturgical services (length, communion, language) suggest: a) That the clergy’s role as teacher and leader is limited strictly to the sacramental department; their influence is minimized, though the priesthood as a sacrament passed down is not questioned; b) That the conception of believers as guardians of the faith is only partly true and includes greater guardianship of the buildings as an inheritance from their grandparents; c) That church governance exercised in Christ’s name is transformed into governance by and in the community’s name along with the deity’s name; d) That the Church as Eucharistic community is overshadowed by the physical and communal sustenance of the cultural/ethnic tradition bounded up with the church.

Yet the evidence may imply but does not fully support secularization of the religious institution. For instance, no impact of the changes on the sacramental core is reported by the clergy. Also, the study has revealed few signs of the decline of the social significance of the churches, which is one of the main indicators of secularization (Bruce 2002:2-3). Indeed, a decline in the importance of hierarchy is noticeable—it has been reduced to an honorary status, so to speak, as opposed to a functional and executive one. On the other hand, the social significance of the church institution in the Macedono-Bulgarian diaspora has
increased, for it is the only available physical community centre where not only religious but also cultural and ethnic messages are exchanged. The secularization process can be inhibited when the religious institution is involved in providing not only a relationship to the supernatural but also resources for the cultural defense and transition to a new identity (Bruce, 2002:34-35). Migration changes the religious complexion and likely the secularization one too.

The leading role of laity and limiting the clergy influence suggest a process of vernacularization. It is unlikely to be a doctrinal vernacularization at this point. The theological foundation—sacramental system, creed, and dogma—are considered and confessed by the clergy to be unchanged and unalterable. It is the format that is subject to change. Or, in the language of information technology, while the theological foundation as the basic operating system is unaltered and its presuppositions remain intact, the same is not true of new software that has been locally developed to allow sound access to the religious institution. By forging their own rules, the churches overcome Episcopal and Synodical authorities. The latter had expanded their capacity to attune to the pulse of community to an extent that transforms traditional practices: the church building is more of a community home to all diaspora member than mainly a “dedo Gospod” (grandpa God’s) home; the service (length of liturgy, structured congregation, lenience of the sacraments of communion and confession, and language) point to the importance of the communal factor; and the laity government provides diaspora members with responsibility and ownership.

The concept of institutional vernacularization, in contrast to secularization and doctrinal vernacularization, seems to represent most adequately the realities of the diaspora church
with their syntonic capacity for communal tenets. Institutional vernacularization could be conceived as being incipient of a secularization which may or may not develop. In this sense institutional vernacularization is a state of negotiating. By shifting their attention from the abstraction of exercising certain religious tradition, the churches focus on reflecting community circumstances. *Vox populi* becomes institutionally internalized, along with *vox dei*, which sets in motion the emancipation of the laity. The role of the priest might be limited to the sacraments, but in fact his social functions have the increased importance of maintaining the integrity of the ethnic community. The diaspora church in Toronto appears not only as a religious space but also as a place where different levels of cultural adaptation interact. In this regard, the diaspora church has been transformed in its institutional expression and behaviour. The dominance of the laity in governance and its involvement in non-religious activities constitute a new trajectory liberating the churches from their official characterization. The motivation for sustaining the community—a mix of faith and cultural-ethnic factors with a fluctuating balance between them—deliver the new homeland religious institutions to the liminal zone of vernacularization. The next chapter observes how the route of vernacularization has also influenced the religious space.
Chapter 3
The Narration of Space

The major stirrings and creative drives of revolutionary events have totality impact. For a brief moment they bring the elements of totality together … (Lefebvre, 2002:4)

A second aspect of institutional vernacularization concerns space as an architectural and visual statement of adaptation. A settlement in a new locality can have total impact on how immigrants organize places of dwelling and develop meanings that bring together their identity and history. This chapter focuses on the physicality of the religious building as a focal gathering point for the immigrants and in this regard investigates the problematic area of reconstruction and redefinition of the religious space. Does the space of a diasporic church function truly as a faith nurturing institution and, hence, as a reconstructive image of traditional religious space? Or, is it a locality that recollects ethnicity and historical rootedness, reinforcing a sense of belonging, and is it thus vernacularized? A focus on the diasporic church as an organization of physical space—by means of architectural and interior design and decoration—will help to reveal how the four churches accommodate a life of resettlement with its ecclesiastical and secular streams. Comparison with the emblematic space of an Eastern Orthodox Church in the first homeland will also bring into sharper relief the new role and meaning of the religious building influenced by diasporic socio-economic realities. Specifically, this chapter argues that the organization and design of diaspora sacred space are suggestive of reconfigured meanings indicative of a shift and argue that space is a

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154 Parts of this chapter are based on previously published studies: “The Narration of Space: Diaspora Church as a Comfort Zone in the Resettlement Process for Post-Communist Bulgarians in Toronto” (2015) and “Icons and the Immigrant Context” (2007).
rather production of communal relations and values that incorporate vernacular responsiveness.

**Space/place**

A common, straightforward definition of place is “a meaningful location” that has a relation to humans and to “the human capacity to produce and consume meaning” (Cresswell, 2004:7). Although space and place are closely related, and are often used interchangeably, they are not identical, for space can be an abstract concept while place is more consistently connected to human meaning (Cresswell, 2004). The concept of place or space as meaningful location can be found in the work of the urban theorist Lefebvre, who treats social space as a reflection of values and meanings which as such is never indifferent. Physical space has no reality, he argues, “without the energy that is deployed within it” (1991:13). It contains “a great diversity of objects, both natural and social, including networks and pathways which facilitate the exchange of material things and information. Such ‘objects’ are thus not only things but also relations” (1991:77). Every action performed within physical space changes its spatial characteristics and transforms it into a social product; every culture produces its own space, which in turn produces socio-cultural practices. The main world religions—Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity (especially Protestantism) and Islam—privilege time over space. Christian denominations are divided in their attitude to space: Protestantism relates to space in terms of practicality; in Catholicism space is aestheticized and divided in sectors of varying sacredness; and Eastern Orthodoxy theologically connects the space and decoration of a religious building as an essential agent in the sacred life of the believers. The idea that space is never indifferent or neutral was illustrated in the previous chapter by the church
board chair who said that the church building narrates the story of his parents and grandparents’ life and that his endeavour is to preserve this meaning for future generations (16:B.13). Thus the diaspora religious space is approached with expectations that reflect a broader spectrum of feelings which affect how the reproduction of tradition appears in Toronto.

At a theoretical level, the creation of space has been examined by Lefebvre in his seminal work, *Production of Space*. Lefebvre approaches space as more than a “passive locus of social relations;” for him, its role as knowledge and action is operational and instrumental (1991:11). Lefebvre coins three categories: (i) *spatial practices* or perceived, physical space, the characteristics of which are tangible, observable, describable, and measurable (1991:11, 33, 38); (ii) *representation of space* or conceived, “mental” space, which corresponds to the sphere of ideas and conceptualization, ideology and the creative imagination of artists (1991:11, 33, 38-39); and (iii) *representational space* or lived, social space. The latter, third category, while encompassing the previous two, is distinctive, simultaneously real and imagined (1991:38-39). Lefebvre comments on lived or social space: “Ego, bed, bedroom, dwelling, house; or square, church, graveyard. It embraces the loci of passion, of action, of lived situations, and this immediately implies time. Consequently it may be qualified in various ways: it may be directional, situational or relational, because it is essentially qualitative, fluid and dynamic” (1991:42).

This chapter approaches Lefebvre’s theory only as a reference for observing the diaspora space rather than as a critical discussion of it. Other studies on religion and location/space include K. Knott (2005), referencing the secularization debate and religion in West and Tweed (1997) with the example of Cuban immigrants in Miami. Tweed also proposes a three stage division of religious space a) locative—associated with the place where the group now resides; b) supralocative—connected with later generations of immigrants to whom the religious life becomes disconnected from either the original homeland or the adopted land; and c) translocative—symbolically moving between the two lands, which is a tendency appearing mostly with first
The three categories are re-described by the geographer E. Soja as Firstplace, Secondplace and Thirdplace. The first concentrates on accurate descriptions of appearance; it searches for social, physiological and biophysical processes and “tend[s] to privilege objectivity and materiality and aims toward a formal science of space” (1996:75). The second, which has some material reality, is symbolic, “ideational, made up of projections,” and more “reflexive, subjective, introspective, philosophical, and individualized” (1996:79). The third is “realandimagined” [real-and-imagined] and represents a “limitless composition of lifeworlds that are radically open and openly radicalizable; that are all inclusive and transdisciplinary…that are never completely knowable but whose knowledge nonetheless guides our search…” (1996:70). This third category is considered by Lefebvre a “possibilities machine” and by Soja a “limitless Aleph.”

The diaspora religious building is a space consisting of both the real and the imagined, it responds to religious habits and emotions connected with pre-diaspora life, while charged with possibilities that do not exist in the homeland. In respect to this thesis, the three areas under examination illustrate the above categories to a certain extent. This chapter shows the materiality of buildings as architecture and design which represent what may be obviously objective, tangible, observable, and describable space as in Lefebvre’s first category of \textit{spatial practices} and Soga’s \textit{firstplace}. The previous chapter was related rather to ideas expressed through the government and, as such, was connected to the category of \textit{conceived space or secondspace} in which concepts are created. (Yet, the spatial practices and conceived space cannot be clearly separated, for the observable materiality of architecture and design
conveys meanings and ideas already conceptualized on the basis of community factors as illustrated in the previous chapter, and since these are not a matter of dogmatic prescription.)

The next chapter focuses on activities that animate the space in which all three levels—materiality, ideas, and emotions—meet to form an unexpected gamut of relations or “possibility machine” relevant to *representation*al space. The power of events and place amalgamate energies that can produce and reproduce an institution with novel, unique goals.

The new functionality of religious space may be a reflection of the North American tendency to see space-place as being functional with respect to life phases. This functionality often results in mobility and is in harmony with Le Corbusier’s idea of a house as a ‘machine for living’ rather than an architectural artefact or design. Or, for that matter, it is in accord with the view that mobility and consumer society are indicative of a sense of placelessness (Relph, 1976:90). However, functional mobility is not typically part of diaspora members’ makeup, for they tend to attach themselves affectionately to the new space/place that they call home, including its churches. According to Eliade, a settlement in a new territory is archetypal and repeats the creation of the world (1959:45). Inhabiting a new space, personal or social, relates to a recreation and consecration (or ‘consecration’) of this space in either sacred or secular mode. Homo religious would consecrate the space with certain signs: marking a tree, a stone, or building an altar, to create a home for the gods. Consequently, religious people create a home for themselves through establishing a centre or *axis mundi* (1959:23-37). In fact, religiously unattached people adopt a similar approach to their new

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156 In this regard Casas (2005) casts a doubt on the functionality of North American city design, which he considers to be introverted and domestic compared to the Mediterranean city tradition with its public, extrovert character.

157 To Andreu “The architect uses borders to form screens, filters and mirrors, discontinuities that lend themselves to the thoughts of another person about a world that is always individual and singular...” (1999:61).
settlements. Possessing comes with recreating and personal ‘consecrating’ as part of their dwelling. A simple example is personalizing the home by painting the interior of a new house with specific colours, or planting its garden. Moreover, the way we mark space/place signifies our identity and belonging: to gods or goods, to culture, ethnicity or nationality. This expression of identity (conscious or subconscious) is the inspiring impulse behind creating any space.

The most popular consecrating rituals among diaspora members are those performed for settling in new homes: according to the priests, “as soon as people buy a home, they call me for a consecration, no matter whether they believe or not” (C2:34). The tradition is installed both in folklore and in official religion. Eliade mentions building sacrifices, symbolic or blood, in south Eastern Europe as part of consecrating a space prior to inhabiting it (1959:56). Those legends are popular and persist today in Bulgaria through numerous folkloric legends and poems and stories based on these legends written by well-known authors. Monumental ethnographic research published in 1914 (repr. 1994) by D. Marinov registers how buildings and other inhabited places were approached in different regions of the country. A family home became a sanctuary through the performance of life rituals (birth, wedding, death) or hearth rituals which involved slaughtering animals (Marinov, 1994:179, 349). However public places, such as watermills, churches, and bridges, required stronger spiritual guarding and were chosen through some supernatural sign; it was believed that the edifice would be long lasting if either a person or person’s shadow was encased in the laying

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158 The motif of inserting a shadow of a live and usually passionately loved person has been an enchanting topic for interpretation for many Bulgarian authors. The most popular treatments are by P.R. Slaveikov (‘The spring of the white-foot woman), P.U.Todorov (‘Zidari’), and S. Chilingirov (‘The bridge over Struma river’). All of these stories have a real contemporary location; for example, there is a fountain called “The spring of white-feet woman” situated on a highway near the town of Stara Zagora.
of its foundation. Usually, the sacrificial ritual object was a young, healthy, recently married woman. Her shadow was secretly measured and put in the foundation, soon after which she would become sick and die, but her spirit would keep the building strong (Marinov, 1994: 228-229). These pre-Christian folklore beliefs most likely had influenced the ritual of consecrating a church by obtaining and displaying a relic of a saint. Consecrating a new home remains a popular ritual and even those with no religious affiliation are observant. Usually it is marked by jolly parties with elements of the ritual.159 In addition, the priests annually sprinkle the homes in their parish with holy water on the day after Epiphany (January 6). It is hardly a surprise that such consecration rituals have been wildly popular among immigrants. In diaspora they have added significance for they mark as well a search for identity and authenticity in a multicultural context that may seem somewhat chaotic at times. The church can appear as a space that is highly personalized with meanings and relations and thus linked to the search for identity and authenticity.

Folklore references illustrate the symbiosis between making and marking space. In the homeland the place of worship is where one searches only for the presence of the divine and experiences a world beyond the tangible. Its architecture, organisation, and purpose represent space that corresponds with doctrinal concepts. In the new homeland, locality affects the religious space with the natural (and inherited) urge to establish a new personal world. Larger and older diasporic communities (such as Greek and Italian) typically have, in addition to

159 Here is a telling citation from a Bulgarian forum by a person who, though aware of the tradition, hardly knows anything about it. The person has learnt details from the internet and creates her own version: “Yesterday we decided to consecrate our new home. We chose a date and I started searching the internet to see what I needed to do. If you only knew what I found! Slaughtering of lambs, roosters, hens…I was stressed. Anyway, I manage to put together a to-do list. Here is what you would need for a consecration with a priest: an icon, a kandilo (icon light), a bunch of root geranium tied with a red thread, a bottle of red wine, round bread with a candle light, a bowl with water, a bowl with oil, candle lights for all attending, and a gift for the priest. Of course a gang of friends and family, good meal and drinks, and good mood.”

churches, multiple public meeting and mediating places, such as schools, cultural centers, clubs, TV and radio programs, and neighborhood cafes, and their members tend to live in areas with high concentrations of the same ethnic population (Georgiou, 2006). Those places reconfirm and reconstruct the lost sense of hominess, thereby forming new responsive space to compensate in a layered way for the loss of collective identity markers. Relatively smaller and/or newer communities on the diasporic map, however, often have only one point of familiarity and togetherness—their religious institution. Such is the case with the Macedono-Bulgarian group. As a result, the religious institution emerges as a mediating place that strives towards replacing the missing pieces of the immigrants’ personal world and, in fact, helps to rebuild it. A mediating place infused with limitless possibilities for shaping an adequate world can be expected to be responsive to the community and to lead to vernacularization of its space.

The Tradition of Sacred Space of the Eastern Orthodoxy

While adhering to the belief that ‘Church’ is a signifier of people rather than of buildings, the early Christian tradition developed deep respect and intrinsic attachment to the church as a sacred space, a home for God and a place for his glorification. Space—buildings, iconography, and rituals—is a fundamental dimension of Eastern Orthodoxy. Christianity, being a secret religious movement in the first centuries, referred the notion of ‘Church’ to a collection of believers as a ‘temple of the Holy Spirit’ and the physical sacred space was less of a concern. After the official acceptance of Christianity in 313 CE, the vigorous church building led to doctrinal developments. The idea of the church as a sacred space in opposition

160 Acts 7:48, 1 Cor. 3:16, 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16.
to the profane was developed by Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, 5\textsuperscript{th}-6\textsuperscript{th} century CE (1955). Eastern Orthodox Christianity, which has stronger ties to Judaic religious culture, continues the veneration of the Temple as a sacred space, recognizing it as a divine model and architectural example.\textsuperscript{161}

Thus, space, structure, decoration, and function are configured to inculcate feelings of piety, devotion, awe at transcendence, and a sense of the overwhelming presence of the divine. The entire visual ensemble is designed to convey the believer to the divine threshold. The language of architecture and art is a theological symbolic narrative (Bulgakov, 1988; Meyendorff, 1974). It is a complex visualization of the ideas of eternity, time, divinity, good, and evil which educates and elevates spiritually. Icons and mural paintings are a visual credo and confession of faith, not merely decorative elements in the church (Meyendorff 1974:51; Ouspensky & Losski, 1982:14-16; Studite, 1981:23). The word for “writing” in Old Church Slavonic, modern Bulgarian, Russian and Greek applies as well to depicting an icon, which reinforces the idea of the image as a divine Word/Logos. The creation of church ornamentation requires artistic talent and theological understanding of the dogmas that every image conveys—the saints’ lives, biblical plots, and the history of the local church. Iconographers are assumed to be deeply religious persons. To depict a church they must be approved by a committee functioning under the Synod that examines their style.\textsuperscript{162} The Byzantine style crystallized after the iconoclastic period of the 8\textsuperscript{th} century and by the 13\textsuperscript{th} century it was fully developed and unified as a dogma (Goshev, 1952). It remains unchanged

\textsuperscript{161} Exodus 25: 8-9, 40; The Wisdom of Solomon 9:8.

\textsuperscript{162} In addition to these rules the personality of the iconographer is considered as well. Before starting a depiction of an icon, the iconographer him/herself undergoes an intense period of preparation: praying, fasting, abstention from sex and waiting for a touch or vision. This procedure of cleansing and focusing the mind and body is thought to provide the possibility of receiving divine guidance in the writing of the icon. During the process of depicting it is expected that the iconographer continues this mode of life.
today and follows the rule for depicting and placing icons and paintings called *Ermenia.*

The form and content of space is determined by a conception of the divine hierarchy rather than as a response to the needs and sensibilities of the attendees. In this sense, the space-place provides a template for ordering and schooling the emotions of the faithful.

**Organization and decoration**

The physicality of the Eastern Orthodox Church is organized and defined by four spatial elements: narthex, nave, iconostasis, and altar. Each relates to the liturgical order and reflects the *skene* (tabernacle) and the organization of the Solomonic Temple. Eliade comments that Christian temple continues that symbolism: “On the one hand, the church is conceived as imitating the Heavenly Jerusalem…; on the other, it also reproduces the Paradise or the celestial world” (1957:61). I describe each of the architectural elements briefly before comparing and contrasting the church building in the diasporic contexts. **Figure (1)** shows the traditional interior organization of church space.

The *narthex*, the vestibule, serves as transitional space between the secular/profane world and the sacred. Originally, in the early years of Christianity, it was used for catechumens, penitents and non-Christians and contained a baptismal font. At the end of the liturgy those who were in the narthex were invited to join the baptized believers in the nave. Curiously, in today’s liturgy the priest still pronounces the sentence for inviting proselytes (*oglasheden*) to join, though all attendees, believers or not, are situated in the nave. In some churches the narthex is simply a porch area. Liturgically, the space is used in some services such as the Little Hours, during Holy Week and parts of the wedding ceremony. Above the narthex is the

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163 From Greek ἔρμηνεια, ἔρμηνευμ, ‘to interpret.’
usual place for a bell tower, which sometimes constitutes a separate building. The decoration of the narthex includes images of the church founder(s) or donor(s) and often the Day of Judgment, which serves to teach, recollect, and heighten one’s consciousness of transcendence.\textsuperscript{164}

The \textit{nave} is the gathering area and it symbolizes the earthly. For the attendees it forms a praying cosmos through spatial arrangement, rituals, and decoration. In contrast to Western churches, the attendees stand; there are no pews or kneelers because standing is the proper posture before the deity. Only a few chairs, called \textit{stasidia}, (simple narrow wooden chairs with high arm rests for a support) are positioned against the walls and used by people with physical conditions or the very elderly. Those present are free to stroll around at any point in the service. Usually engulfed in their own prayer, they watch the liturgical performance or meditate before icons. The worship may appear unstructured to outsiders, but seemingly passive participants are, in fact, in a self-absorbed meditative journey to build personal bridges to the spiritual.

Seldom do attendees sing along or pray in liturgical unison. There is no accompanying musical instrument (organ is excluded as well), allowing one to praise the divine solely though the human voice—the only instrument permitted in a church. Often the choirs in urban, well-established churches are professionally trained. The liturgy itself is based on

\textsuperscript{164} An example is San Vitale church (547), Ravena, showing images of the imperator Justinian and his wife Theodora. In Bulgaria examples include the churches in Bachkovo (12\textsuperscript{th} c.), Boyana (13\textsuperscript{th} c.), and Dragalevci Monastery among many. The Boyana church (part of the UNESCO World Heritage list) is famous for its exceptional 240 frescoes dated 1259 and is one of the best preserved Eastern European monuments of medieval art. The frescos, by an unknown artist, illustrate the advanced development of iconography painting art in the medieval Bulgarian empire and bear features of the Italian Proto-renaissance painter Giotto (1267-1337).
chanting and antiphonic singing. The elaborated ritual of the liturgy is performed by the priests and deacons in solemn garments. They are located in front of the iconostasis, go in and out of the altar area, and pray mostly facing the altar. Hence there is the inkling that individual religiosity takes precedence over congregational expression.

The nave’s iconographic decoration, with its overwhelming abundance of images, serves both veneration and the goal of religious education. Those images belong to three main groups: illustrations of the Jewish and the Christian Bible and historical church events. Included in the first group are images of Adam and Eve, the world’s creation, Jacob’s dream, the prophets, etc. The themes of the Christian Bible encompass Christ’s birth, presentation, baptism, transfiguration, Lazarus’s resurrection, the descent to hell, the entrance into Jerusalem, the Assumption, the Holy Spirit’s descent, and so forth. Historical church events, martyrs, and local saints are positioned in designated places. The dome, symbolizing heaven, is decorated with Christ Pantokrator (Vsenderjitel) surrounded by angels and symbols of the four Evangelists (angel—Mathew, lion—Mark, calf—Luke, and eagle—John) at the base. Very rarely an image of the deity is seen. Included in the nave iconography are minei scenes in the same order as they appear are in the monthly services, as a visual help in following the order.

Other commemorative decorations include stands (analoy) with icons of Mother Mary, Christ, or a popular saint. A second pair of stands with icons is situated before the soley (the step in front of the iconostasis). People make a sign of the cross, kiss the icons and sometimes leave a flower, gift or money. Tall brass candelabras and sand boxes hold candles

165 Antiphon singing has its roots in ancient Greek drama.
lit for living and deceased loved ones. Some churches keep relics of saints in a special feretory (reliquary), displayed in either the nave or a basement room for public veneration.\textsuperscript{166} This veneration is reminiscent of the gatherings around the tombs of martyrs in early Christian times. It is believed that the relics connect those present with the saint’s heroism and reinforce spiritual strength.

The \textit{iconostasis}, or \textit{templon}, visually divides the nave and altar, the earthly and the heavenly. Symbolically, it is a transitional demarcation between the two and a focal point for the church art. A wooden frame, elaborately carved and sometimes gilded, serves as more than just an icon holder; it is an artistic object in itself. It has three doors and up to six rows (\textit{yaruses}) of images. For Bulgaria, the importance of the iconostasis frame is underscored further by a tradition of carving that resulted in three distinct styles by the 19\textsuperscript{th} century: Trevnenska, Debarska and Samokovska woodcarving schools took the art of carving to an exquisite level. Two branches, secular and sacred/ecclesial, covered the needs of the population who have always been fond of this form of art. Today studying and reproducing these styles is a part of the woodcarving department in the National Academy of Art.

Historically, in the 6\textsuperscript{th} century, the altar was separated by a low row of columns with stone plates between them, but following the Second Nicean Council’s (787) endorsement of icons

\textsuperscript{166} The reliquary may be a small box in a designated room. In some monasteries and old churches a space under the altar stores the bones of deceased monks or priests: Boyanska (12\textsuperscript{th} c.), Asenova citadel church (9\textsuperscript{th} c.) and Alexander Nevski cathedral in Sofia. Memorial services are performed in these premises. In general, every Eastern Orthodox church would have a miniature particle of a saint’s relics built in under the altar table; the holiness of the saint is thought to sanctify the place. Some of the most popular relics are those of the saints George, Marina, apostle Thomas, Gregory the Theologian (of Niazanus), Serafim Sarofski, Kozma, and Damian (Goshev, 1952).
as visual dogma of faith, the iconostasis started to add new rows.\textsuperscript{167} As a result the altar and nave space are fully separated. Icons are organized as follows. The first row has depictions of the Jewish Bible as the foundation of Christianity. The next, main row, called the royal or \textit{tsarski}, has the largest images (usually a half life-size torso). At the center of the third, or festive, row is the Last Supper scene with narratives of events from the lives of Mother Mary and Jesus. The fourth row is called the apostolic. Prophets, patriarchs, and saints are depicted on the remaining fifth and sixth rows.\textsuperscript{168}

The second row is mandatory. Its center is the door known as the Beautiful Gate; to its right are images of Christ and John the Baptist, and to its left Mother Mary and the saint for whom the church is named. The two side doors are adorned with icons of the archangels Gabriel and Michael or the first martyr, Stephan. The rest of the images on this row are optional and depend on the popularity of certain saints in particular area. For example, preferred icons are those of saints Nikolas, Mina, and George.

The \textit{altar}, the holiest place in the church and a symbol of heaven, is where the clergy are secluded for the sacred performance of the \textit{proscomedia} (preparation) and Eucharistic transformation of the bread and wine. It always faces East and building a church starts from the altar. Usually it is an outwardly protruding space, formed as \textit{absida} by an oval or multi-angled wall. Here are kept the sacred utensils, books, and garments. Every church must have

\textsuperscript{167} The iconoclasts anathematized the images and sculptures on the basis of the Decalogue; they rejected every likeness or image made from any material. The second council in Nicea in 787 endorsed the usage of images: “The more frequently they are seen in representation of art, the more are those who see them drawn to remember and long for those whos serve as models, and to pay these images the tribute of salutation and respectful veneration. Certainly this is not the full adoration in accordance with faith, which is properly paid only to the divine nature, but it resembles that given to the figure of the honored and life-giving cross, and also to the holy books of the gospels to other sacred cult objects” (Tanner, et al., 1990:132-136).

\textsuperscript{168} The fifth row was developed relatively late, around the 16\textsuperscript{th} century in Russia. The first and sixth rows are the latest formation from around the 17\textsuperscript{th} century.
a miniature particle of a saint’s relic embedded in the altar table to sanctify the place. As the most sacred area of a church, only priests, deacons, and male persons with blessed permission have access to it. Women are prohibited from entry into the altar except by special permission for the housecleaning lady, who must be a post-menopausal widow. The altar’s iconographic themes are closely related to the Eucharist. Depicted in the altar absida is Mother Mary Oranta (hands raised, with Christ shown in a circle in her womb) or Odigitria (holding the child Jesus), Christ taking communion or administrating Holy Communion with the apostles. Also included are Hebrew Bible themes such as Abraham sacrificing Isaac, or Jacob’s ladder. Attendees catch a glimpse of the altar a few times during the liturgy when the main door, the Beautiful Gate, is open.169 Old Church Slavonic is an inseparable part of the liturgical and decorative environment. All inscriptions on the icons and walls are in that language, which has become both a faith and ethnic symbol.

**Architecture**

The most popular church architecture styles are: cruciform, elongated rectangular, and less frequently, a rotunda or octagon.170 A dome is an emblematic element of the Eastern Orthodox Church architectural silhouette, copper or gold-gilded depending on the area. Each nation has added some specific details—for example the onion-like dome/cupola for the Russian or Ukrainian churches. It is usual in small villages to find simple rectangular buildings. In general, the buildings are conservative and it is rather exceptional to see a

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169 Later, around the 15th century, the image of St. Trapeza (table) appears in Bulgarian churches with a discos covered with ‘vozduh’ where lays the “Agnec Boji” i.e. though the Christ body is parted in the communion it stays whole.

170 Fine examples of rotunda in Bulgaria are to be found at St. George in Sofia (5th c.) and Preslav (9th c.). The new church St. Dimitar in Brampton (Greater Toronto Area) is an octagonal.
modern design. The preservation of tradition takes priority, for in Bulgaria a new church project (architectural and interior design) would first need to be approved by a censorship committee functioning under the Synod and by the Church’s historical and archaeological museum. Aside from the observed areas, a few church buildings include a small, narrow adjacent room used for a quick distribution of ritual food after funerals or memorials. In sharp contrast with diaspora churches, there is no space for social activities; building a church is a spiritual act that starts with religious devotion.

Windows are of great architectural and décor significance for the interior of Eastern Orthodox churches. Few, small, and evenly spread, they are positioned high so that the walls remain free for icons, which are considered windows to the spiritual realm. Some churches, such as the Nativity in Arbanaci (15-17th century), do not have windows at all (Fig.2). Daylight filtering in from above, flickering candelabras, and lit candles create *sfumato*, or smoky effects that soften the lines, thus forming an encapsulated spiritual space into which attendees withdraw from the outside reality. All elements of the space, including two-dimensional images, incense, and chanting lead to a visual—and also emotional—*sfumato*.

The social institution of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church has been unquestionably respected as a formative and sustainable factor in the 1,300 years of Bulgarian national history. Today, however, its role and influence in the public and personal domains is marginal. Yet, what

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171 The Greek Orthodox Church in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, contemporary design by Frank Lloyd Wright, and Vanga’s church in Petrich, Bulgaria, decorated with modern unorthodox frescos

172 Boiled sweet wheat, bread, and pastries. An example is St. Nedelia in Sofia which has a narrow room connected with the narthex.

173 *Sfumato*, a renaissance technique of painting referred mostly to Leonardo Da Vinci, is a style of drawing without clear lines that creates an unfocused smoky effect; it is a fine shading that result in soft transitions between colours and tones. See his paintings, Virgin of the Rocks and Mona Lisa.
remains popular is appreciation of the churches and monasteries as historical sites and monuments of art. All interviewees shared this appreciation, and one reported that “going to a church was like going to a museum” (I1:B.5). The interviewees were not familiar with the concept of Church as communal life and had no such experience in the homeland. Diaspora priests confirmed that a homeland church functions mainly to celebrate the divine elements and to reinforce the religious commitments of the people; their parishes had no allocated space for social activities.

In summary, Orthodoxy is a tradition of beauty—in architecture, garments, images, lyrics, music, and rituals,—beauty, not as a superficial earthly goal but as a sign of divine infiltration into the world. As Gochev notes, the “Eastern Orthodox church, as a sacred building is intended for prayer gatherings of believers, and is suited to certain conditions connected with the liturgical purpose of the temple … an artistic building devoted to God, comfortable for services, delighting the eye of the worshipers and ascending their souls” (1952:320). Accommodating the daily life-needs of people, or starting ‘where believers are at,’ is clearly not a priority for the Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox church.

**Diaspora Churches in Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area (GTA)**

Diasporic churches stand in sharp contrast with homeland churches. What is theologically and traditionally given has been contested by the community as a way of compensating for the disruption associated with relocation. According to Smith it is through “symbolization of place that a society or individual creates itself” (1978:143), and in this regard space is not “natural or given; it is contested and constructed” (Tweed, 1997:93). The following close observation of the architectural, exterior and interior configurations and decorative elements
discerns the levels of this contestation through the lens of the vernacular. The four churches under discussion have different histories, reasons for establishment, and relative affiliations with particular waves of immigrants. The first, Sts. Cyril and Methody, was established in 1910 with a new building erected in 1949; the second, St. George, was built in 1941; the third, Holy Trinity, in 1973; and the fourth, St. Dimitar, in 2004. The latter building reflects the traditional style most closely; Sts. Cyril and Methody is an attempt to stay with the tradition while including eclectic architectural elements, and the remaining two bear similarities to Protestant churches. All four buildings possess the spatial elements of the established organization discussed in the first part but introduce two new structural elements: many large windows and community halls.

**Exterior**

Sts. Cyril and Methody is one of the largest cathedrals in the dioceses of the diaspora (Fig. 3). Built in central Toronto, near Dundas and Parliament streets, it exhibits a combination of local influence and an attempt to honour the traditional exterior elements. This is particularly represented by the dome. A dome is usually a structural result of crossing two neffs. Symbolically, it represents the sky and Christ. For Sts. Cyril and Methody, a rectangular church building, the dome is a decorative rather than a structural architectural element, and is covered by stained glass colours coordinated with tall, arch-headed windows. Next to each other on the façade are the main entrance for the church and a second door leading to a banquet hall on the same level as the church. The wide hall and church form one building.

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174 Neff (Lat. navis), refers to parts in the gathering area, usually separated by columns. A Gothic church typically has 3 to 5 neffs, for example St. Stephen Cathedral, Vienna or Reims Cathedral. All of the diaspora churches identified in this study have only one central neff.
Over the wooden entrance door is installed a white stone basso-relievo of Cyril and Methody with the name of the church.

St. George Church’s exterior is far from resembling the traditional structure (Fig.4). Though originally built to be an Eastern Orthodox Church it could easily be taken for a Protestant church with its high triangular roof and tall, elongated and pointed windows on both sides. The banquet hall is on the basement level, accessible by stairs from the entrance (narthex) area. Mounted on the façade over the front door is a white basso-relievo, similar to that of Sts. Cyril and Methody, showing the figure of St. George with the name of the church.

According to one of the interviewees, “The founders, 50-60 families, weren’t confident of how successful the new establishment would be and decided to erect a more ‘popular’ structure that could easily be sold if needed. Their choice of architectural style was only a result of circumstances. Yet it is built with desire and intuition” (C6:139). He added that diaspora churches are ‘mission churches’ and work with whatever resources are available, which, however, “does not make them less Eastern Orthodox” (C6:139). St. George is a ‘splinter’ of the first church and located only a street away. The splintering arose from different political and governing views with regard to the IMRO (Internal Macedono Revolutionary Organization). The new church has been thriving since its inception and, in fact, is the most formal follower of the tradition.

Holy Trinity Church is a former Anglican church built in 1943 and transformed to Eastern Orthodoxy in 1973 (Fig.5). Identifiers of belonging to Eastern Orthodoxy are the stained glass triangular icon of the Holy Trinity above the entrance door and the title inscribed with English letters and Old Church Slavonic script. Some internal modifications were made, but the exterior is unchanged. Similar in shape to St. George, it is more modest, less formal, with
a homey and inviting garden. The church was established by the second and third generation descendants of the first wave immigrants under similar circumstances—by splitting. “Our people were together with St. George Church and Rev. Mihailov. They separated over the MPO [Macedono Political/Patriotic Organization] and 60 families bought this building,” the priest explained (C3:64a ). As a result of these circumstances, both churches, St. George and Holy Trinity lack domes.

The newest church, St. Dimitar in Brampton, is unmistakably traditional (Fig.6). Octagon-shaped, it is situated on a small hill with excellent visibility. Its white silhouette is soft as a result of the structural dome and numerous arches. The building is a copy of a Greek Orthodox Church in Florida. Octagon is a rare and distinctive architectural choice which leaves an impression on the neighbourhood and on drivers passing by on a main street likes Steeles. Unlike the other churches St. Dimitar was mostly built by one donor as a gift to the community.\textsuperscript{175} It attracts partly the second and mainly the third wave of immigrants.

Halls are an architectural intervention in the conceptualization of traditional church architecture and space, both as an exterior and interior element. The first immigrants built a separate cultural center nearby the church, thus keeping the spiritual and communal spaces separate (Almanac, 1960:47-54). It was not until 1941 that St. George Church was built to include a hall. Shortly after that, the new Sts. Cyril and Methody was planned to be a “church with a big theatrical hall” (Almanac, 1960:78). Today the community space is situated on the same level as the sanctuary. The large hall, with its high ceilings, well equipped stage, kitchen, bar, and sound station attracts a variety of visitors to its desirable downtown

\textsuperscript{175} Ignat Kanef is also a generous donor to the University of Toronto.
location. It accommodates around 500 people. The community gathers for celebrations, theatrical performances, concerts, and meetings. A second hall, on the basement level, accommodates around 200 people. The other three churches have their banquet halls situated on the basement level, which is not directly connected to the liturgical area. In St. George the stairs to the hall start in the narthex in proximity to the nave door; the arrangement in St. Dimitar Church is similar but the stairs leading to the hall are discreetly situated at the very beginning of the narthex and close to the main entrance. In Holy Trinity Church the hall is reached through a door in the nave which leads to the administration quarters and to the stairs. The inclusion of a basement level is influenced by the North American tradition which leads to another new constructive element—stairs to the main entrances. Homeland churches are usually situated at ground level and thus offer immediate access to visitors. Stairs are included very infrequently and only to adjust to the landscape where needed. Halls have become an intrinsic component of the diaspora church structure, to the extent that one priest commented ironically, alluding to their popularity as a gravitating point for the community, “Halls are the centre of the church and function as a part of the liturgy” (C1:10). The actual physical space of the halls is equal in size to that of the sacred and even exceeds it by almost three times in the cathedral church Sts. Cyril and Methody.

**Interior**

To recapitulate, the church interior structure contains a narthex, nave, iconostasis, and altar—all of them with a particular liturgical function and a specific role in the individual’s religious journey. This study continues by providing a detailed description of the diasporic religious space interior in order to facilitate a comparison with the homeland and between the four
diaspora churches. For clarity, Fig. 7 shows blueprints of the four churches with specific attention to the connection between the halls and sacred church areas.

The narthexes have acquired a function additional to that of being a transitional space between the secular and profane world and orienting visitors towards the spiritual world. The narthexes of St. George and St. Dimitar include an entrance to the communal space and banquet halls. Thus, one has the option of proceeding from the narthex either to the inner spiritual space or to the secular. And, according to one priest, about 60% of the attendees choose to proceed to the banquet halls, where they meet friends and wait for the service to end (C4:86). By expanding its functions the narthex acquires a closer connection with the secular, specifically by offering the choice of entering into the secular communal hall rather than the spiritual realm.

The naves have an ambience that is quite distinct as a result of space connectedness and internal structuring that offers a sense of bodily comfort. The communicative features of the naves are marked by two elements—windows and doors. The windows, multiple and tall with semi-circled or pointed ends, cover most of the naves’ wall surface, which is well lit. Consequently, the decorative surface is limited. We observed that traditionally decoration is intended rather to educate and to express visually creedal concepts than merely to beautify. By introducing more windows the theological visualization is reduced. The windows of St. Dimitar’s nave are clear while the other naves have slightly tinted windows without images. In general the stained glass tradition is an underdeveloped part of the Orthodox tradition in which the goal is to create an ambience cocooned from the outside world. The typical dim light with its withdrawing and sfumato effect is replaced in Toronto by an abundance of light infiltration that suggests spatial connectedness with the outside realm (Fig. 8 & 9).
doors, another explicit element, link the sacred to the communal space in ways showing an inclination towards amalgamation. Traditionally, they lead to a place for the sale of candles and religious literature or to clergy quarters; in Toronto, they connect the nave with the communal spaces. Sts. Cyril and Methody’s nave is the most obvious case: it has on its north wall two doors directly connecting the liturgical space to the banquet hall. One of these doors is only a step away from the iconostasis. Movement between the two spaces is natural and convenient. Doors are often left open during events, except for Sunday services. In Holy Trinity an additional door in the nave, situated close to the iconostasis, leads to the administrative offices and the banquet hall.

Further, benches and kneelers structure the nave space. Two rows of wooden benches with a red carpeted aisle between them replicate the North American standard. People do not stroll around but sit next to each other, which conveys a visual togetherness and consolidates community. As previously noted, the traditional space accommodates spiritual necessities and seems oblivious to physical comfort. In contrast, the new homeland churches provide practical and comfortable accommodation. One novelty is the introduction of lights, green and red, to signal when attendees are to stand or sit (St. George). Benches and kneelers can also be observed in Russian and Greek Orthodox churches in Toronto, which are known for upholding their religious tradition. For example, St. Nikolas Greek Orthodox church, which indeed creates, as its website announces, a “piece of heaven on earth,” has benches. Henry Lefebvre comments that, “the adoption of another people’s gods always entails the adoption of their space and system of measurements” (1991:111). In our case, the reverse is true; the adoption of a new home space may not change the gods, but it certainly gives a new perspective on approaching them.
Next, untraditionally, the nave interiors of two of the churches include clavier instruments. Holy Trinity’s building inherited an organ from its earlier Anglican occupants, which is located in the deep soley (the elevated space in front of the iconostasis and used during some wedding ceremonies. In St. Dimitar an upright piano has appeared since 2012 positioned in front of the iconostasis and next to the candelabras with a little brass plaque announcing that it is a gift. Canonically and traditionally, there are no instruments of any kind in the churches.  

Services are based entirely on antiphonal chanting between the clergy and choir, or sometimes by the congregation. Only the human voice, an instrument that involves mind, heart, and soul, is considered to be divinely created and appropriate to religious services. The voice is thought to be the most spiritual, sacred and perfect instrument, not merely a production of sounds but a prayer and thanksgiving, an idea that was developed in early Christianity by Chrysostom (4th century) and Clement of Alexandria (3rd century). A piano situated in the nave in St. Dimitar is clearly a step away from the tradition but also a step towards better attuning to the environment and the expectations of the attendees.

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176 The avoidance of instruments functions to some extent to distance the liturgy from the mythological figures popular in ancient times and connected to pagan celebrations. To Clement of Alexandria, 3rd century, Thracian Orpheus is a deceiver, “corrupting human life under the pretext of music, possessed by kind of artful sorcery for purpose of destruction, outrageous in celebrating their orgies…” (McKinnon, 1987:29).

177 Aside from the theological reason there is a practical one: Byzantine chanting used and uses intervals smaller or wider than the whole and half tone intervals (on which an octave is based in well-tempered tuning), which narrows the range of instruments that could possibly accompany the melody.

178 According to Chrysostom “David formerly sang songs, also today we sing hymns. He had a lyre with lifeless strings, the church has a lyre with living strings. Our tongues are the strings of the lyre with a different tone indeed but much more in accordance with piety. Here there is no need for the cithara, or for stretched strings, or for the plectrum, or for art, or for any instrument; but, if you like, you may yourself become a cithara, mortifying the members of the flesh and making a full harmony of mind and body. For when the flesh no longer lusts against the Spirit, but has submitted to its orders and has been led at length into the best and most admirable path, then will you create a spiritual melody” (Exposition of Psalms 41, in Strunk, 1950:70. For Clement of Alexandria “The Lord made man a beautiful breathing instrument, after his own image; certainly he is himself an all harmonious instrument of God, well tuned and holly…” (in McKinnon, 1987:30). Clement also refers to Psalm 150:6: “Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.”
The iconostasis’ frames and the altars of the four churches remain traditional while reflecting a practical attitude. Usually highly decorated with exceptional care and artistry in the homeland, they are less so in the diaspora. As a structural element dividing the earthly (nave) from the heavenly (altar), and serving as a transitioning device between the two spaces, the iconostasis is elevated as much as possible, by up to six rows. However, in the four churches a more realistic approach is adopted. Frames are plain with one to three rows of icons. Sts. Cyril and Methody’s iconostasis is simple and unadorned with two rows of icons. St. George’s is similar: non-carved and holding three rows of icons. Holy Trinity’s iconostasis is uniquely designed, perhaps as an effort to give an ‘eastern orthodox’ feeling to the adopted building. Instead of wood, the frame is covered with forged copper that creates a warm glow. It reproduces the traditional gilded and elaborated woodcarvings and, from a distance, the metal cannot be recognized as such. Three rows of icons are positioned on the frame. Among the four, St. Dimitar’s iconostasis is exceptional with its wood-carved, low frame. Holding only one row of icons, the design represents the tradition in a tasteful and not overly-elaborated manner.

The altars of the four churches preserve their holy status and architectural elements, showing no visible structural modifications or changes. Holy Trinity Church, when adjusting its structure, built an absida (the protruded oval wall on the east side in the altar) which is one of the architectural marks of the altar space. The iconostases are high enough to provide seclusion for the sacred rite of the Eucharist. Usually the altars are fully separated from the nave. Only in the new church, St. Dimitar, is the iconostasis relatively low, which creates a subtle feeling of space melding between the nave and altar. Upon entering the church the upper half of the altar fresco is seen as being integrative with the nave.
The preceding architectural observations raise a question with respect to project choices. The previous chapter on church government clarified that the decision to establish a church is a communal one reached by donors, board members and the broader group of congregants. The archives of Sts. Cyril and Methody register discussions gravitating around church functions and the collection of sufficient funds; they offer a detailed account of how the funds were raised—by the source and the amount—when the community was meagre in size, only a thousand members (Almanah, 1960:34). There is no information on architectural choices. One priest remarked, “Buildings here depend solely on the local people. In Bulgaria different committees and the Synod are involved as well” (C2:30). An example of a practical, community-ownership approach is the architectural design of St. George Church, which was chosen to resemble a Protestant church to facilitate its sale if needed.

An important component of founding a new church is the inspiration and goal behind the project, which greatly affect the architectural design. While faith may seem to be an immediate concern, and is in the homeland, the archival records in diaspora show more complex reasoning. A main consideration is ensuring that community needs will be met; these needs are extensive in range and go beyond simple faith. An example is the occasion of laying the corner stone of Sts. Cyril and Methody’s new church building, which was described as a “day of unbelievable manifestation of patriotism, devotion to the native faith and hope for brighter day in captivated Macedonia” (Almanah, 1960:93). From today’s perspective that is a strong political statement, but more importantly it is indicative of the complex goals interwoven into the initiation of churches. Thus, architectural arrangements in diaspora reflect the utilization of emotions attuned to community dynamics that are irrelevant to buildings in the homeland.
Decoration

The decorative perspective is a further step in examining the extent to which the church as an institution is responsive to the diaspora community. Decoration, in the context of the Eastern Orthodox Church, is not simply a way of beautifying buildings but is also a visual credo and confession of faith by iconic images. Icons, whiles art, are symbolic theological expressions and “ecclesiastical tradition in colours and images, parallel to the oral, written and monumental tradition” (Bulgakov, 1988:142). Every detail contains a reference to the Scriptures, to faith historicity, and conveys theological meanings. The images are two dimensional where perspective and time are absent, which places them outside the secular space-time matrix (Mastagar, 2006). So too is the visitor standing in front of the images. Of course the decoration displays different levels of affluence, artistic skills, and local preferences. This is especially true for the diaspora churches where images are rendered sparsely and serve simply as reminders of the faith rather than as means of conveying the viewer to the divine threshold. The following observation of decorative patterns present in Toronto reveal that not only that the quantity of images is limited, but also they constitute a narrative that goes beyond religious care to deal with ethnic, national and even political issues that vary from church to church.

Sts. Cyril and Methody Church and St. George Church

The narthexes of the two oldest churches welcome attendees with dignity, a traditional atmosphere and a 1950’s style. Although they exhibit a good number of images that are
solely faith-related, both narthexes establish a new display—that of the serving clergies. In Sts. Cyril and Methody there is a sizable frame with portraits of all priests detailing their service since the church’s establishment; a larger portrait of Dr. Malin, the first priest, is hung separately, alongside pictures of Bulgarian patriarchs. The pattern is repeated in St. George’s more formal narthex, were black and white photographs of all serving priests are hung alongside a few icons. Exhibiting portraits of former clergy is a local initiative with a special significance: every clergy is envisioned as an important founder. The practice also recognizes the role of all the clergyman who helped to sustain the diasporic community through the years. The pictures therefore witness the continuity and stability of both the religious organization and the community in a respectful, contemporary manner.

The naves of these churches, however, have evolved in a different direction—from images of the religious-traditional to those of the national and ethnic. Sts. Cyril and Methody’s nave is conservative, not densely decorated, and keeps to the faith narrative expressed through the generic saint personages. Three full-length, wall-engraved paintings of Sts. John, Paul, and Peter and one framed picture of “The meeting of Jesus and John the Baptist” are the only nave decoration. On the balcony parapet small wooden panels are arranged, partly adorned by saints from early Christianity. Completion of the panels depends on donations. However during my conversations no one expressed any desire or concern for further decorative improvement.

In comparison, St. George nave’s images move the focus from generic Christian faith figures to solely national saints. This decorative development is a relatively recent project which started in late 1990 and was completed in 2004. The nave exhibits a collection of 17 gilded
icons which are an exquisite example of orthodox iconography—as artistry and tradition.\textsuperscript{179}

The golden glow softens the ambience of the formal architectural setting. Before, the bare walls (as shown on the archive pictures) were adorned only with a simple console held by small angels; a non-Eastern Orthodox architectural element, the console recalls the times of uncertainty when the church was built. The new collection presents canonized historical figures connected with turning points in Bulgarian history from about the 9\textsuperscript{th} century onwards: St. Equal to the Apostles Cyril, St. Equal to the Apostles Methody, Saints Clement Ohridski (Clement of Ohrid), Naum Ohridski, Ioan Kukuzel, Georgi Sofiiski, Pimen Zografski, Paisii Hilendarski, Boyan Enravota, Tsar Boris, Tsar Perter, Ivan Rilski, Ilarion Muglenski, Theophylact Ohridski, Patriarch Evtimii Tarnovski, Sofronii Vrachanski, and Christ the Great Bishop. The latter is the only biblical image among them. \textbf{Figure 8} shows the south wall. Two other persons are recognized exclusively for their religious achievements: Ivan Rilski (876-969), the most popular Bulgarian hermit and Ilarion Maglenski (-1164) who fought against Bogomilism. The rest of the images are intrinsic parts of the political, ethnic, and cultural history of the country and are subjects of national pride.

Below is a synopsis to illustrate their major roles and politico-historical significance:

Prince Boyan Enravot (ca 833) is the promoter of the new Christian faith among the proto-Bulgarian khans.

Tsar Boris (852-889/893) adopts Christianity as a state religion, provides a home to all disciples of Cyril and Methodius as teachers, and launches schools to establish one national spoken and literary (church) language.

\textsuperscript{179} The images were carefully selected by the former priest B. Drangov and the artist and art restorer R. Kirinkov who is a third wave immigrant and a former professor in iconography. The images were approved by the church board.
Cyril (827/8-869) and Methody (815-885) were brothers and Byzantine scholars. Cyril created the Glagolic alphabet and Methody popularized it. They were the first to translate the Christian texts into a vernacular Slav dialect.

Climent Ohridski (ca.840-916) and Naum Ohridski (ca.830-910), disciples of Cyril and Methody, developed literary schools in the capital Preslav and later in Ohrid (then within the Bulgarian Empire) to educate the population in the new written language. Climent of Ohrid is regarded as the originator of today’s version of the Cyrillic alphabet and is the first bishop of the Bulgarian Empire (Theophilactus, 1966).

Tsar Peter (927-969) negotiates the autocephalous (independent) status of the Bulgarian church which becomes a Patriarchy, the first independent Slavic church, and the first after the Pentarchy.

Theophlact Ohridski (ca.1050-ca.1125) is a prominent Byzantine theologian and writer. He was appointed Archbishop of the Bulgarian Church during the Byzantine rule of Bulgaria and was a dedicated protector of his archdiocese. He writes the biographies of Cyril and Methody’s disciples and ascribes authorship of the Cyrillic alphabet to Clement (Theophylactus, 1966).

More than 3000 people were educated in writing and reading during the first seven years of the appointment of Clement in Ohrid, which, for the 9th century, was a substantial number (Theophilactus, 1966; Crampton, 2005:15).

“It was in Bulgaria that the early Slavic written culture flourished” (Sussex and Cubberley, 2006: 67)

The Pentarchy refers to the five major sees of Constantinople, Alexandria, Rome, Antioch, and Jerusalem.

The Glagolic alphabet (from “глагол” [glagol] means a verb, word, or speak) was created by Cyril in the 9th century, and spread among the Slavic countries in Central and Eastern Europe; remaining popular until the 14th century. The graphic of the Cyrillic alphabet, an adjustment of the Glagolic, is attributed to Clement by Theophilactus, (1966); in general the development of Cyrillic is considered to be an achievement during the First Bulgarian Empire and was spread by Clement and Naum through the two major Bulgarian literary schools in Preslav and Ohrid (Cubberley, 1996:346-355; Dvornic, 1956:179) In fact Glagolitic is an alphabet specifically created for liturgical use but “The Psalter and the Book of Prophets were adapted or ‘modernized’ with special regard to their use in Bulgarian churches, and it was in this school [Ohrid and
Ioan Kukuzel (13\textsuperscript{th} -14\textsuperscript{th} c.) is a medieval church composer who introduces polyphony and Bulgarian intonations into Byzantium singing.\textsuperscript{184}

Patriarch Evtimii (ca.1325-ca.1403) founds the Tarnovo Literary School, reforms the writing rules, and corrects the translated (from Greek) liturgical texts which are adopted by the Serbian, Rumanian and Russian Churches as well. He leads the defense of the capital against the Ottoman army.

George Sofijski (1407-1437) refuses to convert to Islam during the Ottoman rule and is killed.

Pimen Zografski (ca.1540-1620) is an artist and iconographer.

Paisii Hilendarski (1722-1773) is a monk from Aton who writes a brief history of Bulgaria to rekindle the pride of the national past forgotten during the centuries of Ottoman rule and thus became an initiator of a movement leading to liberation.

Sofroni Vrachanski (1739-1813), a bishop and writer, is a follower of Hilendarsky’s deeds. He represents the state’s interests in the discussions with the Russian, Rumanian and Ottoman governments during the Russian-Turkish war 1806-1812 (Radev, 2007:104).

Each of the above names conveys a strong message connected with pivotal events of the national history. Such a combination of images could hardly be seen together in a single church in the homeland. Usually the decoration includes one or a very few local saints among the habitual Biblical images and personages. The image collection exhibited in St. George as a central nave theme is unique in its composition. It is a visual, epigrammatic account of several intertwined narratives—ethnic, historic, religious, and political. Every image stands

\textsuperscript{184} Kukuzel reformed the neuvma notation. The saint’s day has been turned into a national secular celebration in Bulgaria as a Day of Music.
as a logo of a major event that is recognized by the attendees. The images remind the viewer that Christianity and the Alphabet were founding elements of the nation. Also, they recall the glory of the first and second Bulgarian Empire. On another level, it is a subtle political response to current claims by the new state of Macedonia regarding prominent people; it is a statement by the congregation which consists of second and third generation first wave immigrants who came from the contested areas.\textsuperscript{185} To the third wave, uninterested in the Macedonian topic, it is simply an historical recapitulation of the Bulgarian state and nation. This “wall of fame” inspires national pride in achievements that contributed to European culture and reinforce ethnic belonging. As a result, the collection of saints acts as a theophoric guardian of cultural and ethno-religious roots.

The decoration of the banquet halls likewise signals a place for political and national statements, particularly the one at St. George. Sts. Cyril and Methody’s hall again is neutral in regard to such debates and exhibits two pictures of community gatherings from the first half of the last century which are hung behind one of the nave doors. This arrangement is perhaps a result of the fact that the hall is a general gathering place for the whole diaspora and is often rented for events outside the community. In comparison, St. George’s banquet hall is much smaller and the ambience suggests that the place belongs to a closely-connected group. A sizable board shows a map of geographic Macedonia with its three parts (belonging to Yugoslavia/Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria) connected. Obviously, the map was hung before 1992 when Macedonia became an independent state. Around it are displayed pictures of revolutionaries involved in the liberation fights for Macedonia at the beginning of the 20\textsuperscript{th}

\textsuperscript{185} The history of both countries is indeed intertwined to an extent that many prominent figures are shared in both histories.
century. (Chapter one provided a succinct account on this historical moment.) All of them wear uniforms and look presentable. One of the portraits is that of the Drangov, a grandfather of a priest at St. George’s who has served for over 40 years in the church (until 2010). Portraits of the two major leaders of the movement are shown separately: Todor Aleksandrov, who looks regal, holding a rifle as a scepter; and Vanche Mihailov and his wife. The display underscores the political dynamics and streams among the church founders and their adherents.186

The iconostases of both churches are adorned with traditional generic religious images: apostles, church fathers and saints. At Sts. Cyril and Methody Church the main row holds icons of St. Nicholas, Basil the Great, and John Chrysostom among others. On the apostolic row next to the 12 apostles are mounted popular saints such as Constantine and Elena, Kuzma and Damian. Image inscriptions are in the Old Church Slavonic along with the English language. The iconostasis of St. George Church is similar, with the inclusion of a third or festive row. As to the altar decoration, one priest noted that it has been neglected, including utensils that are basic and have not been changed since the 1950s (C3:28). An improvement in this direction is taken by St. George’s board. During the last 10 years the relatively bare altar walls have been gradually adorned. The centre piece icon of Mary Heavenly Manna (a variant of Oranta) is surrounded by the liturgy writers: St. Iakov, Basil the Great, John Chrysostom, Gregory the Theologian, Gregory Roman Pope, and Athanasius of Alexandria. Thus the iconostases and altar decoration stays with the traditional choices.

186 Ivan (Vanche) Mihailov confirms the Bulgarian character of the Internal Macedono Revolutionary Organization: “The whole fight of IMRO was first a fight for spiritual oneness with the bulgarianness. This was well known by the foreign countries and many would hardly believe that we were for “independent Macedonia” (Mladenov, 2005:216). Ivan Mihailov offers an inside understanding of the Macedono Revolutionary Organization in his book Po Tranliviat put na Makodonskoto Osvoboditelno dvizhenie (On the thorny road of the Macedonian liberating movement) published under pseudonym Briegalnishki in 1939.
Holy Trinity Church

The decoration of Holy Trinity church represents space in dialogue—a mix of national and political statements.\(^{187}\) Starting from the narthex we witness a discussion. The only decoration is four icon pictures framed together and hung modestly in the north-east corner. Very attentively, the inscription below each one shows that the images are taken from churches in the present Macedonian state: for example, “The Deposition, 12\(^{th}\) century, church of St. Panteleimon, Macedonia, village Nerezi.”\(^ {188}\) Over the entrance and nave doors are engraved triangular stained glass pictures of the Trinity and Christ. They ooze soft blue light that balances the otherwise bare wall of the narthex.

The nave reflects emotions of mixed national feelings. The Macedonian theme covers the west wall, around the entrance door of the nave. Framed pictures, as seen in the narthex, diligently clarify the location of the churches: Struga, Ohrid, Staro Nagorichane, Kumanovo—all in today’s Macedonia. The pictures are surrounded by cheerful red tape with white snowflakes, probably a project of enthusiastic members. The Bulgarian theme is located on both the south and north walls of the nave. A choice reminiscent of the images at St. George church includes Sts. Clement Ohridski, Cyril and Methody, John of Rila, Patriarch Evtimii, Paisii Hilendarski, and King Boris. Two pictures of Patriarch Evtimii depict the Ottoman conquest of Tarnovo, the then Bulgarian capital. All images are photos of artistic paintings, not particularly icons, which suggest a financial consideration. An interviewee recollected that she had seen one of the pictures in her school history text book.

\(^{187}\) The church was founded by a faction of St. George Church led by Rev. Mihailov.

\(^{188}\) The rest are: The assumption of the Virgin Mary, 14\(^{th}\) century, St. Clement Ohridski Church, Macedonia; Prayer at Gethsemane, 12\(^{th}\) century, church of St. Cl. Ohridski, Macedonia.
The church belongs to the Bulgarian Synod and community yet it is clear that the Macedonian theme is strong. According to the board chair it is an expression of being a “Bulgarian from Macedonia.” A remarkable inscription is seen under one of the pictures in the middle of the nave: “The Baptism of Macedono-Bulgarians in 865.” Historically King Boris baptizes the proto-Bulgarians and Slavs of different tribes. In fact, there were no Macedono-Bulgarians in 865. The expression reflects only the political diaspora realities of the 20th century. Engraved in a brass plaque, this title is perhaps the most gracious way to settle the decoration and political dispute.

The iconostasis, as in the case of the previous two churches, follows the tradition. Icons are organized in three rows: main, festive and apostolic. The latter show an inclination towards predominantly national popular saint figures. Only four apostles are selected: Peter, Paul, Andrew and John; along with them are native (Cl. Ohridski, Rilski, and Petka Tarnovska) and locally popular saints (Panteleimon, Nikolai, Ilia, and Dimitar). While the images show affection towards popular images from the homeland, the iconostasis is withdrawn into the deep soley (the elevated space in front of the iconostasis) and does not participate into the nave debate.

**St. Dimitar Church**

The last of the four sites displays raised Bulgarian and Canadian flags on the sides of the entrance. The narthex functions mainly as a foyer leading to different areas of the church. Only a small icon and candelabra stand can be seen; being a new church its decoration is a

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189 At that time the Bulgarian nation was in a process of consolidation through language and religion unification.
project in progress. Here the interior decoration separates the religious and the ethnical/national as sacred and communal space respectively.

The nave design is focused on conveying a religious message, yet it is organized in an innovative, approachable and informative manner. Due to its octagonal shape the dome functions as a natural centre of the nave. It covers almost the whole seating area and most of the images are depicted on the dome surface. The walls appear somewhat distant and remain almost unadorned, painted in pale yellow which intensifies the daylight coming from the windows. The dome depictions show a contemporary approach with respect to the choice of images, their positions, and colours. Figure (9) shows the interior composition of the nave and part of the dome. Traditionally a dome represents heaven and is reserved for Christ Pantocrator (or rarely for divinity), while angels and stars in blue and gold shades and the symbols of the four evangelists are depicted at the base (or pendatives). Symbolically, the places where the images are presented reflect their place in the hierarchy and the sky is reserved for the most divine. Instead, here at the apex of the dome is Christ Pantocrator encircled by the apostles positioned like rays in full torsos. Another novel idea is the writing of the credo in modern Bulgarian with Old Church Slavonic type and adornment. The same script appears on the book held by Christ.

On the cylindrical wall (drum) holding up the dome a row of windows casts natural light on the four scenes depicted underneath (on the east, west, south, and north side of the drum): the Last Supper, the resurrections of Lazarus and Christ, and the Sermon on the Mount. Each depiction is in an oval setting, and has a title and a short citation from the corresponding gospel story. The Supper Table is also oval, with a fish dish in the middle, pieces of bread
shaped as triangles and separated by bulbs of garlic.\textsuperscript{190} Garlic and onion were basic to the old Bulgarian cuisine. The figures are more robust and fleshy and less ascetic in stature. The use of perspective, while minimized, is tangible. A similar use of the dome can be seen at St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church in Richmond Hill, Ontario, where scenes of Christ’s life are depicted on the ceiling; however, the central, highest part is dedicated solely to his image surrounded with angels.

The iconostasis, while traditional, becomes part of a unique perspective instead of standing alone. The octagonal, almost round format of the space allows the iconostasis to be visually extended and integrated into the flow of the whole space. On display are popular saints: along with the mandatory images of Christ and Theotokos are Ignatius the God-Bearer and Dimitar. The latter two reflect the names of the donors of the building. They are followed by saints George and Nicola, but no national saints save Ivan Rilski. The lack of an apostolic row and Deisis are compensated by the depictions on the dome. As described earlier, the iconostasis is one row, relatively low, well carved with a limited number of images. However, the unique architectural perspective forms one structurally and thematically blended ensemble: the dome’s fresco of Deisis falls at the center of the iconostasis where Deisis is usually situated, the upper part of Mary Oranta is on the altar wall, seen behind the iconostasis frame, and the two side images are of Sts. Cyril and Methody. Upon entering, the visual integration of the images acts as one impression (see \textbf{Fig. 9}).

The colour choice assists the space integration whilst itself sending a message by using more ‘earthly’ tones instead of the symbolic blue and golden shades. The background of the dome

\textsuperscript{190} The bread shaped as triangles reminds one slightly of a pizza slice.
and its drum are stained sandy brown (or burlywood) which blends with the nave’s soft yellow hue. Inscriptions are written in brown-maroon-chocolate shades; a similar hue replaces the gold for the halos. The figures’ garments include pastel gray and blue again in combination with brown. The golden colour, used generously in Orthodox sacred space, is sparsely applied. If blue and gold are associated with the sky and spirituality, the brown spectrum is undoubtedly an earthly colour. One interviewee shared that she likes the dome though the “illustrations are more grounding than heavenly spiritual” (I7:C.13). The word choice, the replacement of icons with illustrations, is already an important indicator. Indeed, the dome illustrates the main ideas and scenes of the Christian Bible by presenting images that are usually depicted on the walls or iconostas, yet without drama and emotions. By being right above the sitting area and not very high, the dome naturally attracts the attendees’ attention; no image or writing can be missed. As noted, the church gathers mainly the third wave, post-communist immigrants who had limited exposure to religious symbolism. Perhaps for this reason, the educative trend becomes more prominent and overshadows the mystical. Whilst the traditional role of church depictions is to assist spiritual contact with the world beyond the image, the decoration observed in this church does not strive to elevate the soul or insist on spiritual motivation. Simply put, it visually informs where the person stands and offers a basic knowledge of the faith.

Structuring the space with benches, which may seem merely to offer a superficial element of comfort influenced by the North American style, in fact affects the necessity of images and their role in the personal spiritual journey. To recapitulate, in a traditional nave people stroll around, and stand before a chosen icon(s) which supports their personal meditative journey. In an unstructured space attendees tend to lean towards images. In a diaspora church, if
walking around is not an option, personal interaction with a preferred image is greatly limited; no one stays in long solitude in front of an altar icon when the whole congregation is sitting behind their back and no one stands before a wall icon for similar reasons. In the case of St. Dimitar, the dome design focuses all the main religious messages at a closer sight. The walls, in comparison, are somewhat set aside from the sitting area; even if they were adorned the images would not affect the attendees in the same intimate manner.

The communal part of the building is purposefully organized to recreate the homeland. The hall and corridors are thematically separated into three sections: archaeological monuments, national history, and contemporary life and folklore. The monuments adorn the walls of the stairs leading to the banquet hall. On display are pictures of ancient archaeological and historic cites, most of which are protected by UNESCO World Heritage: Thracian tombs\textsuperscript{191}, Roman Amphitheatre from Plovdiv,\textsuperscript{192} churches and frescos (Nesebar, 5\textsuperscript{th} century CE and Boyana church, 11-13\textsuperscript{th} century CE) and Rilski monastery (10\textsuperscript{th} century CE). The second, historical theme is a mix of secular and religious figures such as kings, revolutionaries, writers, poets and educators, all pillars of the national culture. In part, the collection is somewhat reminiscent of the “wall of fame” observed in St. George Church. However, here the images are not presented as icons but portraits: Clement Ohridski, P. Hilendarski and S. Vrachanski appear in their earthly roles, and without halos. The third, contemporary life theme decorates the banquet hall: folklore costumes and dancing people from different regions, national cuisine, and short summaries of important historical events. As soon as one opens the door from the narthex to the communal area, one starts a visual journey that instils

\textsuperscript{191} One is from Sveshtary, 3\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE, and a second from Kazanluk, 4\textsuperscript{th} century BCE.
\textsuperscript{192} Plovdiv, 2\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE.
appreciation of the homeland. As mentioned earlier, the third wave of immigrants prefers to integrate with Canadian culture (based on Western values) and lacks the ethnic confidence that could benefit adjustment to the multicultural environment in Toronto.

The national element appears to be sought and explicitly shown at St. Dimitar without the political trends noticed at the previous two locations. Compared to the rest of the hyphened Macedono-Bulgarian churches, St. Dimitar is Eastern Orthodox Bulgarian. It is a new building and serves a group that starts anew without the dilemmas and discussion marking the history of the three other churches. Also, the third wave of immigrants brought a significant number of young children for whom they established a Bulgarian school. Envisioned in this context, the church does serve educational functions by preserving and promoting ethnic knowledge along with the religious. National and religious symbols acting together are not a rare combination. Tweed’s record of the sanctuary of Cuban immigrants in Miami confirms how “religious orientation in space also informs collective identity” (1997:93).

**Church space and cyberspace**

Today, many diaspora churches include a cyberspace dimension in addition to their physical community space. As a result the inherited boundaries of the churches are complemented with an extra space for interconnectedness. Since 2002, a BinO (Bulgarians in Ontario) e-mail list, a private initiative, has been keeping the community regularly informed about ongoing events. Gradually the churches started using this forum, and by 2014 three of the churches, Sts. Cyril and Methody, St. Dimitar, and Holy Trinity, had posted websites.
The websites reiterate to a significant degree the actual space of each of the observed churches. St. Cyril and Methody’s website is designed as a bulletin to announce services with a short educational explanation of current celebrations and feasts, along with coming or recently passed weddings, baptisms and funerals. It was updated regularly until 2012, the year of the 100th jubilee celebration of the church. St. George is focused on religious education. The priest uses regular personal emails that follow the church calendar and provide information about forthcoming services and religious celebrations, sometimes in the form of a sermon. Thus he extends the physical space of the church by reaching people who are not able to visit the building. The new priest has a personal website that educates his followers about the orthodox faith and provides his e-mail address for direct contact. The Holy Trinity site opens with a welcoming statement explaining that the church as a religious institution integrates additional cultural and educational functions. Its stated purpose is to provide education with respect to the Eastern Orthodox faith and the history of the Macedonian-Bulgarian people. This combination is introduced with a citation from a 1944 article the Macedonian Tribune newspaper: “Mother tongue and national church, what else is a better reason for our struggle to save the Bulgarian national spirit in Macedonia?” (L. Dimitrov, MPO President). We observed how the arrangement of images reflects the strength of the nostalgia for Macedonia. St. Dimitar’s website reaches beyond religious happenings and covers a broad spectrum of events: secular celebrations, services, church board information and liturgical readings. In fact, it reflects all the community events taking place on its premises. The home page greets the visitor with the statement that “Strong church faith makes us one of the first organizers and executors of festivals designed not only to preserve but also to promote Bulgarian culture and spirituality.” Again, this position was reflected in
the church’s choice of decoration. Through reiterating online the main characteristics of their space, the churches significantly extend their capacity to reach their flock and to keep them in their orbit.

Connectivity is important to build communal spirit. The home pages of the churches show an entrepreneurial endeavour for creating a presence that is not limited to religion and spirituality but expands to the socio-communal level. The use of the internet enables the churches to reach a new range of flexibility and interactivity that overcomes the traditional split between sacred and secular space. The physical space of the diaspora church shows a tendency to bring the sacred and the secular together, and their websites mix the two realms in a way that is mundane and natural, beyond judgement by the tradition. The internet will play an increasingly significant part in the life of the diaspora churches. As Bernal comments with regards to diaspora identity, people use internet dialogue tools (blogging, email lists and websites) to assert, perform and maintain their identity in a reality that is assimilating, and “Diaspora tends to use the Internet to undo mobility, to re-territorialize, to retain rather than to escape their identity” (2010:167-8). Indeed, the above examples illustrate how identity retention has been a constant theme throughout the existence of the four Toronto diaspora churches. Email and websites connectedness offers much more than the distribution and circulation of information. It is a transmitter of an appeal for the “organization and building of social momentum” to sustain a group that is relatively small (2010:169). In short, cyberspace shares, attracts, and extends the physicality of community spaces while shrinking physical distances; engages members and keeps them informed, congregating them in a new way that is independent of the sacred-secular opposition. The next chapter, which discusses the actual use of church space, also deals with internet communication.
Summary and Conclusion

The table below summarizes the changes observed in diaspora and compares them to the traditional homeland church.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Tradition at Homeland Church</strong></th>
<th><strong>Diaspora Churches in Toronto</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Architecture: exterior and interior</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Style:</em> accords with the tradition, design is approved by Synod</td>
<td>tradition is optional; design is a decision of diaspora community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Narthex:</em> leads only to the sacred area, prepares entrance and emotional transition to it</td>
<td>leads to both sacred and community space and offers choice between them; the ambience does not support emotional transition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Nave:</em> unstructured congregation: people walk around or stand before icons; no connection with other parts of the building (if any)</td>
<td>benches that structure the space and congregation—people interact with images from distance, walking around is not accepted; doors connect the nave with halls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Windows:</em> small in size (or hardly any) to allow more space for image display; daylight is sparse</td>
<td>large and many to allow for ample daylight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Iconostasis:</em> embellished central artistic piece, as high as possible to separate the altar from nave, usually attracts the most attention</td>
<td>more simplistic, practical, and functional approach, with tendency to become lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Community space and halls:</em> None</td>
<td>equal (or larger) in size and importance to the sacred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. Decoration</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Walls and ceilings:</em> elaborately decorated, use of gold hue</td>
<td>sparsely decorated, gold hue is less present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Images:</em> visual credo and confession of faith so as to inculcate piety and veneration</td>
<td>less concerned with visualization of faith credo; remind about the homeland history, and act as a theophoric guardian of ethnic roots; display of national/political and identity attitudes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
none, only human voice accepted

C. Characteristics of the space

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spatial separation and boundaries:</th>
<th>edifice clearly separates the spiritual and secular space and worlds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dimensionality:</strong></td>
<td>monodimensional—a sacred building, devoted to divine; represents a metaphor of heaven and utopia spiritual world space attended only by believers and intended to ascend the soul of worshipers; meaningful solely to religious people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>edifice connects physically and electronically with the realm outside, fluid with tendency to merge the two worlds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>multidimensional—complex building, responding to both the divine hierarchy and community needs; metaphor of homeland and the settlement journey attended by all diaspora members; intended for a creative tension between faith, national/ethnical, and communal values; meaningful location for all diaspora members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Observation of the Macedono-Bulgarian church buildings in Toronto and the GTA suggests that they incorporate new relations and meanings to conform to diaspora realities and thus are not solely a faith-nurturing and reconstructive image of traditional religious space. The materiality of the religious space allows for an observable projection of ideas and relations; as such it represents the Lefebvre *spatial practices* which allow a degree of measuring these ideas of relations. By integrating functional spaces and images important to the community, the architecture and design opens up to a line of attention, other than that of the deity. The diasporic religious space appears closely attuned to vital cultural and ethnic needs which are elevated to a prominence equal to the spiritual one. It represents a piece of the homeland and holds strings evoking emotions of nostalgic connectedness guiding and easing the resettlement journey. Indeed, the preservation of the tradition is a concern, but in no way a limiting one. By redrawing the traditional limits in diaspora a new cultural space is created to contextualize lived experiences broader than those functioning only as a site of worship and
religious performance. In this regard the signs of institutional vernacularization appear on two levels—architecture and decoration.

The new architectural elements and level of connectedness between the sacred and communal spaces is the first sign of developing a syntonic character. While a homeland church lacks entirely any communal area (secular) and is strictly related with the religious functions, the halls in a diaspora church acquire an important role and value of themselves as a gathering space. Architecturally, two interrelated key centers appear. While the sacred area formally has priority, the community energy created in the halls imparts competing attention and, as one clergy wryly put it, they are “part of the liturgy” (C1: 18). The spatial mode of connectedness—between the communal areas and naves and narthexes—is a prominent signal of openness for a communication broader than the religious by offering choices. The direct and indirect connectedness between the sacred and communal zones ensures natural movement. The appearance of sizable and multiple windows affect the amount of direct light, changes the traditional ambience of the naves and the availability of walls for decoration. The opposition between sacred and secular is softened by a comforting life flow.

Several factors affect the four churches’ architectural design: a) the influence of the North American context; b) concern with accommodation of social conveniences with respect to the needs of the community; c) economic realities; and d) the ownership of the building. Whilst the architecture of the building should have little influence on the inculcation of faith proper, what seems to loom larger is the property itself as a community asset and the functions that it is to serve. Unlike the homeland, where the edifice is envisioned as “God’s house,” in diaspora it is a “peoples’ house.” The language reflects this attitude: ‘community church’ is a popular way of referring to the building while the same word combination is not a part of the
vocabulary in Bulgaria. The change in language formula points to an intrinsically populist or vernacular approach to the religious building.

Further, the decoration of the churches shows responsiveness to the environment that reflects the importance of the human factor and its emotional state. As such it vernacularizes the sacred space. The minimalistic and selective approach allows for more prominence and importance to be assigned to the presence of people than to the credo and the mystics conveyed by the art. Narthexes recognize the role of clergymen. Nave decorations incorporate narratives beyond the religious theme, often addressing a particular wave of immigrants: St. George educates historically and shows national affiliation and aspirations; Holy Trinity expresses polemical or nostalgic symbols of Macedonia that are part of the emotional set of the heirs of the first wave; and St. Dimitar educates about the faith and Bulgarianness to the last wave of immigrants who are either unfamiliar with or unattached to their religion and whose ethnic pride is undeveloped.

The decorative pattern acts as a root-keeper which bestows on the images a double role, one as a reminder of the faith and another as a narrator of historical, cultural, and national belonging. The choice of images conveys the history of the homeland, which is important for ethnic identity retention. A traditional church strives to create an ambience in which time disappears and one is spiritually secluded through colours, lack of light, and two-dimensional perspectives. In diaspora, quite to the contrary, the space is part of the contemporary time flow suggested by the use of earthly hues, abundance of light, and the multifunctionality of the buildings. The priests agree that a minimalistic approach has been achieved by arranging the decoration with only the most essential elements. One said: “Visual means do not have influence the way it is in Bulgaria. The altar simply marks a space and is not an expression of
veneration” (C8:145). The decoration ‘venerates’ the national belonging and allows for recognition of the group ownership character of each church.

Summarily, this chapter has illustrated that church space in the new country is a redefined image of the traditional, in which the determination of space, function, and decoration reflects only the liturgical dimension. The religious institution reconfigures its communal relations to incorporate vernacular responsiveness. By introducing new structural, physical and electronic elements, the diaspora church building becomes instrumental in recognizing the communal factor and takes on a mediational role in the resettlement process. Sacred space, with its multi-meaningful symbols and values, does not exist in binary opposition to the secular life-flow of the diaspora group. Faith nurturing is enriched by ethno-cultural nurturing, thereby creating a new layer to the Church’s architectonic and decoration character. This new layer transforms the religious space into a genuinely theophoric guardian of ethno-religious roots and a symbol of belonging. Whether the building narration resonates in harmonious, or discordant, counterpoint with the space utilization, is to be examined in the next chapter.
Chapter 4
The Occasion of Church Space

Whatever space and time mean, place and occasion mean more.
For space in the image of man is place, and time in the image of man is occasion.

Aldo Van Eyck, Dutch architect

The transformations of physical church space and the internal institutional organization observed in the previous chapters bring into focus the occasion and utilization of space. Space, particularly social space, is not an isolated notion. Nor is it a static notion; rather, its characteristics vary with the energy generated by the actions performed within it. In this chapter I will focus on the activities occurring within, and hence defining the functions of, the diaspora church space. I will examine how the sacred and secular zones of the church buildings relate to each other: do they keep the traditional separation of the two worlds, or do they enable a confluence between them? The four churches in Toronto and the GTA each express a different level of syntonic relation through their buildings in order to attune to the needs of the three waves of immigrants that constitute the community and thus create a social phenomenon that harmonizes all elements previously discussed. This negotiation between the

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As cited in Lawson, 2001:25. Aldo van Eyck (1918-1999) was an architect and professor who lectured in Europe and North America. He played a significant role in postwar urban planning, advocating for a humanistic approach to architecture. Van Eyck opposes the functionalism of post war modernism; according to him, architecture is a “form of dialogue with all the forces, cultural and intellectual, that might imbue it with the same depth of meaning as that of ancient Greece.” His fundamental belief is that “a house must be like a small city if it’s to be a real house, a city like a large house if it’s to be a real city” (in Guardian, 28 January, 1999). “Man” is used in the sense of “humankind,” reflecting the common use of the word throughout most of 20th century.
religious institution and community through activities that occur in the church space explicitly reflects the process of institutional vernacularization.

As discussed earlier, the physical organization and design of the churches advocate for inclusions rather than seclusions, for social interaction rather than only a one-way communication of divine messages. This chapter suggests that the events inhabiting church space are among the most important indication of the fact that “setting really consists of the space, its surroundings and contents, and the people and their activities” (Lawson, 2001:23). The symbiosis of making (i.e., building) and marking (i.e., employing) space is, in a sense (or in fact), the actual production of space, a production that is not confined to its physicality.194

Familiar examples of the ‘(re-)marking of space’ are those ancient amphitheatres which are used today as opera and concert venues and often referred to as “opera/concert halls under the stars.”195 What we touch touches us back, and vice versa; there is a mutually transfusing and transfiguring progression. In that sense the events discussed in this chapter are the most potent factor that creates a space consisting of real—the observable as materiality and concepts, and imagined—emotional and symbolic perceptions. It is a level of making or producing new social space by the religious institution (reflecting Lefebvre’s third

194 The power of occasion in the formation of space was illustrated by references to walling in a spirit-keeper to the buildings (in folklore, a shadow, usually of a young woman) and consecrating a home (a ritual of blessing). As discussed above, p. 137.

195 A few examples among many are: Arena di Verona, I century ACE, once a gladiators’ arena and now an opera and concert stage; The Baths of Caracalla, II century CE, in Rome are used for opera performances; or part of the ancient Stadium in Plovdiv, II century CE, as a restaurant.
“representational space”) that encompasses the totality of the immigrants’ life, not a segment of it, and as such is a “possibilities machine” of relations.\textsuperscript{196}

The chapter is extensively based on ethnographical records and uses both quantitative and qualitative approaches. It is guided by methods employed by S. Schensul, J. Schensul, M. LeCompte, C. Watson and influenced by the studies of J. Barker. First, the chapter proceeds by expanding further the discussion of the notion of institutional vernacularization. There follows a description and explanation of how the data have been systematized. The records, collected in a span of seven years, are set out and summarized in categories and eleven tables to facilitate analysis. Next, the chapter looks closely at each of the churches and describes the activities organized by both the religious institution and community agents; two tables for each church summarize the activities held in their premises. The active presence of folklore events, which appeared unexpectedly in the process of analyzing the data will be discusses briefly. Last, the analysis considers all records to arrive at a comparison between the character and functions of each church and conclusions regarding church space in general. The analysis is supported by three final tables which sum up all the lists and tables presented previously.

\textbf{More on the concept of Institutional Vernacularization}

Institutional vernacularization focuses on the “outer” or social layers of relational existence, the apparent functioning of the church; that is, its practical \textit{modus vivendi} (see chapter two), or the way in which it relates to and reflects the community. The nominal meaning of

\textsuperscript{196} Lefebvre’s theory of space (1991) was discussed in the previous chapter and ‘representational space’ is his third space category that encompasses all: the materiality, ideas and lived social space. To Soja (1996) this space is called Thirdplace or realandimagined [real-and-imagined] space.
“vernacular,” according to the Oxford English Dictionary, is a “language spoken by the ordinary people of a country or region,” or “its informal functions,” or (in the case of architecture) that which is “domestic and functional, rather than public.” By their organization and special arrangements, diaspora churches have been engaged in transforming their traditions to “speak” the local “language” of the diaspora community in order to domesticate their members, or to assist them in adapting to their new homeland. While adhering to formal creeds and confessional symbols, these churches have shifted their focus to personal and communal agency, thus showing awareness of the production of new, collective or popular, “vernacular” values. This communal agency can be understood not only as a recipient that needs to be spiritually enlightened by the sacred gifts of the church, but also as a partner that suggests ways of interfacing.

While institutional vernacularization does not extend to changes in the creedal structure, it nevertheless includes the communal factor as an authority; it legitimizes this factor and acts in accord with it. The traditional church-community relationship is transformed and infused with a commonplace, vernacular approach which parallels its liturgical and theological style. This new vernacular approach opens up the boundaries of the institution, expanding its presence in everyday life, while leaving its belief system largely uncontested; the church becomes vernacular in its thought and action at the institutional rather than at the doctrinal level. Primiano, in his seminal essay on vernacular religion, makes a passing remark about elite members of institutional hierarchies – Popes, Patriarchs, Dalai Lamas, and rabbis – who represent the most institutionally normative aspects of their religious traditions: “[t]here is always some passive accommodation, some intriguing survival, some active creation, some dissenting impulses, some reflection on lived experience” (1995:46). In the case of diaspora,
this accommodation is still more marked, for diasporic existence entails a radical leap into experimentation with new ways of life and new goals, relations, and values; it is an adventure along converging and diverging roads which may lead to unpredictable modes of surviving and thriving. When discussion is about diaspora, accommodation is a magnified truth. The churches, on which this study focuses, regardless of their formal faithfulness to the creed, contribute to the diaspora dynamism by creating a new type of institution, one that respects “life as it is,” the times or moments as they are, the community as they find it.

The link between the vernacular and folklore is naturally strong in academic studies. In this examination, however, the notion of institutional and doctrinal vernacularization does not necessarily refer to folklore inclusions at the institutional level or to folklorization in the sense of individual outlooks coming to include beliefs derived from folklore. “Vernacular” in this context generally reflects institutional behaviour; a form of behaviour that is intended to be domestic, functional, to gain acceptance and popularity in the community. Folklore-linked activities—dance groups, concerts and rituals—appear surprisingly often among the events recorded in this chapter. At this point, however, the data do not seem to suggest folklorization and vernacularization at the doctrinal level. Rather they point to an attitude of the church dictated by values broader than the doctrinal and open to types of negotiation which are worldlier and inclusive, less piety-oriented than hitherto. Conversely, the folklore initiatives recorded in the data prompt questions regarding the increased interest shown in folklore culture: why has it become so popular, particularly with the last wave of immigrants, and how do they and the churches relate to it? Are the churches themselves initiating a revival of folklore culture? Why is the third wave of immigrants a carrier of this revival? In fact, only those who arrived after 2000 had the opportunity to witness the sudden blossoming
of folk and pseudo-folk culture and religious freedom in Bulgaria. Perhaps their influence explains to some extent the increase in folklore initiatives since 2005.

Encountering the force of adaptation in a multicultural environment, it is likely that an immigrant community would initiate or deepen a relationship with a locus that compensated for this loss by rendering the new collective identity factors familiar. In our particular case such a locus is the religious institution building as a unique community gathering place. In diaspora all collective identity factors such as language, home, social encounters, politics, culture, and buildings, which have functioned as natural surroundings, are replaced with unfamiliar counterparts (Shneer & Aviv, 2010). It is the church building that offers various degrees of replacement of all these collective identity factors. How, then, does the spiritual aura of the traditional Church survive the intensity of diverse activities in the adopted homeland? How does a conservative faith establishment meet and negotiate the space with all kind of attendees, some of whom are religiously uncommitted? Because it dialogues with transnational lives a diaspora religious institution appears as a transnational entity; its norms and customs are largely shaped by the process of merging into a non-homogeneous Canadian culture to provide means of coping with the overflowing forces of multiple ethnic code-values. Hence the need for a trans-theological approach arises in assessing the phenomenon of a diaspora religious institution which cannot be understood without reference to its social, along with its religious, engagement.

Local churches produce meaningful interpretations of their functions, new strings of connectedness with community, and they reside in the zone of everyday negotiation in order to ensure their continuing existence and authority. The data on the activities presented in this chapter elaborate and develop the idea of institutional vernacularization as an opening to “life
as it is.” For the concept of vernacularization is less about theorizing than about ways of looking at both formal and religious entities “as they are lived.” Approaching the data using both theoretical knowledge and practical awareness facilitates detecting how and to what extent the church demonstrates a syntonic approach. The diaspora church, in reality, has no fixed status and it finds itself in a phase of re-authentication and community commitment to a new order which dramatically changes the interplay between itself and its members. This process develops the religious institution’s capacity to attune to the broader diaspora in its various needs. The churches and the community interact to re-create vernacularized expression coherent with the life flow, a confluence of the sacred and secular cultural realms.

Data gathering and organization

This chapter analyzes events held in the church halls and organized by either the churches and community groups or individuals. The data are based on email records collected from 2005 to 2011. These emails were disseminated through the website Bulgarians in Ontario (BiN) by the churches, groups or individual organizers in order to keep the diaspora community informed. While a systematic approach to data-gathering was adopted, a full and complete record was unattainable, for not all churches were accustomed to using electronic forms of communication and some were selective in their announcements. For example, some confined themselves to publicizing regular Sunday services. Nevertheless, the data do provide insights into their character.

The data are organized into two lists, to be found in Appendix III. List A is composed solely of church announcements of events organized by the originating church, which will facilitate analysis of the degree of their social resonance. List B consists of announcements by
members or groups of the diaspora community, which will reveal the extent of their connectedness to church space. In each list the data are arranged chronologically by year and date, the type of event, venue, and organizer. This classification was not a straightforward process: for example it was difficult to tell to which list an announcement should belong when the email had emanated from a non-church source and yet listed the church administration as a contact or invoked the name of a church. The announcements about the March 3rd celebrations are an example of such hybrid data.

List A, the church-initiated events, includes an extra column to indicate the language in which the message was written. Language proved to be an important element of the process of summarizing and analyzing the data. List A includes as well announcements by clubs affiliated with or promoted by the church, for instance Sunday schools and some folklore dance groups. Rarely do the churches send purely religious announcements; for the most part they combine these with notifications about community events. An exception is the Akatist program for Pasha (Easter) seen in the announcements of Sts. Cyril & Methody Church (2009) and St. Dimitar Church (2008). Since 2008, the Akatist program has been held as a single, inclusive service at alternating churches with all the priests of the four churches assembled together. Similarly, on patrons’ days priests co-celebrate in one appointed church. From List A are derived tables 1, 3, 5, 7 (which are yearly extracts), and 9 (summary of all church-initiated events).

List B includes events announced by diaspora members and groups who are not affiliated directly with a church or religion. These include the General Consulate of Bulgaria, the

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197 Akathist is a chant combined with a prayer which requires the believers to remain standing. The word derives from the Greek ἀκάθιστος. Pascha and Velikden are the names usually used for Easter in Bulgaria: Pascha—from Greek πάσχα and Hebrew פסח; Velikden means ‘a great day.’
Bulgarian-Canadian Society, the Canadian-Bulgarian Association, Radio *Bulgarian Voice*, the newspaper *Bulgarian Horizons*, the entertainment company *Balkanto*, Young Bulgarians in Toronto, the folklore groups *Igranka* and *Na Horoto* [On the Horo], Bulgarian student associations at the University of Toronto, Ryerson, and York Universities, and the Canadian-Bulgarian Club of Niagara, as well as some private individuals. Not included are the monthly meetings organized by the Damski (Ladies’) Club, as their gatherings have a somewhat private, small-scale character. Some events are not community-initiated but are listed because of the participation of either a diaspora member or a Bulgarian artist: an international film festival, an opera performance, a concert, or similar. These events are not part of the tables which supply data for the analysis of church space, yet they add context to an understanding of how a small diaspora, like the Macedono-Bulgarian, has not only survived in a multicultural city but has attained increased recognition over the last decade. From List B are derived tables 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10 which indicate the extent of each church’s involvement in hosting community events.

Further, the data from List A, events initiated by the churches, is structured into three categories, religious, religious-social and social, to facilitate precision of analysis and comparison.

a) The *religious activities* category includes events which are solely related to religious services scheduled in addition to regular weekly liturgies and services. Examples are the solemn Christmas liturgy, *panahida*,\(^{198}\) and the *Akatist Hymn* in honour of St. Clement Ohridski. The social element, if present at all, appears insignificant for this category, an

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\(^{198}\) Panahida is a memorial service; the word is a Slavic version of the Greek παννυχίς, vigil.
example being the celebration of Pentecost at Holy Trinity. Sometimes one type of event is classified in different categories depending on the organizing church’s approach to it: the patron’s day of Holy Trinity, for example, is predominantly religious, while patron’s day in the other churches tends to be a social gathering as well. It is important to note that this category appears strikingly smaller than the others, since it does not include regular services; its numbers could be misleading without the implicit factoring-in of the regular services.

b) The religious-social activities category includes social events which are held in a church hall and tied to important religious celebrations. Often it is unclear whether the principal event is social or religious. Sometimes the religious service is simply a prelude to and blends into the subsequent social gathering. Examples include the Christmas Eve (Lenten) dinners at St. George and the Christmas children’s parties. The email texts help to determine which of the events is intended to take precedence—by the wording of the announcement, its design, position and font size. The emails from St. George reflect a certain formality and clearly emphasize participation in the liturgy, while the approach of other churches is less formal, to a point that the liturgical aspect of the occasion appears to be virtually redundant.

c) The social activities category includes primarily community-based events. These reflect the needs of the general group of diaspora members; they provide an opportunity for self-expression (in the form, for example, of cooking bazaars or concerts), and often replace some customary celebration from the motherland. New Year’s Eve parties are one such event, and they attract a significant portion of diaspora members. Other examples are the commemoration of the Liberation of Bulgaria (March 3) and the Day of the Slavic Alphabet (May 24). Such events may feature a religious component: a case in point is the “Ilinden”
picnics, devoted to celebrating the Ilinden Uprising (1903), which take place in parks, include music and food, but also honour the victims of the uprising with short *panahida*. These types of events appeal to many diaspora members who would otherwise be unlikely to attend and bring revenue to a church.

The above categories help to organize the ethnographical data for each church. A summary of the information from List A forms table (9) which compares the numbers of all three categories for all churches. Ethnographical observation is supported by eight tables (see Tables 1-8). The analysis of the data is supported by three tables (see Tables 9-11).

**Ethnographic data on activities performed in all church venues, 2005-2011**

This section provides an ethnographical description of the activities, supported by a pair of tables for each church. One table is a yearly extract from List A for a particular church chosen to be representative of actual church dynamics. However, the accompanying analysis is based on the full, seven-year record of events organized by the church and detailed in List A. The other table, based on List B, is a summary of events organized by the community and held in the church hall over the seven-year period.
Sts. Cyril & Methody Macedono-Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church

This church, a venue for all waves of immigrants, hosts a wide range of activities. The announcements, with few exceptions, follow the yearly cycle with a mix of religious and community celebrations: Pascha/Easter, Sts. Cyril and Methody day, an annual bazaar, and a children’s Christmas party. The Bulgarian language (BG) is preferred for communicating the information. Table 1 is a yearly sample which includes the centennial celebrations of the church.

Table 1. Events organized by Sts. Cyril and Methody Church (one year example)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Organizer</th>
<th>Language of announcement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23 May</td>
<td>Patrons’ Day banquet (following the liturgy service)</td>
<td>church hall</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>BG/EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Sept.</td>
<td>Centennial Celebration gala dinner</td>
<td>The Western Prince Hotel</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>BG/EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Sept.</td>
<td>Centennial Holy Liturgy, all priests participate</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Oct.</td>
<td>Annual meeting of the church board</td>
<td>church hall</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Nov.</td>
<td>Annual Bazaar</td>
<td>church hall</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Dec.</td>
<td>Children’s Christmas party, Sunday school program</td>
<td>church hall</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The full list shows 28 events which fall into one of the three following categories:

a) Religious (3 events): Christmas liturgy (2008), Holy Week schedule for Pascha/Easter (2009), and the Centennial Holy Liturgy (2010). The Christmas liturgies are announced in Toronto in order to encourage attendance because in Bulgaria both days, Christmas Eve (called Budni Vecher) and Christmas Day (popular as a name day), are domestic festivities celebrated exclusively at home.199

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199 Christmas Day for the Bulgarian population is a name day for persons called Christo/Hristo or Christina or other names derived from Christ. On this day it is those persons rather than the deity that are honoured. The celebrations are marked by gatherings with friends and family with an abundance of food and wine. During
b) Religious-social (13 events): Children’s Christmas parties and Patron’s days are representative of this group and announcements tend to emphasize the social side. Christmas parties for the children are a main focus and much anticipated community events. They follow a short service which appears to be something of an appendage or add-on to the party. Santa’s distribution of gifts is accompanied by a national food bazaar and a presentation by the Sunday school. One of the messages includes two pictures—one of Santa and one a map of Bulgaria—and somehow omits to include the usual rider that the party “follows the church service” (#389).

The Patron’s day is celebrated on May 24 and commemorates Sts. Cyril and Methody, Bulgarian culture, and the creation of the Slavic alphabet. The design of the messages provides another example of emphasis on the social component. One of the announcements directs attention first to the banquet with bold capital letters, while a small regular font beneath informs that the banquet will be held “following the church service” (#361).\textsuperscript{200} The program is outlined in detail: the banquet itself with an official ceremony, a performance by the Sunday school, a dancing group featuring Igranka, horos, and an award ceremony at which the Sunday school students receive certificates. The Consul and other guests from Bulgaria are listed as attendees. The menu is provided only in the Bulgarian-language version. The design of the message is composed of four pictures: an icon of Sts. Cyril and Methody, the church exterior, a folklore dance, and a stage performance by the Sunday school students. The day chosen for the celebration is an additional signifier of attention to the social factor. In Bulgaria there are two distinct celebrations for Sts. Cyril and Methody,

\textsuperscript{200} Some of the messages will appear in the text under their number for organizational clarity and easy references; they are part of an unpublished archive.

\textsuperscript{\text{the communist period the celebrations of the name days were preserved while the religious connection faded away.}}
one observed by the church on May 11 and the other, a national holiday, on May 24.\textsuperscript{201} In Toronto it is the church that initiates the organization of both by combining the service with activities which are usually undertaken in the homeland by government (addresses and awards for achievements in culture) and by schools (certificates and alphabet festivals). Thus, in Toronto the church continues its traditional role while assuming the additional one of representative of a cultural institution.

c) Social (12 events): yearly bazaars, concerts (pop, jazz, and folk), meetings of the church board, and the formation of a folk dance group (2010). The yearly bazaar provides a venue for culinary crafts and is very popular among the women who support the church. The church rarely initiates concerts itself and only four appear on the list: a performance by Great Bulgarian Voices (2005), a music competition for children, and two folklore concerts featuring popular Bulgarian and Macedonian songs (2011). The last two are essentially just entertainment: one is called an Easter concert, but only borrows the name because of its proximity to that festival. Regarding the launch of the folklore dance group, the church has had a tradition of maintaining it since its foundation; during the last quarter of 20\textsuperscript{th} century it was discontinued due to a lack of demand.

A main contribution to the community is a Sunday school with 25 to 45 (varying by year) students aged four to fourteen. The school is not religious but educates about the ethnic culture. It is devoted to keeping the Bulgarian language alive: the children learn how to read, recite poems, sing Bulgarian songs, study Bulgarian history and literature, along with the most important prayers and popular bible stories. An illustration is the Christmas show where

\textsuperscript{201} The different dates are based on two calendars—Julian and Gregorian. In 1916 the Gregorian calendar was officially adopted by the Bulgarian Church, but the people keep some of the celebrations according to the Julian calendar, especially May 24 and December 8 (Climent Ohridsiki day, celebrated nation-wide as Students’ day).
pupils perform the story of Christ’s birth along with folklore customs and songs, such as *Koleduvane* and *Suruvakane*, associated with both Christmas and New Year.\(^{202}\) This school has existed since the church’s establishment a century ago and for most of that time it has provided the only opportunity to learn the native culture and language in Toronto. It was not until the post-1990 wave of immigrants, which significantly increased the number of young Bulgarian students, that the Toronto District School Board included Bulgarian on its list of native language courses.\(^{203}\)

Table 2 summarises the events of List B organized by the general community on the premises of Sts. Cyril and Methody Church. These activities complement the above data and confirm that the church is indeed a socially oriented space. Of the 98 events which have taken place in the Toronto community over the last seven years, 31 of them have been held in this particular church.

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\(^{202}\) *Koleduvane* is a ritual performed on Budni Vecher or Christmas Eve. A group of lads gather and visit every house in the village singing songs. These songs wish abundance and wellness for the house but are also a call for an awakening to meet the deity: “Get up mister, Kolade,/ if you sleep, awake,/if you are drunk get sober, /open the box-wood gates,/the box-wood gates, old doors/because good guests are coming/ good guests koledari/ we bring good news/ God will visit you,/ can you welcome God/ welcome and feast him” (Marinov, 1994:431, translation mine). Marinov has recorded numerous songs and kind of breads prepared for Budni Vecher (1994:391-453). Some of the songs are popular and though there are no groups of koledari in the urban milieu, the songs are part of the celebrative programs on TV, in schools and entertainments in restaurants. See also Katzarova and Dzhenev, 1976:38-39.

*Suruvakane* is a ritual performed after midnight on New Year’s Eve wishing everyone abundance and health. The wishing is done with an adorned cornel-tree twig with fresh buds. With this twig the children pat the adults and sing a song or recite a blessing: “Surva joyful year/heavy wheat-ear in the field,/ a red apple in the garden,/yellow corn in maize,/big bunch of grapes on vine-tree,/ full purse with money,/ be alive and healthy till the next year,/ till next year, till amin (for always)” (Marinov, 1994:465). This blessing has variations such as “full house with silk, a bam full with wheat” and similar additions. The adults respond by giving money, fruits and walnuts. The ritual is alive today and performed in the family in urban environments, though in the villages children still walk from house to house. According to Katzarova and Dzhenev it is a carnival ritual (1976:53-54).

\(^{203}\)Five schools in East and North York, Toronto, have now made after-school Bulgarian language classes available. See [http://www.tdsb.on.ca/programs/continuing_education/int_lang](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/programs/continuing_education/int_lang), as viewed on 17 July, 2013.
Table 2. Events organized by independent groups and held at Sts. Cyril and Methody church hall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Folk &amp; ethno pop concerts</th>
<th>Pop &amp; rock concerts</th>
<th>Celebrations (New Year, National day, gatherings)</th>
<th>Meetings</th>
<th>Fundraising concerts</th>
<th>Theatre</th>
<th>Jazz concerts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total 31</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that music-related events enjoy the strongest appeal: these account for 28 out of the total of 31 (90%), including celebrations with a musical component. The musicians come from Bulgaria and from the North American Bulgarian or Balkan communities. Concerts are held as fundraisers (in aid of individuals in Canada or Bulgaria), and/or as a part of community celebrations, or simply as entertainment.\textsuperscript{204} The principal organizers are the Bulgarian-Canadian Society (BCS), Radio Bulgarian Voice, and Balkanto. While the events are externally initiated, the church is closely involved in their promotion. This is so, for instance, in the case of the celebration of the national day of Bulgaria. The event is officially organized by the Bulgarian-Canadian Association, but the emails relating to it are titled with the church’s name and the church office helps to distribute tickets. The three events that do not include music are a meeting with the Bulgarian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, a lecture on alternative medicine, and a theatrical performance.

**St. George Macedono-Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church**

Located one street south of Sts. Cyril & Methody, this church is less socially open and a more ardent keeper of the traditional functions. One reason for this difference is that the membership of St. George includes few recent immigrants; it is composed principally of a

\textsuperscript{204} The program for the celebration of the national day in 2010 includes poetry, opera, pop, and folk dances.
very well established group of the second and third generation of the first-wave immigrants. A large portion of this group has a common origin, mainly from Lerin, a village in today’s Greece, which stimulates a strong emotional bond among those members. According to one clergy the church is treated as a countrymen organization (C1:17). Perhaps this solid constant group is the reason why the adjustment to the diasporic flow is less evident than at Sts. Cyril and Methody.

Table 3. Events organized by St. George church (1 year example)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Organizer</th>
<th>Language of announcement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 May</td>
<td>St. George Great Martyr, divine liturgy followed by traditional banquet and kurban lunch</td>
<td>church &amp; hall</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>EN/BG (with Latin letters)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Aug.</td>
<td>Panihida for the former priest S. Kapitanov</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Sept.</td>
<td>13th Annual Family Day, divine liturgy and blessing of families with Holy water</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Dec.</td>
<td>Children’s Christmas party following the Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Dec.</td>
<td>Christmas Eve, Divine Liturgy followed by Lenten dinner with participation of 3 priests</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>BG/EN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

List A features 32 announcements for this church:

a) Religious (6 events): an annual family day, panahidi (memorial services), Christmas divine liturgies, and a special service of reunification to the Bulgarian Orthodox Church. The family day is an initiative of this particular church, established in 1995. On this day the priest blesses with holy water the families who constitute the nucleus of the church. The priests have been searching for creative ways to involve members in bible education, and a former priest disclosed that he had initiated private home gatherings with discussions on the faith. A unique occasion is the celebration of the return of the church to the Bulgarian Diocese after

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205 The day of Christian family is connected with the celebration of the Presentation of Theothokos (St. Mary) into the Temple, Nov 21 according to the Eastern Orthodox calendar.
being a member of the American Orthodox Church. Christmas Eves are not included in this category, as their social aspect is of a special magnitude.

a) Religious-social (21 events): Patron’s days, children’s Christmas parties, Christmas Eves, and church anniversary celebrations. As compared to Sts. Cyril and Methody Church, the emphasis at St. George is unambiguously on the religious purpose of these events, though their social component is not without importance. The patron’s day (May 6) is celebrated with a liturgy and a traditional fund-raising banquet; when it falls on a week-day the liturgy is followed by a kurban lunch. The children’s Christmas parties are comparatively small-scale events and the announcements pertaining to them typically stress their religious nature: for instance, “Divine Liturgy followed by our annual Children’s party.” (Emphasis added to underscore the primary role of the liturgy.) Moreover, the church recommends that children prepare themselves for the festivities by receiving communion (#199). The Lenten dinners, which mark a closure of the lent on Christmas Eve, attract many attendees to the dinner rather than to the service. In Bulgaria, as it was noted, Christmas Eve/Budni Vecher is celebrated only at home with the immediate family. In Toronto, commencing in 1996 Budni Vecher has been performed in the church hall.

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206 During the period of this study the church celebrated the 65th and 70th anniversaries of its establishment.

207 Kurban is an offering, giving away food in honour of a saint. The difference from the pagan offering is that the slaughtering is not part of the blessing and the ritual, according the priests. Usually a calf, ram, or lamb is baked or prepared as a soup. The meat is consecrated and censed by a priest. See D. Marinov, 1994:713-716. Private/personal offerings or kurbans are also popular today. They are prepared for a saint-protector or as a gesture of thankfulness. For example, if somebody had encountered dangerous situation and got out of it, every year on the same day the person would prepare kurban and gather family and friends. By doing so the person celebrates his/her good fortune, presumably thanks to the good spirits, and ensures further protection. People giving kurban are more superstitious than religious. According to Marinov, the censing of the food was performed by the oldest member of the family, but later when every village had a priest, the censing was done by him.

208 Koleda Lent is a 40 days long period which starts in November; Christmas Eve is the last day of that lent.
c) Social (5 events): classic concerts and Christmas baking gathering. As of 2010, announcements included social events, all of which were scheduled following the liturgy on Sundays. Two classical concert matinees appeared in 2010 as fundraising events. These were followed in 2011 by two more concerts dedicated to International Music Day (Oct.1) and a farewell cocktail party for a priest returning to his parish in Bulgaria. The only other community event listed is a Christmas baking evening for youth.

Table 4, a summary of List B, events organized by independent community groups, shows that St. George hosted no externally organized events until 2011. In that year it accommodated three: a concert of classical music as a part of the Bulgarian Art Festival, an evening of Bulgarian folk dance, and a New Year’s Eve party.

Table 4: Events organized by independent groups at St. George church

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Folk &amp; ethno pop concerts</th>
<th>Pop &amp; rock concerts</th>
<th>Celebrations (New Year, National day, gatherings)</th>
<th>Meetings</th>
<th>Fundraising concerts</th>
<th>Theatre</th>
<th>Classical/ Jazz concerts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The paucity of social events may be explained in part by three reasons. One is the close proximity to Sts. Cyril and Methody, which is more suitable for accommodating larger community gatherings. Further, St. George is solvent and not under a pecuniary obligation to attract outside events. In addition, beyond the immediate membership, the church is less inclined to attract new immigrants. Yet, the data do indicate a slight increase of social activities which can be attributed to the third wave of immigrants.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁹ The Bulgarian Art Festival (now popular and supported by the Canadian Arts Council) is organized by the choir conductor of the church who is a post-1990 wave immigrant. So is the art restorer and iconographer R.
The language of the announcements put out by this church is suggestive of a struggle to preserve the ancestral language along with the prevailing English. Mostly second and third generation, the church congregation is fluent in English but very fond of its roots. This is illustrated by the mixed-language messages: written in English (10), in both English and Bulgarian (9), and only in Bulgarian with the Cyrillic script (3). There are other Bulgarian texts but transliterated with Latin letters; one email, interestingly, is written in English and modern Bulgarian with adjusted Old Church Slavonic letters. Sometimes the phonetic replacement is imprecise, including a few spelling mistakes. In the body of the announcements, the title of the church itself is in English with Old Slavonic calligraphy. For the first generation immigrants, Old Church Slavonic was part of their life as it was close enough to the literary writings with which they were familiar. One interviewee mentioned that her grandparents and her parents could read Old Slavonic, and that she herself remembers some of it. Preserving it can be a political statement in the case of Bulgarians from Macedonian areas. What is forgotten for the last wave of immigrants is kept dearly by the second.

Kirinkov who joined the church as a deacon. The inclusion of a New Year’s Eve celebration definitely signals an adaptation to the expectations of the new wave immigrants.


211 Applying Church Slavonic calligraphy to the modern Bulgarian is quite popular and part of the culture in the first homeland. In fact, the first secular contemporary grammar book for primary school students, Riben bukvar, by Petar Beron, published in 1824, is written with Church Slavonic letters (used by old Bulgarian) and was in secular use until the beginning of the 20th century; in the 19th century there was still significant closeness between the secular literary Bulgarian language and Church Slavonic. The orthographical reforms in 1921-23 and 1945 removed letters and modernized their graphic image. The reforms are still perceived as political by many people and scholars, especially since 1945, as they disconnect today’s Bulgarian language from its old roots and because the removal of the letters Б (b) and Ш (š) opens up a gap between the Eastern and Western dialects. See K. Petkanov, 1944; Brazitsov, 1943:83; S. Mladenov, 1929:412.

212 A book published by Pando Mladenov, one of the St. George church’s members, in 2010, partly uses letters which were removed by the orthographic reform of 1945. The author uses old spelling the letters Ш for Ee
The details of language use reveal that fluency in the native language varies greatly among church attendees but that the desire to retain authenticity and the ancestral languages continues. English is the language of preference for the third generation and though the services include Bulgarian, English tends to be used to a greater extent than in the other churches. Yet, the persistence in using the native language, and in its old version, is a sign of determination to stay connected with the cultural roots. In general, the language as nostalgia, pride, and politics is a part of St. George church life.

**Holy Trinity Eastern Orthodox Macedono-Bulgarian Church**

This church has been marginally active in the electronic communications space. As a result, Table 5, unlike that for the other churches, is a compilation of all the events for the whole seven years study period, amounting to only five.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Organizer</th>
<th>Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Folklore dance group gathering (children and adults)</td>
<td>church hall</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Solemn Christmas Liturgy</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Celebrating the day of Slavic literacy</td>
<td>church hall</td>
<td>church &amp; Bulgarian Horizons newspaper</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 May</td>
<td>Celebrating children’s day and the first birthday of the group for Bulgarian traditions and customs</td>
<td>church hall</td>
<td>church and Bulgarian Horizons newspaper</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Nov</td>
<td>Akathist Hymn in honour of St. Clement Ohridsky (all priests participating)</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>BG/EN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here are the events by categories:

a) Religious (2 events): Christmas liturgy and *Akatist*, which honours St. Clement Ohridski. Missing from the list is the main event, the Pentecost service, a patron’s day and "Bb" (translated as "Aa" but sounds more guttural) that are part of Old Church Slavonic. For the author it is a cultural and political statement.
trademark celebration for the church, which is the only one among the four that performs a service on this day. Pentecost is a movable celebration and it often falls on a weekday; nevertheless, the church is always full and all the priests are in attendance. Unlike other churches, Holy Trinity does not organize a banquet for Patron’s day.

b) Religious-social (1 event): a celebration of Cyril and Methody’s day and Slavic Literacy. Its supporter and co-organizer is the newspaper *Bulgarian Horizons*, based in Toronto. The email text provides another example of how Old Church Slavonic calligraphy is applied to modern Bulgarian (msg. #358).

c) Social (2 events): a folklore dance-group gathering and Child’s day (June 1) celebration. The two are announced separately, but marked on the same day. The text extends an invitation to “lovers of everything Bulgarian and native.”

Table 6 below is derived from List B and shows that the church hall has been host to nine independent social events, an indication that the venue is as popular as the other churches (see Table 10 for comparison).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>year</th>
<th>Folk &amp; ethno pop concerts</th>
<th>Pop &amp; rock concerts</th>
<th>Celebrations (New Year, National day, gatherings)</th>
<th>Meetings</th>
<th>Fundraising concerts</th>
<th>Theatre &amp; movies</th>
<th>Classic &amp; Jazz concerts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

213 As a symbol of the Holy Spirit, the priest disperses walnut tree leaves but in Canada they are replaced with whatever leaves are available.

214 The international Child’s Day is a relatively new celebration established in the mid-20th century and first announced by Moscow. All countries from the former Soviet block celebrated it. Yet, the celebration didn’t have a political connotation and it gained popularity. In Canada it was introduced by the third wave of immigrants who had become accustomed to the celebration.
The church is, for example, a meeting place for the annual conference of Radio Bulgarian Voice. The radio station initiated a discothèque in 2006, announcing it as an opportunity to gather and foster community ties. In 2011 the church also became a venue for a movie night connected to the Bulgarian Arts Festival. Private initiatives include a celebration of New Year’s Eve and two fundraising dance parties co-organized by the Balkanto Corporation.

In general, the data indicate that the church does not reach out and propagandize itself in the community space. Likely reasons include its administrative style and its location. In contrast to the other churches, Holy Trinity is situated in proximity of the diasporic community; the Danforth and Greenland area is inhabited by South-Eastern European immigrants like Serbs, Rumanians, Bulgarians, Macedonians and Greeks. The priest himself lives in the neighborhood and personal contacts are strong. This is probably the reason why electronic communication has not been much used to keep in touch and why the language used for services and messages is mostly Bulgarian without English translation. The current priest is focused mainly on liturgical services and the spiritual needs of his flock, yet he participates in community events and sometimes will pick up an accordion to play and sing. The “brotherhood atmosphere” alluded to by an interviewee can be maintained because the neighborhood location makes people comfortable with and fond of the church. The church board chair confirmed that they warmly welcome every newcomer, making sure to introduce them to the rest of the members, and that their goal is to preserve their homely atmosphere.
St. Dimitar Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church

From the moment of its inauguration this church has represented a new and distinct approach to institution-community relations which is unapologetically different from the traditional homeland Church. As the preferred medium for the dissemination of information is electronic, a reliable record and insight into the dynamics of that approach was possible. Since the first year of its official existence (2005), the church’s aspiration to become a centre for the third wave of immigrants has been apparent. The social events in that year surpassed the total for the same period of the other three churches (see Table 9). Located in Brampton, St. Dimitar Church is a convenient nexus for families living in Mississauga, Etobicoke and the surrounding west-end area. Table 7 below presents the activities undertaken by the church itself (List A) in 2009. It reveals a broad spectrum of initiatives manifesting a high level of syntonic commitment to the community.

Table 7. Events organized by St. Dimitar church (one year)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Events</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Organizer</th>
<th>Language of announcement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Jan.</td>
<td>Church calendar of events (January-June)</td>
<td></td>
<td>church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grandmother’s day (18 Jan.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Valentine’s day (14 Feb.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yearly meeting of the board (22 Feb.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National day celebration (3 March)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trip (TBA)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First spring and Kukeri celebration (21 March)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Easter services (12-19 April)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children’s concert (24 May)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Golf tournament (TBA)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Feb.</td>
<td>Every Friday: Bulgarian movie and catechism course</td>
<td>church hall</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Feb.</td>
<td>St. Valentine/ Trifon Zarezan Party</td>
<td>church hall</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Feb</td>
<td>March 3, National day of Bulgaria; Attended as always by representatives of provincial and local government. Starts with panihida, followed by dinner</td>
<td>church hall</td>
<td>church &amp; CBA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 March</td>
<td>(i)Establishing a choir and looking for a choir conductor;</td>
<td>church hall</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(ii)Course in introduction to liturgy (March 15, 22, 29)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 May</td>
<td>Celebrating May 24: Piano recital of young pianists (Canadian and Bulgarian)</td>
<td>church hall</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 May</td>
<td>Children’s talent competition: singing, dancing, and</td>
<td>church hall</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A total of 80 activities are organized by the church (List A) grouped as follows:

a) Religious (7 events): Divine Liturgy with the Metropolitan (2006), Akatist Service and Easter (2008 and 2009), Christmas Divine Liturgy (2008), a formation of a choir, and a course in introduction to liturgy (2009). The last two initiatives signify a trend towards recognizing the necessity of introducing the third wave of immigrants to basic knowledge of church traditions as a strategic step in building the present and future congregation.

b) Religious-social (9 events): Christmas Eve (2005, 2008), the official consecration of the church (2006), Patron’s day (2006, 2007, 2008, 2010), celebration after the great Easter service (2008), and movie night paired with catechism course (2009). Easter and the Patron Day celebrations blend into large-scale community gatherings. For example, after the great Easter service in 2008, to break the Lenten fast, three baked lambs were prepared for the subsequent community gathering—an impressive quantity, suggesting a large attendance. This initiative is found only at St. Dimitar Church. The announcement for the event employs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31 May</td>
<td>5th Annual Charity Golf Tournament ‘St. Dimitar’</td>
<td>Lionhead golf club</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 June</td>
<td>5th Annual Charity Golf Tournament ‘St. Dimitar’</td>
<td>Carliste golf course</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-12 July</td>
<td>Carabram, Brampton multicultural festival—Bulgarian pavilion</td>
<td>church hall</td>
<td>church and Bulgarian community</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Aug.</td>
<td>5th Annual Charity Golf Tournament ‘St. Dimitar’</td>
<td>Century Pines golf club</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Aug.</td>
<td>Yearly Ilinden-Preobrazienie picnic</td>
<td>Park</td>
<td>church &amp; Canadian-Bulgarian Association</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Sept.</td>
<td>Charity Tennis tournament</td>
<td>Lionhead golf club</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Sept.</td>
<td>Invitation for: (i) a new dance group to reproduce traditional customs, and (ii) A new amateur theatre group</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Sept.</td>
<td>Beginning of the school year for the Bulgarian school</td>
<td>church hall</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Oct.</td>
<td>5th Annual Charity Golf Tournament ‘St. Dimitar,’ final round</td>
<td>Lionhead golf club</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Dec.</td>
<td>New Year’s Eve Party</td>
<td>church hall</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
a word, *otgoveem* (to break a fast), which would be more familiar to the second wave immigrants.

Another distinct initiative is the series of movie nights combined with catechism courses (2009).215 These events, together with the Introduction to the Liturgy course, show again a motivation to promote religious education. Christmas Eve, or *Budni vecher*, is listed twice and offers those who live in the west end of Toronto and the GTA an experience similar to that of the Lenten dinners at St. George. While the homeliness is a mark of this celebration at St. George, the official stress is always on the event as a religious happening. At St. Dimitar, in contrast, the invitation is explicitly personal: “Let us all be like one big family” which positions the stress rather on the togetherness as a community, than on the congregation.216

As with the other churches, the Patron’s day celebration is a major event.217 However, here the scale of the event surpasses the local community circle. The roster of invited people indicates an outreach towards both the wider diaspora and Canadian society. The list of invitees for the 2010 celebration includes a member of the former Bulgarian royal family, Princess Maria-Luisa Borisova Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, the Bulgarian ambassadors to the US and Canada, and the Consul in Toronto. The first event is held at the banquet hall of the Lionhead Golf Club, one of the golf clubs owned by the founder of the church. It is a thematic dinner commemorating “The events of 1943, King Boris and the saving of 50,000

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215 From Greek κατηχέω, to teach orally and to sum up a doctrine.
217 One of the reasons why the patron days are celebrated is connected with the tradition of celebrating name days. The most popular are: Ivanov’s day (7 Jan.), George’s day (6 May), and Dimitar’s day (26 Oct.). They are followed by Constantine and Elena (26 May), Peter (29 June), Ilia (30 July), Maria (15 Aug.), and Katerina’s (24 Nov) day. People with these names celebrate in their homes and everybody can come without invitation. This tradition probably sparks the grand gatherings in both churches where along with the honoured saints are present people celebrating their name day.
Jews from death." Conversations with the guests, an art exhibition and music are included in the program. Two folklore groups are invited, the York University Balkan Ensemble and the Montreal Dance Ensemble. On the next day the guests participate in the liturgy, followed by a tree planting to mark the first visit by the royal family. The light lunch includes kurban (ritual sanctified lamb soup) and presentations by the Sunday school and folklore groups. A similar organization was scheduled for the official consecration of the church (2006) with over 400 guests, including Canadian politicians. Clearly, these occasions are designed to gain visibility and to inaugurate a church that is a centre of the diaspora not only in Toronto but throughout Canada; they reflect a desire to boost the group’s self-esteem and to form an empowered community. This trend is even more evident through the social activities.

The Bulgarian nation saved its whole Jewish population by refusing to send them to Nazi death camps and is accepted as the righteous among the righteous in the Yad Vashem memorial. The Bulgarian Orthodox Church, represented by its metropolitans Kiril and Stefan as a main force, with the support of the population, exercised pressure on parliament. As a result the king stopped the long trains of boxcars waiting to take the Bulgarian Jews. Not one Bulgarian Jew was taken away; the refusal to permit their removal was so firm that at the beginning of 1943 Hitler gave up. The same year King Boris III met with Hitler and refused to join the war against Russia. A few days later the king died, supposedly poisoned by Hitler. On the topic see Bar-Zohar, 1998; Todorov, 2001; Chary, 1972; Boyadzieff, 1989; Comforty, 2001 (film). More studies become available after 1990 when an access to Bulgarian state archives was allowed. Instead of being proudly publicized, the rescue of Bulgarian Jews, and documents connected with it, were kept in secret by the communist government since the act glorified the church and king, both perceived as enemies. In addition it set Bulgaria apart from the other countries of the communist block which were anti-Semitic to a greater degree, while in general anti-Semitism is absent from the Bulgarian social and cultural tradition. As a result this incredible act of humanity is hardly known, especially in North America. As the patron’s day and Holocaust educational week in Toronto almost coincide in time, it seems that St. Dimitar sets a goal to publicize this fact in Canada.

In general anti-Semitism did not exist in Bulgaria; there were no ghettos and the Jewish population was part of the common and political life of the country. During the fight for liberation of Sofia when the retreating Ottoman army was about to destroy the town, the Sofia’s rabbi intervened and helped saving the town from being burned down. Later, the same rabbi Almosnino participated in the preparation of the first Bulgarian Constitution in 1879.
c) Social (64 events). This category reveals an institution that unexpectedly engages in a very wide range of activities and aims well beyond religious functions. Given the large number of events in this category they are further divided into three subgroups: entertainment, charity, and celebration.

The *entertainment* events include Bulgarian movies, a theatre with guest Bulgarian actors, concerts, and a variety of parties. Concerts are presented by world renowned names and groups: Great Bulgarian Voices, the Russian Male Choir, and classical concerts with singers such as S. Evstatieva and V. Nicolova. The fact that the latter has worked with Elizabeth Schwarzkopf (one of the greatest names in the opera world) is underscored. By offering carefully selected events the church ensures growing attendance and builds a name for itself. The parties are connected with popular community celebrations like New Year, *Trifon Zarezan* (which coincides with Valentine’s Day), Humour Day (April 1), and a culinary show.

The *fundraising* and *charity* events include annual golf tournaments, bazaars and discotheques. The golf tournaments are co-organized by the church founder who is the owner of several golf courses. The profits benefit the church. The proceeds from a Halloween discotheque and bazaar in 2009 were sent through the Canadian Red Cross to help victims of the flood disaster in Bulgaria.

The *celebratory* events are grouped around three popular days: National Day (March 3), Children’s Day (June 1), and the Ilinden uprising (July 30). Usually National Day is

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219 Mr. Kaneff is a community-spirited businessman. He holds many honours among which are the Missisauga Citizen of the Year (1992) and an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws from the University of Toronto (1994). He is a philanthropist who supports hospitals, universities and the church. See [www.kaneff.com](http://www.kaneff.com), viewed on Dec. 4, 2013.
celebrated in the Lionhead Golf and Country Club. It is an official event attended by representatives of local and provincial government and Canadian political figures of all affiliations. This fact is underscored in the announcements: “attended as always by representatives of the government” (italics added, see Tbl. 7). The anniversaries of the Ilinden uprising are arranged as picnics with panahida, baked lamb, music and horo-dances. Priests and members of other churches are invited. Children’s Day is a custom brought over by the post-1990 wave of immigrants; it is a relatively new tradition in Bulgaria and one that seems to have gained popularity in diaspora. Concerts and competitions in the church hall allow the children to express their creativity through music, art, and dance. Other celebrations include First Spring, marked by dance parties, Babin Day (Midwife) and Kukery, both pagan folklore traditions. All these festive days enrich the new homeland calendar in its effort to replace the celebrative cycle to which the third wave of immigrants was accustomed in Bulgaria.

Some events that do not belong to the above groups are: celebrations marking the start of the school year, tennis tournaments, the children’s folk-dance group Dimitrovche, and group outings. Designed for a smaller circle of people, these events are attended by a stable cluster of regular participants. Another important initiative is hosting the Bulgarian pavilion for Carabram, the annual Brampton Multicultural Festival, which features art exhibitions and traditional costumes, cuisines, folklore music, and dance groups. According to the organizers, the church ambience provides for these shows a more comprehensive representation of Bulgarian culture.

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²²⁰ In 1951 the folklore celebration of midwives, usually older women in the village (babi), was accepted in Bulgaria as a national day of gynaecologists, midwives, and in general of the birth medical personal. As such, a folklore ritual was transferred to the secular celebrative cycle of the country.
The events organized by independent groups and persons at the premises of St. Dimitar are summarized in Table 8 below (from List B). Most of these activities are, however, initiated by insiders who are closely connected to the church.

Table 8. Events organized by independent groups at St. Dimitar Church hall (7 years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Folk &amp; concerts</th>
<th>Pop &amp; rock concerts</th>
<th>Celebrations (New Year, National day, gatherings)</th>
<th>Meetings</th>
<th>Fundraising Concerts</th>
<th>Theatre and movies</th>
<th>Classic &amp; Jazz concerts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 (kukeri)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 (kukeri)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 (kukeri)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 (kukeri)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One example is meetings of the Canadian-Bulgarian Association (CBA), which was established and is led by the church founder. Another is the Kukeri (Mummers) day celebrations, initiated by the folk-dance group Igranka which had been helped by the church. The CBA and Igranka co-organised a concert of the orchestra Thracia. Only two folk concerts are externally organized (by Balkanto and by the Bulgarian Art Festival). As a result, no clear differentiation is noticeable between the events from List A and List B.

The annual celebration of Kukeri and the presentation of the rituals are perhaps the most thought-provoking event happening in Toronto, for they have never been associated with Christianity and Church. The same is true of the celebration of Babin Den (Midwife day), also a pagan ritual. Moreover, Kukeri appeared for the first time in diaspora. The rituals have Thracian roots (first millennium BC) and persisted through both Slavic and proto-Bulgarian paganism (first millennium CE) and Christendom. The custom honours evil spirits, thereby

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221 Balkanto is a corporation for entertainment management, concert promotion, and artist booking. They are aiming towards “Canadian residents with European Balkan region heritage who long for their culture, and for Canadians who would like to experience authentic Eastern European creative arts.” See [www.balkanto.ca](http://www.balkanto.ca), accessed on Dec.4, 2013.
taming their power and providing protection to their potential victims; it also makes for a good harvest (Marinov 1994:506-514). Today, *Kukeri* can be encountered as a part of festivals in smaller towns and villages in Bulgaria, though its distinctive costumes adorned with a collection of bells enjoy widespread popularity and have become emblematic of Bulgarian folklore along with *nestinari* (walking on fire). Considering the attention, attendance and interest it garners, Kukeri is turning out to be one of the main celebrations in the diaspora calendar. Though St. Dimitar has only hosted and not organized the event, the announcements for *Kukeri* appeared on the church event list for 2008 and 2009. The priest confided that he felt uncomfortable with the church’s involvement in *Kukeri*, and after four years, in 2011, the group was asked to find another venue (C4:79). It seems, though, that during the initial years of their existence, both the group and the church benefited from the event by increasing their exposure to the community.

In general, St. Dimitar acts in a way that enriches the church and community on multiple new levels: it attracts significant group of immigrants who most likely will become part of the congregation; the church lobbies for the community in Canadian society and government to provide visibility to the diaspora group; it takes on the role of cultural ambassador in the multicultural city and builds ethnic pride. Its success owes much to the strong collaboration between successful professionals of the second wave of immigrants, who lay the base, and those of the third wave, who make the goals outlined above attainable.
Data analysis

Folklore revival in Toronto

The active presence of folklore in diaspora emerged as a surprise during the processing and analysis of the data. This phenomenon, dating only from around 2004-2005, indicates that the community and the churches themselves have become initiators and supporters of a folklore culture revival. It might be expected that every ethnic group seeks to preserve its music, but the generation of the post-communist wave of immigrants, especially those from an urban background, grew up in an environment almost devoid of folklore tunes. Thus the folklore revival in diaspora poses a series of questions: Why has this revival occurred with the third wave of immigrants? How do the churches deal with folklore? Can a diaspora environment perpetuate folklore and folk beliefs?

Like religion, folklore music in Bulgaria was preserved for its museum value. Its real presence was minimal in everyday life, particularly in the cities, and very few radio and TV programs featured it. The predominant attitude was that folklore music was part of the old life and times, typical of uneducated or village people, and that did not represent modern, future-oriented socialist values. Or it was rooted in agrarian rather than industrialized modern society values. This opposition suddenly disappeared with the Fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and was followed by a sudden explosion of folklore, semi-folklore, and pseudo-folklore (called *chalga*) music in all the media. The burst of interest in folklore music and religion

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222 There were two high schools for folklore musicians, one in a very small town, Kotel, the other in a village, Shiroka Luka. One university (Plovdiv) was (and is) offering a degree in folklore music. Several folklore choirs and dance groups, state-supported, were the face of Bulgarian folklore music. Because of its incredible abundance of rhythms and melodies Bulgarian folklore has always been appreciated world-wide. Thus a certain respect was paid to it but in reality folklore music was hardly present in urban life.
took place simultaneously. Whether this renaissance was an expression of a freed spirit, a political statement, a search for a new civic (and personal) authenticity, or perhaps all of these, is beyond the scope of this study. The echo of this renaissance in diaspora and the connection between folklore and the church are pertinent and they must be acknowledged here even though an examination in depth is out of the dissertation’s scope.

Culturally, folklore and church both represent an ethnic and national mark of belonging in diaspora, yet in the place of origin they have always been distinct. The religious institution has been the provider of ‘pure’ Christianity and a pillar of the orthodox faith. Yet the dense layers of folklore—songs, dances, poetry, herbs, healing, cosmetics, magic, mystical creatures, mythological characters, and life cycle celebrations—continue to be an intrinsic part of the national fabric. Sometimes, too often for the liking of the official religion, Christianity and local folklore appeared to cross paths and overlap. In this sense Bulgarians have never been ‘pure’ Christians for their celebrative cycle reflects Christianised paganism, as D. Marinov shows in his collection of ethnographic data collected at the end of the 19\textsuperscript{th} and the beginning of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century (1994). All diaspora priests shared stories from their encounters with folklore beliefs in Bulgaria. Especially interesting and rich are the death rituals and magic (C4:69). The clergy conclude that at an everyday level folklore remains and its rituals are not forgotten: “because of the inherited spiritual genes from Thracians and Slavs—there is no clearing up” (C2:25). As a result “the fear of the superstition is greater than that of God” (C4:69). However, institutionalized Orthodox Christianity and folklore culture in Bulgaria share a parallel existence; aware of each other, they remain formally two separate realms.

In diaspora these realms appear to meet in the church hall, the only community gathering location. Therefore clergy feel obliged to take a stance as folklore and folk groups play a
significant part in most celebrations. According to their opinion there are two kinds of folklore. One is envisioned as pagan and is unapproved by the clergy. An example is the Kukeri celebration which is labelled a “pagan savagery” because it deals with evil spirits and fertility and employs sketches of ploughing, marriage and birth, and phallic symbols. A priest was “terrified to see this ritual in an orthodox church,” and firmly declared that “in my church this cannot happen” (C1:5). But it did happen in two church halls and the community was attracted. The ritual was first introduced by the folk dance group “Igranka” and performed on the premises of St. Dimitar church premise for four years. After moving out of the church hall, the group performed at different diaspora venues and the Kukeri celebration attracted increasingly large audiences. In addition, the group combines *Kukeri* with the ritual of jumping over a fire. Both *Kukeri* and fire jumping are performed around the first week before Easter Lent (end of February or beginning of March).

The second kind of folklore traditions, according to the clergy, is considered to be a perpetuation of good ethnic relations. These include making martenici and preparing *koleduvane, suruvakane* and *lazaruvane* with the children; the rituals are considered ‘innocent’ in terms of their meaning as bearers of wishes for happiness and good health and wealth. St. Dimitar, for example, celebrates days that are part of the folklore cycle such as Babin Den (Midwife’s day) and Trifon Zarezan. Love of “authentic” folklore in the form of costumes, music and dances (horos) appears to be in accord with church care for the community. Two new children's folklore groups have been established, one at St. Dimitar and one at Holy Trinity, and are advertised as groups for the study of Bulgarian traditions

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223 In 2011, the venue was in the municipality of Markham and attended by local people and even the local councillor, all pleasantly surprised by this unique spectacle.
and customs. The Sunday school group performs the rituals of *Koleduvane* and *Suruvakane* at the Christmas concert. There are currently three independent dance groups in the community and these participate in most of its celebrations. The groups offer regular dance courses in various locations, including the churches. They popularize Bulgarian folk dances and music in the community and beyond. “Ingranka” was the first group invited to the Pow-Wow annual gathering in Toronto and it participates in most of the Ontario government’s celebrations.²²⁴

The folklore revival is seemingly absurd for several reasons. It appears in an urban environment disconnected from an original rural feeder; it is led by urban-identity bearers (third wave immigrants are mostly urban born and raised) detached from the folklore tradition, and it is performed in religious institutions. Why do these rituals appear and thrive in diaspora, and particularly with the third wave of immigrants? Barely informed about the folklore festive cycle, these immigrants have only seen some rituals, devoid of meaning and symbolism, on the TV. In an interview, the founders of the group “Igranka” recalled that until 2004 folklore activities were scarce and community celebrations included no more than one or two horos.²²⁵ In 2004, with the establishment of the group as a school for folk dances, people began to learn about different kinds of horos, rhythms, rituals and costumes.²²⁶ This initiative quickly gained popularity within and beyond the diaspora community. The dance workshops in Canada, US and Australia are attended by Bulgarians and non-Bulgarians. The

²²⁴ See interview and an article in the newspaper *Plamak*, Nov.16, 2012 and Jan. 25, 2013.
²²⁵ The interview is published in a Bulgarian newspaper Viara http://www.igranka.com/Vestnik_Viara_1.pdf
²²⁶ There are a great many types of Bulgarian horos are a great many. The website of “Igranka” lists 47 of them. There are different kinds according to a) the way they are played – chain and circle, or b) to what they are connected—seasons, parts of the day, craft guilds, marital status and etc. In addition there are special horos for every ritual and celebration (Katarova and Dzhenev, 1976).
clergy tend to regard the revival of folk rituals as reflecting a lack of spirituality and thus as being “susceptible to superstitions,” and also as being connected with the third wave of immigrants (C3:58). Curiously, a tenth century comment likewise suggested that Bulgarian folk dances were “leading a man away from God” and towards evil.227

The folklore tunes, rhythms, and rituals may not have been a part of urban life for the immigrants, but folklore’s communicative power is spontaneous and contagious, even for non-native listeners. Studies on the effect of the Bulgarian folk music and dance comment that the “vitality, energy, and beauty of the folklore” attracts the Americans (Forsyth, 1987:81), and the “warmth, soul, love, and history” that saturates the music “speaks about something important that cannot be explained” (Peicheva, 2008:534, Laushevic, 2007:64-66). They stress that it is the horo-dances that are especially of interest because “the horo as a collective dance has the ability and resources to concentrate, organize, and unite constantly scattering personal energies in a positive group experience” (Peicheva, 2008:535). For its internal stability music offers understanding and possibility of reconstruction of cultural history and “an extremely precise way of reconstructing contacts between people as well migrations of cultures through time” (Merriam, 1964:297). The primary effect of music is to give the listeners a feeling of security, which is part of music’s ability to become a symbol with a wide range of associations, including place of birth, childhood, religious experiences, courtships and work—all of which are personality-shaping (Lomax, 1959:929). Thus music, particularly folkloric music, is charged with unconscious impulses and reflections that recall both a personal reality and collective memory.

227 Prezviter Kozma wrote in the 10th century: “They run to dance and not to church, they are not Christians, for with rebecks, dances and songs, they drink wine, yielding to evil.” A manuscript from the 14th century calls the dances devilish. As cited in Katzarova and Dzhenev, 1976:9.
The diaspora re-creation of folklore easily connects with nostalgic first-homeland identification, yet it most likely reasserts a new civic and urban identity in the multicultural climate of Toronto. In an environment knit of different ethnic belongings, Kukeri and other rituals are a source of Bulgarianness. However this ethnic seems to have emerged out of multicultural conditions rather than from internal motivation. The third wave of immigrants lack the healthy dose of ‘nationalism’ connected with their first homeland which, due to historical and political reasons already discussed, is necessary to ensure ethnic preservation. In addition, they are more inclined to be cosmopolitan and fully (or ‘fully’) Canadian by values and mindset. Hyphened identity is not a preference and their ethnic background is shared only when asked. In an environment that cherishes ethnic diversity, folklore provides for some development of ethnic pride and it supplies communal visibility among the numerous ethnicities in Toronto.

A further question arises from the absence of natural (generational) continuity critical for folklore survival. Then, does diaspora create pseudo-folklore or its own traditions? Hobsbawm comments on the “use of ancient materials to construct invented traditions of novel type for quite novel purposes” (1983:6). The “invented traditions” replace voids that might need to be filled with invented practices during adaptational phases (1983:8-14). By undergoing a process of re-authentication, folklore and the religious institution may both be envisioned as being in sense inventors of tradition. They both respond to novel situations that require a non-traditional reaction. Yet, to speak of invention would be premature; the flow of modifications might be conceived at this stage as customizing a tradition. It is too early to detect the full depth of the ‘customizing’ changes that are emerging with the post-1990 immigrants.
In diaspora historical continuity, generational connectedness and a shared ethnic identity are disjointed and fragmented; they cannot easily resist the pressure of the new life forces. The most likely answer, then, is that folk beliefs will fade away. The priests claim that the “old immigrants” (and second and third generation) are losing their superstitions (C2:35). Among the solid congregation of St. George there are almost no folklore believers: “they are Canadian, the superstitions are knocked out of their heads,” commented a member of the clergy (5:102). An example is provided by my conversations, a year apart, with a newly arrived couple who consider themselves to be atheists. Initially their vocabulary was coloured by associations and references to the world of Bulgarian folklore with its herbs, healing, wisdom sayings, superstitions and so forth. (Here ‘superstition’ does not have a pejorative connotation but refers to themes which have been part of everyday exchange for millennia.) A year later, the couple’s vocabulary was less ‘magical’ and ‘superstitious’; the mystic aura of folklore was thinner, and references to the supernatural rarer. By changing the environment the sub-conscious connectedness to tradition also changes.

The diaspora church incorporates folklore initiatives into its social responsibilities towards the community and as such vernacularizes. It may not doctrinally approve of these initiatives, but its role as the only communal institution in the diaspora fosters a high sensibility of the need for ethnic care. Perhaps with time, when the environment no longer provides support for folkloric beliefs, a more ‘pure’, orthodox form of religious views will take their place. Or the latest wave of immigrants may influence developments in a different direction, one that we cannot yet clearly identify. Their close connectedness to the first homeland—in the form, for example, of regular traveling and daily phone and Skype conversations—in an age of mighty globalization is a major factor to be considered. Another is the sense of ‘discovery’ of
religion and folklore experienced by this wave both in the first and second homeland. The energy of this discovery may endure and help to form relations which do not fit into the usual scenario of second and third generation immigrants.

**Comparative analysis of the ethnographic data**

To comprehend the utilization of space and overall church-community dynamics and trends the following analysis includes three segments. The first examines how the religious institutions themselves engage their space; the second considers how the community approaches the church space; and the third observes whether sacred and secular spaces are in confluence. The last three tables sum up the data: Table 9 presents the events initiated only by the churches (from List A); Table 10, the events initiated only by the community including their place of performance—the church hall or other venue (from List B); and the last, Table 11, sums up all the information.

**Religious institutions as initiators**

Table 9 presents at a glance all type of events—religious, religious-social, and social—initiated by all churches from 2005 to 2011. To recapitulate, purely religious announcements are those made only about additional services. Churches perform their functions on a regular base and the weekly services are implicitly considered. Announcements about religious-social and social events are, therefore, best able to reveal the degree of church engagement in the production of diasporic space through communal responsiveness.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church and type of announcements</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Sts. Cyril &amp; Methody</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to the figures, Sts. Cyril and Methody and Holy Trinity churches achieve a relative balance between the religious and the social. The three religious and thirteen religious-social as against twelve purely social events reflect an equilibrium whereby the religious and the social complement and support one another. Yet the content of the events and their corresponding announcements provide mixed information that inclines towards the social importance prevailing. For example, announcements always draw attention first to the social happening, which suggests reliance on the cultural gathering as a strong motivation that exceeds the religious drive. This may result in part from the diversity of the church’s attendees, who include all waves and generations of immigrants with a significant presence of third wave immigrants. Table 10 lists 31 social events organized by various diaspora groups. In comparison, the other three churches have hosted a combined total of 22 events, which confirms that Sts Cyril and Methody is sought out by the community as a focal gathering place. A priest shared his view that “The church is the main organization through which the immigrants integrate. The social activities are very important and we are here to stretch out our hand, especially to the recent comers. There are other organizations which appear and disappear, but the church stays” (C2:28). However, the church’s experience since
1910 of a strong commitment to traditional values which have been passed down through the years has helped to develop a capacity to keep religious practices and communal needs somewhat in accord.

On a reduced scale, the figures for Holy Trinity suggest a similar balance (two religious and one religious-social vs. three social initiatives) but closer consideration of the events reveals that they are predominantly religiously inclined. The neighbourhood location naturally supports the church, which does not require serious effort and attractive events to ensure attendance. Communal interaction and religious life are equally valued, but socializing relies mainly on the post-service luncheons. The purely social initiatives attract a smaller and relatively regular portion of the diaspora. The language of communication is confined to Bulgarian. Overall, the impression is that social activities are not sought after.

The remaining two churches assert styles that are definitive and less balanced: St George focuses on the religious and St. Dimitar on social gatherings. St. George holds firmly to the religious core of the activities undertaken in the church. The social element is crucially important, but by way of compensation most of the gatherings are explicitly religiously justified. According to one interviewee, “Our church is a church family with a church life, not a community gathering” (I3:C9). As a result, there were 21 religious-social events and six religious as against only five purely social events. With 27 religious and religious-social events, St. George stands in contrast to the other there churches which, combined, have featured 35 events from the same categories. The nature of the events and their corresponding announcements underline this contrast. Further, the small number of social initiatives and the fact that the church has hosted diaspora events only since 2011, confirms the tendency to keep the church as close as possible to its tradition. The determination in this
regard continues beyond the period under consideration: the new priest invests in consistent efforts to educate members, regularly explaining and advising on the procedures and benefits of weekly confession and communion. One of the church-goers, who had been disregarding this aspect of her spiritual life, responded to this initiative by considering a change from occasional to more regular communion. Weekly emails from the priest serve to inform parishioners about upcoming services and their meaning—a kind of beforehand homily. Thus, those who come for services and those who are absent receive information about the history and meaning of church celebrations. Popularity in the sense of attracting members is not a principal aim; the church has its solid core of congregants, bonded by their local place of ancestral origin in Aegean Macedonia in Greece. Thus the social element only garnishes the religious, as the social bonds are pre-existing. Yet the church decoration, discussed in chapter three for its exceptional historic and national references, and some of the social events (such as the patron’s gatherings) suggest a view of the church space as recapturing the strong political and emotional ties of the founders with the customs of their place of birth that have been preserved by their children. In this sense, space reproduces a richer narrative that serves as a background for the religious focus.

The above data and the fact that the attendees are mainly second and third-generation immigrants, demonstrates that St. George Church preserves ethnic ties through religious practices. This portion of the diaspora has had no opportunity to maintain connections with their place of origin; their cultural framework and values are those of Canada. Little desire for an active ethnic life is apparent aside from the church. The ethnic ties are reduced to deeply meaningful expressions in the form of religion and language which are constitutive of their connection to their heritage. Religion brings this portion of the diaspora closer to their
ethnic belonging by providing rituals and activities that had been familiar to their parents. Maintaining their mother tongue poses practical difficulties because English is their native language, unlike the last wave of immigrants for whom English is a second language ensuring social mobility and acceptance. Thus the St. George church environment provides a valuable opportunity to maintain the mother tongue and to bond nostalgically with cultural and ethnic roots. One clergy commented: “The majority of the congregation are children [and grandchildren] of the first wave of immigrants and they keep what they know from their parents—a rural parish type of church” (C1:17). The priest, who comes from an urban cathedral-type church in Bulgaria, sees St. George more as a means of maintaining the cultural inheritance. To him, the Toronto churches in general are socially “polluted,” resembling a “social club,” and a “milieu for everything.”(C1:17). The relativity of this opinion is apparent: it is true when St. George is compared to Bulgarian churches, but less so when it is compared to the other Torontonian churches. Among these St. George is the most devoted keeper of traditional church customs and functions. Nevertheless, the high number of religious-social activities is a statement of connectedness between the institution and community, and the employment of space leads, though cautiously, to a production of a diasporic type of religio-social space.

In contrast, St. Dimitar, an exceptionally active church, takes a candid approach of building a religious community by social means. Of its 80 events, 64 are social as compared to seven religious and nine socio-religious. Both the figures and the nature of events suggest that the institution is driven primarily by the necessity establishing a community. Founded in

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228 On the interplay of language, religion, and ethnicity (including gender), see Nieves and Rosati (2007:29-49) and Lopez and Edfeldt (2007:149-171) in A. Jule, ed.
circumstances similar to those of Sts. Cyril and Methody Church, but 95 years apart, St. Dimitar Church responds to the urgent needs of a large new immigrant influx. Whereas Sts. Cyril and Methody was established by and for a group raised in a genuinely religious tradition, the ties of the third wave of immigrants with religion are underdeveloped. Thus the establishment of a new church could have been expected since the existing church venues did not fully match the new immigrants’ social and religious experience. Some of the religious activities, like catechism and liturgy courses, show that the administration has been on a quest to educate its members. Nonetheless, the large number of social events points to a high degree of responsiveness or a tuning to the pulse of the community. The new immigrants are still closely connected to their first homeland (immediate family) and need resources to support their fresh ethnic and cultural life memories. For example concerts of Bulgarian rock bands or singers have been part of the teen and young adults’ lives of the third wave immigrants. Yet this does not mean that the church is perceived as a means of resistance to the new society. On the contrary, Bulgarian in particular and Eastern European immigrants in general have grown up influenced by Western culture and were appreciative of it even before their arrival in Canada; they willingly accept the new homeland and aspire to become an intrinsic part of it. The church for them is a means of replacing a lost familiarity in both their everyday and celebratory life, and a help in reinventing themselves as members of the new society. The role of the church space as a “possibility machine” for the diaspora group is evident: the religious institution ‘speaks’ the language of the community’s needs and its vernacularization bridges life and tradition. For the first time, a Bulgarian church has stepped out of its congregational and diaspora boundaries and taken strides to promote the community within Canadian society, a mission supported by the aptitude of the last wave of
immigrants. We could say that St. Dimitar, at this stage, does not so much assert religion as a culture expressed by religion.

**How the diaspora community approaches religious building space**

The secular gatherings organized by diaspora representatives (List B) illustrate the gravitational pull of the religious institution. Table 10 provides totals of all events organized by diaspora members and groups in Toronto and the GTA year-by-year and overall; it shows how many of these events have been held in church halls, and how many in each of the churches surveyed.229

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Events held in all venues in Toronto</th>
<th>Events held in churches’ halls</th>
<th>Events held in Sts. Cyril &amp; Methody’s hall</th>
<th>Events held in St. George’s hall</th>
<th>Events held in Holy Trinity’s hall</th>
<th>Events held in St. Dimitar’s hall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 98 events initiated by the community, 11 were outdoor activities. Hence, there were 87 indoor gatherings, 53 (or 61 percent) of which were held in church halls. The figures suggest two tendencies. First, choosing locations away from the churches signals that groups are well integrated, or at least eager to integrate, and comfortable with their new gathering places. (Having a comforting place to meet was a dominant consideration for the first wave of immigrants, and usually comforting meant ethnic.) The community does not gravitate exclusively to the churches as it did before the third wave of immigrants; more than one-third

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229 This is not to be confused with cases in which the churches rent out their halls to generate revenue.
of the events, 39 percent, are spread around the town. Comparative data are not available, but the descriptions of activities year-by-year from 1961 to 1984 in the Jubilee Almanac reveal a community life centered in the church. With the addition of the post-1990 immigrants the events become dispersed throughout the GTA which signals (i) increasing confidence; (ii) a larger diaspora population so that organizers can expect a substantial audience; and (iii) the fact that the diaspora is not concentrated in particular areas. List B includes a few events that are not reflected in Table 10, such as film festivals and concerts with appearances by Bulgarian artists. These events are organized by institutions outside the diaspora, but they add context to the growing presence of the diaspora group in the cultural landscape of Toronto.

The second tendency is that the churches remain preferred gathering venues out of convenience and/or personal attachment. An interviewee, who herself had organized a meeting, thought that the church hall was the most suitable location: “Everybody knows the place; it is convenient and cheaper to organize a gathering there, and it provides a kind of insurance that more people will come” (I14:B.6). While the data indicate a significant degree of comfort with any venue, on an individual level many would choose the church hall. The familiarity of places and faces is still a factor, especially for newcomers. But established immigrants who attend church infrequently also express a preference for the church venue. Simply “being there” invokes feelings of “the right place to be.”

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230 Jubilee Almanac, a 75th anniversary issue, “The Macedono-Bulgarian Orthodox Cathedral ‘Sts. Cyril and Methody’ from 1961 to 1985.” The 50th anniversary commemorative almanac 1910–1960 supplies additional information on the groups affiliated with the church and their events.

231 With the exception of the Pape/Cosburn and Pape/Gamble districts where new immigrants settle attracted by the convenience of the area. However this is not always the case: a couple who immigrated in 2012 preferred to live in a non-ethnic neighbourhood. There are no “Bulgarian” areas in Toronto and people generally live in mixed areas.
explained: “I have a hectic routine, am not used to church-going, and somehow my life is barely connected with the Bulgarian community. But when I come for a concert or a theatre, I do prefer the church hall. It feels right and good to be here, and to support the community” (I1:C9). Being in the church hall, for this individual, is seen as a way of paying dues to his roots or reciprocating care within the community. ‘Being there’ creates a connectedness, an emotional attachment that is not to be found in a neutral venue.

**Are the sacred and secular zones in confluence?**

Part of the discussion on how the religious institution reaches out to the community and vice versa are the questions of how the building space physically reflects social interaction and whether the sacred and secular areas fully separated. Table 11 below summarizes all events of all types, initiated by both the churches and independent community groups and individuals that have taken place in the church venues.

Table 11. Summary of all events held in the churches, organized by them or independent community groups (7 years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of events</th>
<th>Sts. Cyril &amp; Methody</th>
<th>St. George</th>
<th>Holy Trinity</th>
<th>St. Dimitar</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious-social</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: organized by church</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social: organized by diaspora groups</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the table, there are 142 solely social events initiated either by the churches or the community, a number that significantly surpasses the religio-social (44) and religious (16) events. In fact, the religious-social type of events complements the solely social events, which brings the communal happening into greater prominence. The significance of these numbers is best understood when we consider the nature of the events, previously discussed, and their role as a community builder and supporter. Strikingly, in contrast to the homeland
church as a provider of purely spiritual care, the above data confirms and illuminates the central role of the religious institution in producing new social diaspora space. It creates a ‘village’ of diverse activities where everything needed can happen.

Further, these figures raise the key question of how the physical space functions practically and how the sacred area of the buildings is involved in a life of diversity. When the church hall is favoured as a gathering place it is assumed that the sacred zone is separate from the secular, and that both parts are isolated, detached, and independent, as indeed they were intended to be and mostly remain. However, chapter three supplied details on the floor plans and the connections between the areas, and these demonstrated possibilities for confluence. To recall the plans (Fig.7), Sts. Cyril and Methody’s hall is directly connected to the nave (the gathering central part) by way of two doors; for St. George and St. Dimitar access is through the narthex (the entrance area, which is still part of the sacramental church structure); and for Holy Trinity it is through the administrative section, which can be reached from the nave. The latter, former Anglican Church, shows the clearest separation between the spaces. As a result, the sacred area holds the potential of inclusion and is not always entirely isolated from the social-gathering, secular zone.

A certain level of confluence is naturally intensified by social gatherings. An illustration is provided by one of the concerts observed for this study, a 2011 jazz performance in Sts. Cyril and Methody banquet hall, during which both areas were equally accessible to the participants. People were seated at tables. A buffet with national dishes was situated in front of the open nave door, close to the iconostasis. Through the door one could see the candelabras with lit candles in front of the iconostasis and a few people praying. The second door between the nave and hall was open as well and allowed unobstructed access to the
church’s sacred zone. The jazz concert concluded with a *horo*—a national folklore dance—and many joined the dance. A newcomer commented in surprise that “one has everything [known from home] here—jazz and *horo*, meat balls and *ljutenitsa*, icons and candles—everything in the church” (I5:C11). This was her first visit to the building. The above scenario can, in fact, often be observed at community gatherings at Sts. Cyril and Methody. Figure (10) shows a view from the hall during a children’s Christmas party: through the open door can be seen a person in the sacred zone sitting on a bench. The first impression is that he is in a search of solitude, maybe praying. A zoomed image shows, however, that the individual is focused on a cell phone. The second door is right behind the buffet tables and next to the iconostasis. Figure (11) is a view from the sacred area on a Palm Sunday. Through the door next to the iconostasis is seen part of the hall and people sitting for luncheon around the tables. People continuously and naturally move between the two zones. The building acts as a wholesome organized space where the sacred and secular areas are in apparent confluence and separation is only partial and functional.

A less obvious physical confluence is seen in the other churches, where the connection between the spaces is through the narthex. Yet the confluence is expressed more clearly by the attendees’ attitude and behaviour. Due to their busy pace of life and long commuting distances, not many people can attend services. While in the building for a social event, they may take the opportunity to light a candle or mingle between the zones. A person who had never set foot in a church in Bulgaria shared: “I have a very positive opinion about the church here—people have a need to meet their ethnic culture. Or maybe it is nostalgia. I am consumed with my job now but I used to go for meetings of the Engineers Association and some other gatherings.” (I1:C10). Another individual, who came immediately after the fall of
the communist regime in 1989, reported: “I knew nobody and this was the place to exchange a few words in my native language. It was my bridge between what I left behind and my new home” (I3:C1). The ‘togetherness’ to be found in church spaces during events appears natural to diaspora members who appreciate this opportunity. If the buildings in general are symbols of the first, ancestral homeland, then both zones are most likely approached as a part of both ethnic and ancestral belonging which emotionally overcomes the boundaries between them.

However, the clergy consider the facts as representing a social ‘invasion’ of the church space, which is traditionally considered to be solely the ‘home’ of the deity. They admit, nevertheless, that “the church here is more worldly minded” and “a place for consolation, healing, hope, nostalgia, and homesickness” which encompasses many aspects of the immigrant’s life (C2:37). One priest disappointedly stated that “halls have become the altar”(C1:18). Another expressed a more balanced opinion: “while to me the spiritual aspect is most important, for people it is everything in the church—faith, language, exchange of information, concerts, and parties. The church is a humanitarian and religious organization; the new immigrants need a place to acclimatize and to integrate easily. Nostalgia is also a factor, but there is a spark that not everything is corporeal” (C3:51). Church halls are often disparaged by the clergy as “the centre and part of the service” (C1:10) though the same clergy admit that “the church is a centre for all that is needed and everybody looks for different things” (C1:17). Taken from their creedal frame, these statements hold a strong message of commitment. The church ‘service’ has expanded its particular significance and fills in for the life necessities of the diaspora group. Despite the personal apprehension of the clergy, their institution is finely tuned to resonate not only religiously but as well to complex community emotions.
The logo of St. Dimitar Church is an icon-like illustration of the observations made above in that it brings together religion, folklore, and national customs to form a new-home space. **Figure (12)** is an announcement for celebrating March 3, the national day of Bulgaria. The text starts and finishes with two logos. The first includes the coat-of-arms of the Bulgarian state in the centre, framed by the title of the church on the base and a semi-circular inscription at the top: “Around the hearth of the Bulgarian-ness.” The second logo uses as a background the national Bulgarian tricolour flag; the title of the church is written at the top; the Bulgarian coat-of-arms is positioned in the middle surrounded by two pictures of people in folk costumes, and over the third colour at the bottom, in Bulgarian, is the motto “Let us together retain Bulgarian-ness.” Both logos point to the church’s mission to create a home for the third wave of immigrants. One interviewee commented that the homeland and diaspora churches are very different: the former is an office church, and the latter missionary (I3:C13). Similar is the opinion of a priest who believes that it appears as a place of revival and renaissance (C5:72) which refers to all—the culture, the religion, and community formation. The logos’ statements may seem to an outsider to be inclined to nationalism, but that is quite inaccurate. It was mentioned that the third wave of immigrants are for many reasons detached from their first home emotionally, and that they blend willingly and easily as Canadians. In a multicultural urban environment like Toronto, where festivals and activities celebrating ethnicity and nationhood are commonplace, the third wave immigrants have not been able to enjoy their share of national pride. St. Dimitar Church acts as a mentor

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232 Many third wave immigrants feel that their first homeland, so to speak, left them. Some of them say that they felt like immigrants in their own country. This sense of “homeland betrayal” promotes easier adjustment to their second homeland. In addition, the series of historical misfortunes for Bulgaria, the lost hopes after the fall of the Berlin Wall in the wake of the ensuing political corruption, all result in an underdeveloped national self-esteem and a kind of inferiority complex. Bulgaria is a member of the European Union but one of the poorest countries in the union led by governments influenced by interests other than that of the citizens.
in restoring the personal and communal ethnic pride that facilitates finding equal acceptance in the Canadian multicultural model.

Conclusion

That institutional vernacularization is occurring is one of the inferences that can be drawn from our discussion of the activities of diaspora churches in the Greater Toronto Area. Church building space is clearly a social venue and a focal point for the community. In trying to reach the community and remain relevant to it, the church expands beyond the spiritual to the cultural realm, recreating vernacular expressions coherent with diaspora life; expressions that reflect a confluence of the sacred and cultural realms. The occasion of church space with its eventfulness in turn modifies the time-honoured inward, spiritual aura associated with the motherland church. The community, once a mere recipient of spiritual gifts, becomes in the diaspora setting a co-creator of the ecclesial institution. The vernacular approach parallels the liturgical and theological functions without intentionally or necessarily implementing changes to those functions. Vernacular behaviour aims only to gain acceptance and popularity by opening up the boundaries of the traditional institution, thus showing the syntonic capacity of the churches to attune to the reality of resettlement. In other words, in contrast to the homeland church, the diaspora church is not just a representative of sacred truth; rather it also seeks partners for communication, participants in the many truths (including sacred truths) which are vital for the existence of both church and community.

The second inference follows that both the local churches and the community are involved in a transfusing process of producing new social space. The key to this production are the events and activities organized by the churches or independent groups, of which 142
“social” and 44 “religious-social” examples were considered. These represent lived situations above and beyond the doctrinal and they contribute to the vernacularization of a space usually regarded as “God’s home.” Diasporic religious place encompasses the characteristics of Lefebvre’s *representational* and Soja’s *realandimagined* spaces by creating an arena open to both the real and the imagined; a centre that hosts fluid and timeless situations. As such the religious institution location appears to be a “possibilities machine” of relations addressing the immigrant life in its multiple sides. Here the communal and vernacular enters the realm of sacred space by complementing it in an ethnic-demanding way. An amalgamation of material, spiritual and emotional energies produces an institution and space that responds to a community composed of second, third and fourth generation immigrants, along with a massive new influx of post-1990 arrivals. To accommodate these groups the institution must be a place that envelops not just the spiritual but also the social, psychological, cultural and ethnic dimensions that are coterminous with living.

The accommodation achieved depends on fulfilling particular roles that churches may find expedient for different generations of immigrants. One such role is the preservation of ethnicity. As we have seen, this role has been adopted most notably by St. George Church in responding to the needs of the second, third and fourth generations of the first wave of immigrants. For these generations religion is a guardian of inherited ethnic values and language, and the church strives to replicate the tradition closely. Another role, exemplified in this study by St. Dimitar Church, is that of cultural institution. The first generation of the post-1990 wave of immigrants tends to value the church largely as a cultural or social space in the service of co-creating their new existence. In response, St. Dimitar as an institution acts on behalf of the diaspora community, helping it to integrate into Canadian society.
Church space now constitutes a venue for such immigrants to familiarize themselves with or to learn about both religion and folklore and to build ethnic dignity. The logo employed by the church can be seen as a straightforward endeavour to embrace the third wave of immigrants by offering them meaningful elements of their ethnic identity, thus compensating for the absence of religion and folklore in the homeland during their formative years. In general, the priests’ creedal-framed reaction does not amount to an actual fight against the “unaccepted folklore” since they recognize that folklore is a strong identifier in diaspora. In this sense, through vernacularizing its institutional relations, the church venue supports its community in the creation of a diasporic subjectivity.

Finally, we may anticipate further adjustments to the role of the diaspora church, particularly with respect to the post-1990 wave, though it is too early to identify the changes that will emerge. Eastern European immigrants have arrived from an epochal experiment. They and their parents have been subject to a freshly invented ‘communitarian’ tradition which has affected their day-to-day social interaction and the passage of their life events. This faction of the diaspora does not continue and maintain tradition in a straightforward way but re-discovers, re-collects, and re-personificates cultural symbols, both religious and folklore. Hence, the response of the diaspora religious institution may be envisioned as a way of ‘customizing’ the tradition.
Conclusion
Bach and Diaspora: the fugue of location\textsuperscript{233}

\textit{“Without Bach, God would be a complete second rate figure.”}
Cioran\textsuperscript{234}

I return to the story with which this thesis began: Budni Vecher or Christmas Eve at a church hall. Known in the first homeland as a domestic celebration involving only the immediate family, in Toronto this festivity has been incorporated into the church calendar. All the domestic rituality of the evening is to be found as a community performance in church halls, where folklore, ethnic themes, and religious modulations intertwine. The emotional response is dramatic as it conveys memories of one of the most intimate family events through language, singing, food, and history. The epigram above stresses the primary significance of the human factor in the relation with the divine. In a native environment, people respond in a

\textsuperscript{233}The title of this chapter alludes to the fugue composition as an image which implies that the diaspora religious institution exists by new polyphonic and fugue principles of multi-function. The notion of fugue is strikingly transferable to the diaspora dynamics. In music it was Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) who brought fugue as a central polyphonic form which for him is a method of musical thinking that permeates all other genres of his music. Fuga, from the Latin “run,” is a polyphonic form with a theme and equally participating voices (two to ten) which develop this theme. Polyphony often consists of simultaneous melodies which are independent. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, fugue is a musical composition “in which one or two themes are repeated or imitated by successively entering voices and contrapuntally developed in a continuous interweaving of the voice parts.” Rosenshild describes the innovativeness of Bach who approaches harmony in a way that was not known to the composers before him: “dissonant thirds…functional relations and colouring of the chromatic system, wider use of alterations, modulation in far-away tonality, enharmonic modulation” (1982:427). Further, he brings attention to the specificity of the Bach’s fugue as intensely rich with a hidden polyphony: “From the branching out melodic lines arises ‘polyphony of second plan:’ the lowest hidden voice usually is a metric ‘skeleton’ of the melody and together with the rest creates specific oneness, connectedness of elements…” (1982:435-436).

\textsuperscript{234}Cioran suggests further that "Bach's music is the only argument proving that the creation of the Universe cannot be regarded as a complete failure." Cited in \textit{Newsweek}, 4 Dec., 1989. Cioran was a 20\textsuperscript{th} century French philosopher (Romanian born) known for his nihilistic views.
predictable way towards religion—by accepting or rejecting it or something in-between. In
diaspora, the phases of discarding and rewriting personal and group histories bring up themes
that had not been a part of the peoples’ or the religious institution’s life.

The invitation for the Budni Vecher dinner by the newest church, St. Dimitar, is an explicit
example of how the religious institution modulates its relations: “Let us be together as one
big family on the eve of the brightest Christian celebration….“235 In the homeland the sole
function of the church is to bring people to the doorstep of the divine world. In the diaspora
the invitation points to an effort to form a scattered community into a new “big family.” By
tempering its goals to offer a needed substitute for homeland practices, the church reorders
its priorities to deliver community first at the doorsteps of the family. It is a new alignment of
interests that resynchronizes the tradition with new conditions. Bach wrote numerous fugues
for church performance in which the philosophy and beauty of music honour the deity. In
diaspora, however, the religious institution, in the wake of post-1990 immigrants, creates for
itself a polyphonic, fugue-like existence, wherein several themes, many of them non-
religious, intertwine. This polyphonic existence led my research to explore a new analytic
category, that of institutional vernacularization.

This study explores the attunement or the syntonic capacity and degree of responsiveness of
Macedono-Bulgarian diaspora churches in Toronto and their coherence with the community,
especially with the post-Berlin Wall immigrants who, while unchurched and predominantly
secular, have revived the diaspora churches. In general, the recent immigrant movement from
Eastern European countries is largely understudied, in spite of its significant number and

235 Msg. # 291 is sent by St.Dimitar Church which is oriented mainly to post-1990 immigrants.
influence in diaspora. In stark contrast to the country of origin, where secular and sacred are held in binary opposition, the diaspora church offers a confluence of worlds. This raises questions about the ways in which religion and religious institutions operate in diaspora. My thesis is that for the immigrant community, the religious institution is a vehicle for identity formation and a site of historical memory performed in a multicultural setting. Typically, a diaspora maintains culture *through* religion, in an almost nostalgic way. This is the case with one of the churches studied, which is attended mainly by second or third generation first wave immigrants.

For the third wave, however—previously areligious and unchurched—nostalgic appeal is ineffective. In addition, the third wave’s voluntary resettlement has been influenced by the evolving era of globalization which de-emphasizes the homeland orientation and aspirations for return.\(^{236}\) These characteristics of the group appear to be a challenge for the religious institution. For the third wave immigrants, the church creates a cultural environment to support identity formation, specifically by facilitating the immigrants’ tendency to ‘invent’ or customize religious and folkloric practices. In a Canadian environment, where multiculturalism is celebrated, the church is a platform to compensate for the lack of ethnic assertiveness of the third wave. This platform offers a cultural alternative to simply blending in; the church becomes a site of new “bulgarianness” in diaspora. In its leading, diaspora-structuring role, the religious institution experiences “vernacularization” as opposed to secularization. That is, the diaspora church has not lost its dogmatic commitments or cultic practices; it has, however, become hybridized in response to community needs, and this hybridization can be seen in terms of the allocation of space, church architecture and

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\(^{236}\) See Tölöyan (1991, 1996) on the process of de-territorialization, transnationalism, cultural hybridity, and the evolving sense of multiple belonging that will challenge the definition of diaspora.
decoration, governance structures, and a repertoire of activities which are unlike those that typically occur in Eastern Orthodox church space.

This thesis proposes the term “institutional vernacularization” as an analytical category that facilitates the assessment of how a religious institution relates to the communal factors. My original hypothesis had been that the church in diaspora had been secularized in comparison to that in the homeland. The secularization thesis entails a decline of the religious institution’s role and the salience of its symbols, an erosion of personal religiosity and, in general, a decline of religion as an awareness of supernatural power. The character of post-1990 immigrants and the employment of church symbols in a new communal commitment are seemingly dominated by non-doctrinal values, which points in the direction of secularization. Nonetheless, I have shown that the churches play major and indeed enhanced roles in the diaspora as gathering places attended by all waves of immigrants and broader than a congregational community. In fact, secularization, as a lost connection with the supernatural world and religious practices, has not yet taken root. As the secularization model does not adequately capture the dynamics of the diaspora religious institution, I looked for other options. The model of vernacularization takes these dynamics into account.

Institutional vernacularization as a viable option is distinct from vernacular religion. Vernacular religion, a concept coined by Primiano, suggests that religion is more than a manifestation and perspective found within an official institution; that it includes religion “as it is lived” (1995). This as-it-is-lived religion is often connected with folkloric beliefs, for it focuses on people’s interpretations and expressions and captures experiences that are not normally included in official religions (Primiano 2012). As such, Primiano emancipates personal religious practices from organized religious forms and bestows them with equal
importance. Yet the idea of vernacular religion takes as a point of reference ‘official’ institutions as static entities against which personal expressions are articulated. Certainly, official institutions tend to be less dynamic and anchored in creedal foundation. This is particularly true for homeland religious institutions but even more so in diaspora; the Macedono-Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox churches in Toronto are a case in point. By empowering personal experience, the concept of vernacular religion is a step towards developing an understanding of the modern blend of religious perceptions and secularities. However, it leaves religious institutions outside the discussion.

Institutional vernacularization is not related to folklore in this study; it applies to an official religious institution, considered as an object of vernacularization. The concept captures the informal, domestic connection between the church and the diaspora community and manages to encompass both traditional impulses and secularization trends. Institutional vernacularization is a syntonic characteristic which refers to the capacity of an official religious institution to attune, respond, reflect, and conform to the communal agent and/or new cultural context without changing its dogmatic basis and practices. As a category it allows one to examine how “outer” or social layers of the institution are altered and re-authenticated. In this process, the communal factor is a form of legitimizing authority. While continuing to adhere to the formal creed and confessional symbols, the church shifts its focus to personal and communal agency and produces new collective, “popular” values. The communal agency is not only a recipient of the spiritual/sacred gifts of the church, but also a partner that suggests “popular” ways of interacting. In this sense, the diaspora religious institution is engaged in a vernacular discourse.
The notion of institutional vernacularization focuses on how the church acts strategically rather than doctrinally, leaving belief systems uncontested. Thus, the religious institution is examined not on the grounds of theology but by its local or lived experiences. The four churches observed in this study are suppliers of spiritual goods but also representatives of the historic legacy and tradition of cultural messages. Institutional vernacularization signals that theological frames and purposes are not of primary concern in diaspora, but nevertheless are not ignored either. The functional transformation of churches results from an ability to “speak” the local “language” and to domesticate a broader community which may not be religiously engaged.

I tested the notion of institutional vernacularization against the empirical results of field work in four Toronto and GTA churches. The intricate history of diaspora formation showed that the group has been under intense strain since its resettlement due to reverberations from the local and world wars in Europe during the 20\textsuperscript{th} century that affected the place of origin. The historical misfortunes of the first homeland kept ethnic and national issues vibrant, which in turn placed the diaspora group at a crossroads of multiple political interests; the community was tormented from inside and pressed from outside. With the third wave much of this inheritance disappeared. The church regrouped its potential to attract new immigrants and to be a resource for identity formation and historic-ethnic memory. Three aspects illustrate these functions: the governance of the church, physical space as architecture and decoration, and space-utilization. Each of these three has traditionally been determined and supported by the dogmas of the Eastern Orthodox Church. In the diaspora, however, these aspects appear at variance with the homeland practices.
First, in diaspora the conception of church and its governance has been transformed radically. The homeland church is clergy driven with the laity only marginally included; it is a Eucharistic community united in the name of and by Christ. In diaspora the church is an ethnic community united in the name of and by its members. This transformation is not unrelated to the fact that the property is owned by the members. Correspondingly, the leadership is laity based with a newly developed notion of membership which does not exist in the homeland church. The priest remains responsible for spiritual matters, but church governance is left to its members, for the church is now a public institution owned by them. This results in the selection and hiring of priests being a prerogative of the membership. Whether the priest participates in the church board is also left to the members to decide. The role of the priest now includes working for the religious, social, national/ethnic, and cultural advancement of the community, a role specified in bylaws, where the community is alluded to as a diaspora community. One clergy wryly describes his role as a “social organizer in cassock,” since spiritual leadership comprises only a portion of his duties; other priests look on the arrangement as an opportunity for interaction with a broader group. Consequently, the position of the priest, in the homeland an almost monocratic leader, is subject to a new ‘hierarchical’ order dominated by the community. Yet, paradoxically, the overshadowing of the Eucharistic community by the ethnic one increases the social significance of the church institution.

The last wave of migrants proved to be catalytic for vernacularization, since their ethnic and religious upbringing had been shaped differently by the communist ideology, which emphasized class membership over ethnic identity. If the diaspora church was to offer a

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gathering location it had to participate in polyphonic unity with the immigrants’ experience and to institutionalize the vox populi alongside vox dei, expressing faith and ethnic themes in counterpoint with a fluctuating balance between them.

Second, the architectural and decorative elements illustrate a significant transformation of the diaspora church space. Traditionally, in Bulgaria, a church building is regarded as “God’s home.” It is structured and decorated to appeal to the visual, aural, and olfactory senses so as to induce an emotional perception of the supposed divine presence. As a result, the space is closed off from the secular world. Dim light and a few small windows produce a sfumato effect, defusing the contours of objects. The ambiance is individualistic in its approach to the divine; the nave space is unstructured by benches, allowing for a meditative solitude. All elements work towards the visualization of the creed and education in dogma. The space in traditional churches inculcates piety and is a metaphor of heaven. The deity’s home offers meaningful experience solely to the worshipers. It contains no communal church halls as part of the architectural ensemble.

By comparison, in the Toronto diaspora churches the architecture includes church halls, openness and confluence of spaces, and decorations which are not necessary spiritually elevating but include historical, national, and ethnic modulations. Tall and wide windows allow for ample light and a sharp definition of objects. The most telling element is the connection of the spaces: halls are linked either to naves or narthexes (both part of the sacred space), which offers church-goers an option either to gather socially in the church hall, to proceed to worship, or to move in-between the two areas (see Fig. 7, 10 and 11). Many prefer
the hall. Pews have been introduced into the nave and contribute to the worship service as a structured communal event. The massive windows limit the space available for icons, which suggests that the visual conveyance of the credo has been relegated in importance.

The choice of images focuses on illustrating some basic elements of the faith rather than on uplifting the spirit or attuning it to the divine. Also, the use of a palette of earthly colours results in a more grounding effect. The decoration of the church halls is unrelated to faith; typically it is an exhibition of archeological monuments, historic figures of cultural and national importance, and folklore. The sanctuaries continue this trend; in additional to the traditional use of icons the images portray a new theme, that of the first homeland’s history, which serves as a counterpoint to the religious one. The homeland theme invokes and heightens emotions in much the same way as churches normally invoke and heighten religious emotions. St. George Church’s nave exhibits a fascinating collection of canonical icons of saints, each of whom relates to a major period or event of crucial importance in Bulgarian history since its establishment in the 7th century. This particular selection of images sacralizes the group memory rather being a visual credo. It implies that the community attending this location is the bearer and carrier of a respected inheritance. Thus, the line of holy images resonates polyphonically: one theme is a reminder of the faith; another constitutes a ‘wall of fame’ of ethnic achievements and pride.

Theologically, icons are envisioned as a means of delivering the faithful to the divine threshold. Diasporically, church images facilitate ‘veneration’ of ethnic belonging and recreate a metaphoric home rather than one confined to inculcating dogma and elevating the spirit; they deliver attendees to the history of the first homeland and provide awareness of their ethnic identity. Architecturally, the confluence between the communal and sacred space
assigns prominence to the presence of people either as a congregation or simply as diaspora members and thus vernacularizes its religious purpose. Community space assumes a mediational role; it recognizes the need for belonging, replaces some lost aspects of this belonging, and provides for an adjustment to and harmonizing with the new cultural context.

Third, the data of church events illustrate significant change in the functionality of the buildings towards producing a new social space that promotes identity markers and plays a diaspora-structuring role. In general, all churches exhibit a shift towards the conception of church as a community centre. Even St. George Church, the most conservative of the four and one in which religious functions dominate, is the church that in 1996 established the new tradition of celebrating Budni Vecher (Christmas Eve) *communally*. Purely social gatherings in the church hall at St. George are few and did not occur at all until 2010. The church supports its members—second and third generation heirs of the first wave immigrants—by perpetuating traditions known from their parents. A solidly formed group, St. George’s congregation preserves its ethnic and historic memory through its heritage of religion and language. Holy Trinity is the least active of all churches, concentrating mainly on its regular Sunday services. Yet its hall is relatively well used by the ethnic community with no church affiliation. In this respect it is unlike St. George’s hall, which is scarcely used for broader communal events at all. Holy Trinity is attended by all waves of immigrants, but the leadership, as with St. George’s Church, is exercised by the heirs of the first wave immigrants.

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238 The church has changed towards being a more dynamic venue with enriched social and religious activities after the retirement of the priest and the appointment of a new one. At that point the dissertation was already completed and did not reflect these changes.
Sts. Cyril and Methody, with ample community space and a downtown location, is the focal point of the diaspora and its various events. Its hall can be regarded as a ‘community temple’ which generates diaspora-structuring power. The church itself is inclined towards social openness and the figures show that only the newest church, St. Dimitar, exceeds its number of social activities. Whilst the preference is for cultural over religious gatherings, Sts. Cyril and Methody, a 100 year-old church, has developed the capacity to hold its religious and social motivations in accord. All waves of immigrants meet here and the leadership includes representatives from each. A clergy observed that social activities fulfill an essential role in the community, since the church is the main organization in the new homeland representing the group. Although the community is well integrated into Canadian society and is at ease with diverse meeting places, church sites remain preferred for reasons of familiarity and comfort. According to one non-religious and non-church-going immigrant, it feels the right place to be because it supports the community. The church hall creates connectedness and emotional attachments which are often lacking in neutral venues.

St. Dimitar Church, established in 2005, is a hub for post-1990 immigrants and is unapologetically distinct from the other three churches. This distinctiveness is related to the character of the attendees, who represent a generational hiatus of tradition and religion. For these the church offers purely social events, almost three times more numerous than those recorded in the other churches combined. As a strategy for building a future congregation it has also adopted the tradition of celebrating Budni Vecher as “one big family.” These strategies are a means of asserting, not so much religion, as a culture expressed by religion. The social events structure community, a function obviously vital for the third wave of immigrants. Its large-scale and high-profile events are designed to gain visibility and to
inaugurate a centre for the diaspora, not only in the GTA but in Canada. As well, it seeks to build the self-esteem of the ethnic group to enable its members to enter comfortably into the multicultural reality of cosmopolitan Toronto. Thus, it supports the structuring of a new civic identity for a group that lacks meaningful contact with its tradition. The church lobbies for the community with the Canadian government and society and steps out of its liturgical role to act as a cultural ambassador.

Assuredly, this function of the churches has stirred controversy among the clergy. Some consider that halls “have become the altar” and their activities “part of the service.” Others recognize that the “church here is more worldly minded” and that it has a legitimate role as a place of consolation, nostalgia, faith, language, exchange of information, healing, and adjustment. Moreover, the surprising emergence of folklore rituals since 2005 has evoked a further debate within the church, with some creedally-framed reactions taking it to be “pagan savagery” (Kukeri rituals) and others “authentic” folklore, or folklore that is in accord with the church’s care for the community (horo dancing, koledari, and survakari). Yet folklore as a strong ethnic identifier adds to the vernacularization of the institution’s relations; the church venue supports the community in the creation of diasporic subjectivity and participates in it. The confluence of physical spaces within the church reflects goals shared.

The scholarly relevance of this thesis relates, firstly, to the introduction of the concept of institutional vernacularization, which expands the understanding of vernacular religion to include its official representatives. Further, the concept brings an additional dimension to the debate on secularization, as institutional vernacularization could be perceived as being incipient of secularization or as an alternative to secularization. Secondly, this thesis defines the waves of Macedono-Bulgarian immigration by their character and relation to the religious
institution and is one of the few available academic studies on this group. It reflects a diaspora group influenced by globalization and directs attention to a new development of the study of diasporas that not only attends to diasporas as a whole, but stratifies discourses and practices between different groups within a specific diaspora (Johnson, 2012:97). Thirdly, the data provided by the thesis allows for insights into the process of replanting the Eastern Orthodox Christianity in Canada beyond Greek Orthodox churches. It contributes to the literature on the south Slavic immigrant communities, which are understudied in North America, and more importantly to the understanding of the latest massive wave of post-1990 immigrants.

One of the limitations of this study is that a sizable portion of the interviews about personal religious attitudes had to be omitted and used only as a background since the focus was on the religious institution. For the same reason, many details on the renaissance of folklore were left unaddressed. Further investigation of these data could facilitate a new project, an in-depth study of the ‘customized’ changes that have emerged with post-1990 immigrants in Canada.
# Appendix I

## Population of Bulgaria by faith and year of census 1887-2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>All together</strong></td>
<td>3,154,375</td>
<td>3,310,713</td>
<td>3,744,283</td>
<td>4,337,513</td>
<td>4,846,971</td>
<td>5,478,741</td>
<td>6,077,939</td>
<td>7,029,349</td>
<td>8,487,317</td>
<td>7,928,901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Orthodoxy</td>
<td>2,424,371</td>
<td>2,606,786</td>
<td>3,019,999</td>
<td>3,643,918</td>
<td>4,062,097</td>
<td>4,569,074</td>
<td>5,128,998</td>
<td>5,938,418</td>
<td>7,274,592</td>
<td>6,552,751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>676,215</td>
<td>643,258</td>
<td>643,300</td>
<td>602,078</td>
<td>690,734</td>
<td>789,296</td>
<td>821,298</td>
<td>938,418</td>
<td>1,110,295</td>
<td>966,978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholics</td>
<td>18,505</td>
<td>22,617</td>
<td>28,569</td>
<td>32,150</td>
<td>34,072</td>
<td>40,347</td>
<td>45,704</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestants</td>
<td>1,358</td>
<td>2,384</td>
<td>4,524</td>
<td>6,335</td>
<td>5,617</td>
<td>7,518</td>
<td>8,371</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>21,878</td>
<td>42,308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>24,352</td>
<td>28,307</td>
<td>33,663</td>
<td>32,067</td>
<td>43,232</td>
<td>46,431</td>
<td>48,398</td>
<td>2,580</td>
<td>6,572</td>
<td>6,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armenian-Gregorian</td>
<td>5,839</td>
<td>6,643</td>
<td>13,809</td>
<td>12,259</td>
<td>10,848</td>
<td>25,402</td>
<td>23,476</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1,461</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>706</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>1,456</td>
<td>1,802</td>
<td>79,604</td>
<td>15,226</td>
<td>7,784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undefined</td>
<td>2,274</td>
<td>718</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>308,116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| All together %      | 100.0      | 100.0      | 100.0      | 100.0      | 100.0      | 100.0      | 100.0      | 100.0      | 100.0      | 100.0      |
| Eastern Orthodoxy   | 76.86      | 78.74      | 80.66      | 84.0       | 83.0       | 83.4       | 84.4       | 84.9       | 85.7       | 82.6       |
| Islam               | 21.44      | 19.43      | 17.18      | 13.9       | 14.3       | 14.4       | 13.5       | 13.1       | 13.1       | 12.6       |
| Catholics           | 0.59       | 0.68       | 0.75       | 0.7        | 0.7        | 0.8        | -          | 0.6        | 0.3        | 0.5        |
| Protestants         | 0.04       | 0.07       | 0.12       | 0.1        | 0.1        | 0.1        | -          | 0.3        | 0.3        | 0.5        |
| Jewish              | 0.77       | 0.86       | 0.90       | 0.9        | 0.9        | 0.8        | 0.8        | 0.6        | 0.0        | 0.0        |
| Armenian-Gregorian  | 0.19       | 0.20       | 0.37       | 0.3        | 0.2        | 0.5        | 0.4        | -          | 0.1        | 0.1        |
| Others              | 0.04       | -          | 0.01       | 0.0        | 0.0        | 0.0        | 0.0        | 1.1        | 0.2        | 0.1        |
| Undefined           | 0.07       | 0.02       | 0.00       | -          | -          | -          | -          | -          | -          | 3.9        |

The table is organized based on data from “Structure of the population by faith” [http://www.nsi.bg/Census/StrReligion.htm](http://www.nsi.bg/Census/StrReligion.htm), accessed on 18 January 2012.
### Appendix II

**Chronology at a glance: Bulgarian state and Church history and waves of immigration to Canada (based on chapter one)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1000 BCE</td>
<td>Thracians, strong kingdom 5th-3rd centuries BCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-6 CE</td>
<td>Slavs spread over the Balkan Peninsula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-7 CE</td>
<td>Proto-Bulgarians conquer the territories with Slav population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>681</td>
<td>Establishing the Bulgarian state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>681-1018</td>
<td>First Bulgarian Empire. At its height the state spreads from the Visegrad (Hungaria) to the Black Sea and from the Dnieper River to the Adriatic Sea. Main antagonist of Byzantium, periods of peace and alliance alternate with hostility. Territorial and cultural expansion under Boris (9c) and Simeon (10c); decline under Samuel (10th-11th c).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>865</td>
<td>Christianity accepted as official state religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>865</td>
<td>Creation of Glagolic alphabet by Cyril</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>868</td>
<td>Pope Adrian II accepts Slavic language as liturgical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>870</td>
<td>Bulgarian church becomes Autocephalous, Archbishopric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>886</td>
<td>Cyril and Methody’s disciples Clement, Naum, Sava, Angelarius, and Gorazd reach Bulgarian capital Pliska and all of them become leading educators in Bulgaria; Clement is the first bishop of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and most prolific author in Old Church Slavonic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>893</td>
<td>Council of Preslav: Old Church Slavonic (Old Bulgarian) replaces Greek in liturgy and is the official state language. Two theological/literary schools are established: in Pliska led by Naum, and in Ohrid led by Clement. Enormous production of literature and translation of liturgical texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>927</td>
<td>Bulgarian Church officially becomes Patriarchy, the first after the Pentarchy; rise of monastic life 10th-12th century; the See of Patriarch moves to different towns: Sredec (Sofia), Prespa, Ohrid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-11 century</td>
<td>Rise of the Bogomil movement, a dualistic sect rejecting hierarchy, cross, and church buildings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1018-1185</td>
<td>Byzantium rule; Patriarchy is subordinated to Constantinople, but Bulgarian Church independence is preserved as Ohrid Archbishopric; Greek clergy and language start replacing the Slavic liturgy;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1185-1396</td>
<td>Second Bulgarian Empire, great territorial extension (13th cent.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1235</td>
<td>Patriarchy is restored (1205-1235) through union with Rome the archbishop was appointed as primate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 century</td>
<td>Hesychasm becomes popular in Bulgarian; resurgence of literature which spread beyond the borders; apocryphal literature thrives; churches and monasteries are main centres for education and literature production.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1396-1878</td>
<td>Under Ottoman rule, the state ceases to exist as administrative entity and becomes part of the Ottoman Empire. The Church is under the jurisdiction of the Constantinople Patriarch; Greek clergy and language start replacing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>254</td>
<td>the Bulgarian liturgy. Culture is destroyed, most of the written texts lost and educated clergy that survive, emigrate. Only the Ohrid Archbishopric is preserved until 1767.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-17 centuries</td>
<td>First massive exiles to Banat (Central Europe) and Wallachia (Rumania) as a result of unsuccessful uprisings against Ottomans. Double dependence: political and administrative from Ottomans, religious from Greeks (all Christian subjects of the Ottoman empire are under Constantinople Patriarch). Increase in cultural assimilation of the Bulgarian population by Ottomans and Greeks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 century</td>
<td>National movement for independent church; church conflict between Constantinople Patriarch and Bulgarians; church and clergy main leaders for political independence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>1850-1903 pre-diaspora period. The first immigrants are primarily students, businessmen, and visitors. This period is also called “Protestant” as missionaries in Bulgaria sent many young students to the US.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>Bulgarian Orthodox Church was restored as separate from Greek with a lower status, as Exarchate, by a decree of Sultan Abdul Azis on 27 Feb., 1870. The document delineates the borders of the Exarchate which includes Thrace and Macedonia areas at that time with predominantly ethnic Bulgarians (par.10 of the decree). Conflict with Constantinople Patriarch increase. Exarch establishes the Exarchate in Constantinople.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1872-1945</td>
<td>Schism, Bulgarian Church is excommunicated by the Constantinople Patriarch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>Liberation from Ottoman rule only as Autonomous country. The first exarch Iosif (1877-1915) is more of a diplomat and politician than theologian; he restores church in times when imperial Russian, Ottoman, and Western powers interests will keep clashing in the region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878 March</td>
<td>San-Stephano Treaty includes within the borders of Bulgaria most of the lands belonging to the Exarchate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878 July</td>
<td>Treaty of Berlin revises San Stefano Treaty: the country is partitioned and left with only one third of the lands provisioned by San Stefano Treaty; Thrace and Macedonia returned to Ottoman Empire. However, the lands of jurisdiction of Bulgarian Exarchate remain the same; only in Thrace and Macedonian area there are 15 dioceses with 7 metropolitans and the Church builds and maintains thousands of schools, teachers, and clergy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878-1908</td>
<td>Organized revolts for unification of the country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>Unification of East Rumelia (Southern part of Bulgaria) with Kingdom Bugaria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893</td>
<td>Internal Macedono-Odrin (Adrianople) Revolutionary Committee is established to prepare the liberation of Macedonia and Thrace from Ottoman rule. Later it changes its name to the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO) with strong influence in Balkan and even European politics. Its ideas have continuous influence on diaspora organizations, church, and community life, and interpersonal relations for the first wave of immigrants and their offspring until today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>Ilinden-Preobrajenie Uprising is defeated; exiles head to the Kingdom of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bulgaria, Canada and USA from Macedonian and Thracian areas. The years until Balkan Wars are marked by constant fight of the population for freedom from life of danger and poverty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1903-1912</td>
<td>First wave of immigrants, victims of political misfortune. Mainly from Macedonian area. During this period the diaspora was shaped.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>The first Eastern Orthodox Macedono-Bulgarian Church, “Sts. Cyril and Methody,” is established in Toronto.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>Independence and full liberation of Bulgaria from the Ottomans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912-1913</td>
<td>Balkan Wars, massive return of immigrants from North America to participate in Bulgarian Army. Bulgaria loses territories. Thousands of exiles from Thracian area. Destruction of Bulgarian schools and churches in Greece and Serbia, and replacing the ethnic presence of Bulgarian population.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914-1918</td>
<td>WWI, almost no immigration to North America is registered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918-1927</td>
<td>New territorial redistributions after Neuilly Treaty, 1919. Macedonia is partitioned mainly between Greece and Serbia. Massive immigration from Dobrudja, Macedonian and Thracian areas to Bulgaria, Europe and North America. Peak of diaspora consolidation around the Macedonian question; congresses deciding on independence for Macedonia or its integration into Bulgaria; determination to influence the outcome of the Peace Treaties of WWI by sending letters to the US president and the Great Powers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930-1940</td>
<td>Low immigration. Diaspora thrives, many new diaspora churches are established in the USA. The first Bulgarian Embassy opens in 1913 in New York; the first Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Diocese opens in 1938 (shortly after 1944 both are closed).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942-1943</td>
<td>During WWII, the Bulgarian Church initiates and plays major role in saving all the country’s 50,000 Jews. No one is sent to concentration camps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>Second Eastern Orthodox Macedono-Bulgarian Church, “St. George,” Toronto, one street away from the first.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944-1950</td>
<td>The second wave of immigrants, political persecution. With establishment of the communist government in Bulgaria and the WWII redrawing of borders, a new wave of emigrants flees to Central Europe, Australia, and North and South America.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>Establishing Social Republic of Macedonia as part of Yugoslav federation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>Standard Macedonian language is codified as an official language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Serbian Church grants autonomy to the Macedonian Church as restoration of Ohrid Archbishopric; in 1967 Macedonian Church separates from Serbian and self-declares autocephaly. Both events have important reverberations in diaspora where the first Macedonian church opens in 1963 and some of the Macedono-Bulgarian diaspora join.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944-1989</td>
<td>Communist government in Bulgaria. By 1950 the borders are closed and no immigration from Bulgaria will occur in the next decades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>The schism of Bulgarian Church is lifted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>Bulgarian Patriarchy is restored.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-1990</td>
<td>Distant relationship with homeland; the diaspora has no support from embassies and dioceses in North America until 1970s. Diaspora declines in</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
numbers due to lack of new immigrants, voluntary assimilation, and internal diaspora division. Strong emigration from Yugoslavia and very proactive embassy facilitates establishing vigorous Macedonian diaspora and church competing for customers. Internal diaspora division, diaspora starts declining in numbers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>Eastern Orthodox Macedono-Bulgarian Church, “Holy Trinity,” Toronto;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Eastern Orthodox Church, “St. Ivan Rilski,” in Niagara Falls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Third wave of immigration starts, immigration by choice. After 1990 immigration to Canada increases significantly; until 2000 it is based on refugee status and after that on landed immigrants. The churches and community are revived and continue to increase in numbers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>L’Eglise Orthodoxe Bulgare, “St. Ivan Rilski,” is established in Montreal by the third wave immigrants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Eastern Orthodox Bulgarian Church, “St. Dimitar,” is established in Brampton serving third wave immigrants. New church groups are recorded in Ottawa and Calgary.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix III

**LIST A: Event initiated and organized by the diaspora churches (2005-2011)**

### 1. St. Cyril and Methody Macedono-Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Organizer</th>
<th>Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 July</td>
<td>Great Bulgarian Voices: church and folklore songs</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Nov.</td>
<td>Traditional Yearly Bazaar; lunch and music (trio “Orpheus”) after service</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 May</td>
<td>Celebrating Sts. Cyril and Methody’s day; liturgy, lunch and folklore dances</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG/EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Nov.</td>
<td>Traditional Yearly Bazaar; lunch and music (after the service)</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Dec</td>
<td>Children’s Christmas party</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 May</td>
<td>Celebrating Sts. Cyril and Methody’s day; liturgy, lunch and folklore dances</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Nov.</td>
<td>Traditional Yearly Bazaar; lunch and music (after the service)</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Dec.</td>
<td>Children’s Christmas party</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 May</td>
<td>Celebrating Sts. Cyril and Methody’s day; liturgy followed by lunch and folklore dances</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Oct.</td>
<td>Sunday School starts with a prayer</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Nov.</td>
<td>Traditional Yearly Bazaar; lunch and music (after the service)</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Dec.</td>
<td>Children’s Christmas party with program from the Sunday school</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Dec.</td>
<td>Christmas liturgy</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Venue</td>
<td>Organizer</td>
<td>Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-19 Apr.</td>
<td>Schedule for divine Services-Holy week and Pascha</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 May</td>
<td>Patron Saints Day, banquet following the service</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG/ENG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Nov.</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Cathedral’s annual bazaar</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Dec.</td>
<td>Children’s Christmas party with program from the Sunday school</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 May</td>
<td>Patrons’ Day banquet (following the liturgy service)</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG/EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Sept.</td>
<td>Centennial Celebration gala dinner</td>
<td>The Western Prince Hotel</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG/EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Sept.</td>
<td>Centennial Holy Liturgy, all priests participate</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Oct.</td>
<td>Annual meeting of the church board</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Nov.</td>
<td>Annual Bazaar</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Dec.</td>
<td>Children’s Christmas party, Sunday school program</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Jan.</td>
<td>Folklore concert, Bulgarian and Macedonian songs</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 April</td>
<td>Easter folklore concert</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 May</td>
<td>Patron’s day celebration with a banquet</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 June</td>
<td>Talent competition for children: singing, dancing, instruments</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Dec.</td>
<td>Christmas children’s party with a program from Sunday school</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. St. George Macedono-Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Organizer</th>
<th>Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Dec.</td>
<td>Children’s Christmas Party</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>EN/BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Dec.</td>
<td>Christmas Eve, Great vespers followed by Lenten Dinner</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>EN with Old church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td>Location 1</td>
<td>Location 2</td>
<td>Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2006</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 May</td>
<td>Divine liturgy for the Patron’s day followed by kurban lunch. All priests.</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 June</td>
<td>Pontifical Divine Liturgy with Archbishop Cyril &amp; 65th traditional banquet to follow with “Aegea sings”</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Dec.</td>
<td>Divine liturgy followed by annual children’s Christmas party.</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Recommends all children to prepare themselves and take communion.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Dec.</td>
<td>Christmas Eve, Great vespers followed by Lenten Dinner. All priests participate.</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>EN/BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2007</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Dec.</td>
<td>Christmas children’s party</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2008</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 May</td>
<td>St. George Great Martyr, divine liturgy followed by traditional banquet</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>EN/BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Aug.</td>
<td>Panihida for priest Stephen Kapitanov, former priest of the church</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Sept.</td>
<td>13th Annual Family Day, divine liturgy and blessing the families with Holy water</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Dec.</td>
<td>Christmas children’s party, after divine liturgy</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Dec.</td>
<td>Christmas eve, divine liturgy followed by Lenten dinner (3 priests)</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Dec.</td>
<td>Christmas Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>EN/BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2009</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Feb.</td>
<td>Invitation to welcome the new priest, after divine liturgy luncheon</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG/EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 May</td>
<td>Divine liturgy and traditional banquet</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>EN/BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 May</td>
<td>Church celebration, St. George day, Divine liturgy and Kurban lunch</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>EN/BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Sept.</td>
<td>St. George Family day; Father Nikola will speak about the parable of the Prodigal son; lunch will be served</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>EN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Dec.</td>
<td>Annual children’s Christmas party, after the divine liturgy</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>EN/BG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Dec.</td>
<td>Christmas eve, divine liturgy followed by traditional Lenten dinner (3 priests)</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>EN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Feb.</td>
<td>Fundraising concert cycle Noon Matinee, after divine liturgy</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>EN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 May</td>
<td>St. George Great Martyr, divine liturgy followed by traditional banquet</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>EN/BG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 May</td>
<td>St. George day, Divine liturgy celebrated by the priests from our churches; a Kurban lunch will be served</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>EN/BG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Nov.</td>
<td>Music matinee, classical music concert following the divine liturgy</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>EN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Dec.</td>
<td>Annual children’s Christmas party, after the divine liturgy</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>BG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Feb</td>
<td>Fundraising concert cycle Noon Matinee, after divine liturgy</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>EN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 March</td>
<td>Very Special service for returning of St. George Church to Bulgarian orthodox Church. Forgiveness Sunday.</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>EN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 May</td>
<td>St. George day, Divine liturgy celebrated by the priests from our churches; a Kurban lunch will be served</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG/EN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Sept.</td>
<td>70th anniversary, divine liturgy and panihida in memory of the founders</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>EN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Oct.  Sunday noon music matinees dedicated to International Music Day, Oct. 1, with farewell cocktail for Father Nicolay</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>EN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Dec.</td>
<td>Christmas Baking for youth</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>EN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3. Holy Trinity Macedono-Bulgarian East Orthodox Church

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Organizer</th>
<th>Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>10 Feb. Folklore dance group gathering (children and adults)</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>25 Dec. Solemn Christmas Liturgy</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>23 May Celebrating the day of Slavic literacy</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church &amp; Bulgarian Horizons newspaper</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30 May Celebrating the first birthday of the group for Bulgarian traditions and customs (dedicated to Children’s day, 1st June)</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Nov</td>
<td>24 Nov The akathist Hymn in honour of St. Clement Ohridski, all priests participate</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG/EN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### 4. St. Dimitar Bulgarian Orthodox Church, Brampton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Organizer</th>
<th>Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>29 Oct. First service in St. Dimitar; follows lunch at Liondead Golf Club</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>5 May Bulgarian movie and theatre-guest actor, Philip Trifonov</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18 June Dance party: disco, horos and Latino</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9 July Concert: The great voices of Bulgaria</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14 Aug. First annual Charity golf Tournament, invitation from St. George</td>
<td>Lionhead Golf course</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18 Aug. Initiative for donation to Bulgarian Red Cross (through the Canadian) for the flood disaster in Bulgaria</td>
<td>Church &amp; Radio Bulgarian Voice,</td>
<td>BG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Oct.</td>
<td>Halloween charity party-discotheque for the flood in Bulgaria</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Nov.</td>
<td>Bazar (food and art objects) fundraising for the church</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Dec.</td>
<td>Christmas concert, classic music, Stefka Evstatieva, soprano and duet viola and piano. Cocktails follow.</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Dec.</td>
<td>Christmas Eve, dinner after Great Vespers</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Dec.</td>
<td>New Year’s Party</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**2006**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Toronto</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11 Feb.</td>
<td>St. Valentine and Trifon Zarezan Party</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 March</td>
<td>National celebration of Bulgaria; Attended by government representative, A. Ignatiev</td>
<td>Lionhead Golf and country Club</td>
<td>Church &amp; Canadian-Bulgarian Association (CBA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 May</td>
<td>Official consecration of the church, 400 guest, cocktail</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BG/EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 May</td>
<td>Classical music concert</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 May</td>
<td>Divine liturgy with metropolitan Joseph, cocktails to follow</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 June</td>
<td>Concert to mark the Children’s Day 1 June</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 July</td>
<td>Picnic to mark 103 years of Ilinden-Preobrazensko uprising; panihida in honour of the victims and folklore music</td>
<td>park</td>
<td>Church &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Aug.</td>
<td>Culinary show, after the liturgy</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Sept.</td>
<td>Classical music concert—mezzo soprano V. Nicolova (worked with E. Shwarzkopf)</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EN/BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Sept.</td>
<td>Concert—Russian Male Chamber Choir ‘Akatist’ (internationally acclaimed)</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EN/BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Oct.</td>
<td>2nd annual Fall charity Golf Tournament</td>
<td>Golf course</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Oct.</td>
<td>Annual banquet in celebration of St. Dimitar, Patron saint; program from Sunday school and folk dance group</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Nov.</td>
<td>Church Bazaar—all benefits for the</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Venue</td>
<td>Organizers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Dec.</td>
<td>New Year’s Party</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church &amp; CBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2007</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 April</td>
<td>Comedy evening and dancing (income for the church)</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church &amp; CBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 May</td>
<td>Children’s competition: singing, dancing, and playing instruments</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church &amp; Sunday school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8 July</td>
<td>Carabram Brampton festival, Bulgarian pavillion</td>
<td>Church Hall</td>
<td>Church &amp; community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 July</td>
<td>Yearly Ilinden-Preobrarenje picnic with baked lamb; panihida service by the priests from all churches</td>
<td>Park</td>
<td>Church &amp; CBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Sept.</td>
<td>Invitation for the first day of the Sunday school</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Oct.</td>
<td>Parents’ meeting</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Oct.</td>
<td>Annual charity Golf Tournament of St. Dimitar Church</td>
<td>Golf course</td>
<td>Church &amp; CBA, I. Kaneff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-28 Oct.</td>
<td>Celebration of St. Dimitar, Patron saint; liturgy, banquet and kurban; folklore dance group ‘Igranka’</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Dec.</td>
<td>Christmas party for kids</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Dec.</td>
<td>New Year’s Party</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2008</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Feb.</td>
<td>Children’s movie day</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Parents committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Feb.</td>
<td>St. Valentine and Trifon Zarezan Party</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 March</td>
<td>Ceremony in honour of National day of Bulgaria; attended as always by representatives of provincial and local government. Starts with panihida, follows dinner.</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church &amp; Canadian-Bulgarian Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 March</td>
<td>Akatist service for Easter</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-27 Apr.</td>
<td>Schedule of the Easter services starting with Lazarus day and finishing on the second day of Easter. After the great</td>
<td>Church/ Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 July</td>
<td>Service follows lunch with three baked lambs to finish the lent.</td>
<td></td>
<td>BG/EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Annual Charity Golf Tournament ‘St. Dimitar.’ Benefits for the church.</td>
<td>Golf course Church</td>
<td>BG/EN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-13 July</td>
<td>Carabram, Brampton multicultural festival</td>
<td>Church hall and building Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 July</td>
<td>Yearly Ilinden picnic; starts with panihida service by the priests from all churches; follows music and horos.</td>
<td>Park Church &amp; CBA</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-26 Oct.</td>
<td>Celebrations of the patron St. Dimitar: 25 October, vespers followed by kurban; 26 October, Divine liturgy followed by banquet and music program from the Sunday school.</td>
<td>Church &amp; Church hall Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Dec.</td>
<td>Christmas Eve dinner after evening service (vespers).</td>
<td>Church &amp; Church hall Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Dec.</td>
<td>Christmas divine liturgy</td>
<td>Church Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Jan</td>
<td>Church calendar of events (January-June): Grandmother’s day (18 Jan.) Valentine’s day (14 Feb.) Yearly meeting of the board (22 Feb.) National day celebration (3 March) Trip (TBA) First spring and Kukeri celebration (21 March) Easter services (12-19 April) Children’s concert (24 May) Golf tournament (TBA)</td>
<td>Church Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Feb.</td>
<td>Every Friday: Bulgarian movie and catechism course</td>
<td>Church hall Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Feb.</td>
<td>St. Valentine/ Trifon Zarezan Party</td>
<td>Church hall Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 March</td>
<td>(i) Establishing a choir and looking for a choir conductor; (ii) Course in introduction to liturgy (March 15, 22, 29)</td>
<td>Church hall Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 May</td>
<td>Piano recital of young pianists (Canadian and Bulgarian) in celebrating the day of Slavic letters, 24 May</td>
<td>Church hall Church</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 May</td>
<td>Children’s talent competition: singing dancing, and playing instruments</td>
<td>Church hall Church</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 May</td>
<td>5th Annual Charity Golf Tournament ‘St. Dimitar’</td>
<td>Lionhead golf and country club Church</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Organizers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 June</td>
<td>Annual Charity Golf Tournament ‘St. Dimitar’</td>
<td>Carliste golf course</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-12 July</td>
<td>Carabram, Brampton multicultural festival—Bulgarian pavilion</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church and Bulgarian community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Aug.</td>
<td>5th Annual Charity Golf Tournament ‘St. Dimitar’</td>
<td>Century Pines golf club</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Aug.</td>
<td>Yearly Ilinden-Preobrakenje picnic</td>
<td>Park</td>
<td>Church &amp; CBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Sept.</td>
<td>Charity Tennis tournament</td>
<td>Lionhead golf club</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Sept.</td>
<td>Invitation for: (i) a new dance group at the church to reproduce Bulgarian traditional customs; (ii) a new armature theatre group</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Sept.</td>
<td>Beginning of the school year for the Bulgarian school</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Oct.</td>
<td>5th Annual Charity Golf Tournament ‘St. Dimitar,’ final game</td>
<td>Lionhead golf club</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Dec.</td>
<td>New Year Party</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2010</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Feb.</td>
<td>Yearly meeting of the board</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 March</td>
<td>Celebrating 3 March, Bulgaria day; representatives of the consulate and local and provintial government</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church &amp; CBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 May</td>
<td>Concert of folklore orchestra ‘Thracia’ Montreal</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>CBA &amp; dance formation ‘Igranka’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 June</td>
<td>Spring Children’s talent competition: singing, dancing, and playing instruments</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church &amp; Bulgarian Sunday school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9,10,11 July</td>
<td>Carabram, Brampton multicultural festival—Bulgarian pavilion: dance group ‘Igranka,’ folk songs, rose oil flaskets</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Church &amp; Bulgarian Consulate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 July</td>
<td>Annual Charity Golf Tournament ‘St. Dimitar’</td>
<td>Lionhead golf club</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Sept</td>
<td>Bulgarian school starts</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+30 Oct.</td>
<td>Celebration of St. Dimitar, Patron’s day: 30 October Dinner with guests</td>
<td>Liondead</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Princes Maria-Luisa Borisova Saxe-Coburg-Gothska, His Highness Prince Herman, Bulgarian ambassador in Canada and Bulgarian ambassador in USA; 31 Oct. Divine liturgy together with the royal family. Follows kurban.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Language(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31 Dec.</td>
<td>New Year’s Party</td>
<td>Lionhead golf club</td>
<td>BG/EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>29 Jan. Valentine and Trifon Zarezan party</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 March Celebrating 3 March, Bulgaria’s day</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 July 7th Annual Charity Golf Tournament ‘St. Dimitar’</td>
<td>Lionhead Golf club</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17 Sept. Yearly tennis tournament</td>
<td>Lionhead golf club</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15 Oct. 7th Annual Charity Golf Tournament ‘St. Dimitar’</td>
<td>Royal Ontario Golf club</td>
<td>EN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 Dec. Concert on the occasion of the first birthday of Folk-Dance formation ‘Dimitrovche’</td>
<td>Church hall</td>
<td>BG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**LIST B: Events organized by independent groups and individuals**

*(2005-2011)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Organizer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Jan.</td>
<td>Party for uniting Bulgarians in Canada</td>
<td>Banquet hall QSSIS</td>
<td>Private initiative &amp; Radio Bulgarian Voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Feb.</td>
<td>Yearly meeting of Radio Bulgarian Voice</td>
<td>St. Troitsa church hall</td>
<td>Radio Bulgarian Voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Feb.</td>
<td>Theater “Vrajaletz”</td>
<td>Metro Toronto Hall</td>
<td>Radio Bulgarian Voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Feb.</td>
<td>13th traditional dinner of the Canadian-Bulgarian Association (CBA), in honour of 127 years of independence of Bulgaria</td>
<td>Lionhead Golf Club</td>
<td>Canadian-Bulgarian Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 May</td>
<td>Fundraising concert for Lily</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Private initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 July</td>
<td>Ilinden upspring picnic</td>
<td>park</td>
<td>Canadian-Bulgarian Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 July</td>
<td>Picnic</td>
<td>park</td>
<td>Canadian-Bulgarian Club of Niagara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24&amp;25 Nov.</td>
<td>Concert Mila Ioncova, soprano</td>
<td>Heliconian Hall</td>
<td>Non-diaspora initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Dec.</td>
<td>Celebrating the students’ day: Party until down</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Student organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Dec.</td>
<td>New Year Party</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Canadian-Bulgarian Club of Niagara</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**2006**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Organizer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 Feb.</td>
<td>Yearly meeting, Radio Bulgarian Voice</td>
<td>St. Troitsa church hall</td>
<td>Radio Bulgarian Voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 April</td>
<td>Discotheque</td>
<td>St. Troitsa church hall</td>
<td>Radio Bulgarian Voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 May</td>
<td>Film by Milena Kaneva–Havel award for Human Rights</td>
<td>Isabel Bader Theater</td>
<td>Non-diaspora initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 June</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>Innis Hall</td>
<td>Bulgarian Student Association at University of Toronto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td>Location/Details</td>
<td>Organizer/Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Dec.</td>
<td>New Year Party</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Radio Bulgarian Voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Feb.</td>
<td>Party for uniting Bulgarians in Toronto, promoting Bulgarian culture, and developing charity</td>
<td>Banquet hall QSSIS</td>
<td>Private initiative &amp; Radio Bulgarian Voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Feb.</td>
<td>Annual general meeting of CBA</td>
<td>St. Dimitar church hall</td>
<td>Canadian-Bulgarian Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 March</td>
<td>Kukeri Day and celebrating First spring day—horos and songs until down</td>
<td>St. Dimitar church hall</td>
<td>Folklore group “Igranka”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 May</td>
<td>Party Young Bulgarians in Toronto</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church, small Hall</td>
<td>Private initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 June</td>
<td>Bulgarian movie</td>
<td>Goethe Institute Toronto</td>
<td>European Film festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 June</td>
<td>Beach volleyball</td>
<td>Beaches</td>
<td>Private initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 June</td>
<td>Picnic “Networking event”</td>
<td>park</td>
<td>Private initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 July</td>
<td>Opera “Toska” in concert version with Mila Ionkova</td>
<td>Heliconian Hall</td>
<td>Non-diaspora initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 July</td>
<td>Yearly picnic</td>
<td>park</td>
<td>Bulgarian-Canadian Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Oct.</td>
<td>Lecture of Philip Dimitrov</td>
<td>Munk Center at University of Toronto</td>
<td>General Consulate of Bulgaria, Munk Center and EU of Excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Nov.</td>
<td>Opera “Cavalleria Rusticana” with Mila Ionkova</td>
<td>UofT Scarborough Hall</td>
<td>Opera by Request (non-diaspora initiative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Nov</td>
<td>Concert with guest conductor R. Christov</td>
<td>Toronto Center for Performing Arts</td>
<td>Non-diaspora initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Nov.</td>
<td>Fundraising concert to help a child in need</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody’s church Hall</td>
<td>Radio Bulgarian Voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Nov.</td>
<td>Annual general meeting of Canadian-Bulgarian Association</td>
<td>St. Dimitar church hall</td>
<td>Canadian-Bulgarian Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Dec.</td>
<td>New Year Party</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Bulgarian-Canadian Society &amp; Radio Bulgarian Voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Organizer/Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Feb.</td>
<td>Theater “Waiting for Godo” with Peter Batakliev</td>
<td>Distillery</td>
<td>Modern Times Stage Company (non-diaspora initiative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 March</td>
<td>Celebrating 130 years of independence of Bulgaria, 51 years of BCS, and Baba Marta</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Bulgarian-Canadian Society (BCS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 March</td>
<td>Fundraising concert-party: donation for charity trust to help a person in need</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Radio Bulgarian Voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 March</td>
<td>Kukeri celebration</td>
<td>St. Dimitar church hall</td>
<td>Folklore group “Igranka”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 April</td>
<td>Pop concert K. Bodurova</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Bulgarian Community in Toronto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 May</td>
<td>Concert of “Yesbaby” group</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Bulgarian Student Association at York University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 May</td>
<td>Yearly meeting of radio Bulgarian Voice and movie</td>
<td>St. Troitsa church hall</td>
<td>Radio Bulgarian Voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 May</td>
<td>Concert “The Mystery of Bulgarian Voices”</td>
<td>St. Andrew’s Church</td>
<td>Small World Music Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 June</td>
<td>Participation of Radio Bulgarian Voice in International festival CHIN and Picnic</td>
<td>Exhibition Place</td>
<td>Radio Bulgarian Voice &amp; Chin Radio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 July</td>
<td>Canada day participation of folklore group “Igranka” in multicultural program</td>
<td>Yong and Dundas square</td>
<td>Non-diaspora initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Nov.</td>
<td>Pop concert, Georgi Hristov</td>
<td>AYC concert hall</td>
<td>Balkanto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Nov.</td>
<td>Bulgarian movie</td>
<td>Ryerson University</td>
<td>Bulgarian Student Association at Ryerson university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Dec.</td>
<td>New year party</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Radio Bulgarian Voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Jan.</td>
<td>Opera concert with Mila Ionkova</td>
<td>College street United Church</td>
<td>Non-diaspora initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Feb.</td>
<td>Pop concert Toni Dimitrova: “Evening of love and vino”</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Radio Bulgarian Voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 March</td>
<td>Celebrating the national day of Bulgaria with a concert and dinner</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Bulgarian-Canadian Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 March</td>
<td>3rd Kukeri celebration in Toronto</td>
<td>St. Dimitar church</td>
<td>Folklore group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Venue</td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 April</td>
<td>Pop-jazz concert of Elica and Stungy</td>
<td>Opera House Club</td>
<td>Balkanto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 May</td>
<td>Folk concert: Tania Boeva</td>
<td>Sts.Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Bulgarian-Canadian Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 May</td>
<td>Meeting with the Bulgarian deputy minister of foreign affairs</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>General Consulate of Bulgaria in Toronto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-14 June</td>
<td>International Art festival, Bulgarian art section, Luminato festival</td>
<td>Metro Toronto Convention Center</td>
<td>General Consulate of Bulgaria in Toronto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 June</td>
<td>Balkan folklore orchestra “Izgrev” from Chicago; Balkan music dance and dinner party</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Balkanto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5 July</td>
<td>Participation of Radio Bulgarian Voice in International festival CHIN and Picnic</td>
<td>Exhibition Place</td>
<td>Radio Bulgarian Voice &amp; Chin Radio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 July</td>
<td>Yearly picnic</td>
<td>park</td>
<td>Bulgarian-Canadian Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-17 Oct</td>
<td>Pop concert: Duet Riton</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall &amp; St. Dimitar Church hall</td>
<td>Diaspora initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Oct</td>
<td>Folk concert: E. Stoyneva, A. Tangenhorst, and K. Stockman from Main’s Balkan Choir</td>
<td>St. Troitsa church hall</td>
<td>Balkanto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Dec</td>
<td>Theatre “Oneway” Boston presents S. Atanasova: Love is greater secret then life</td>
<td>George Ignatieff Theater</td>
<td>Balkanto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Dec</td>
<td>New Year Party</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Radio Bulgarian Voice &amp; Bulgarian-Canadian Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Dec.</td>
<td>New Year Party</td>
<td>St. Troitsa Church Hall</td>
<td>Private initiative</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23 Jan.</td>
<td>Pop concert: Iordanka Hristova,</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Bulgarian Cultural Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Jan.</td>
<td>Classic concert: Duo R. Tcholakova (violin) and S. Ivanova (voice and piano)</td>
<td>College Street United Church</td>
<td>Balkanto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Feb.</td>
<td>Pop-folk concert: Desislava</td>
<td>The Mob Club</td>
<td>Balkanto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Organizer</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Feb.</td>
<td>Valentine Party</td>
<td>Restaurant Flamingo</td>
<td>Private initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Feb</td>
<td>Fundraising to support an orphanage in Bulgaria</td>
<td>Electronic venue</td>
<td>Private group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 March</td>
<td>Celebrating 3\textsuperscript{rd} March, national day of Bulgaria with poetry and music</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Bulgarian Canadian Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 March</td>
<td>Folk music concert of S. Kalcheva; participates dance group “Igranka”</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Balkanto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 April</td>
<td>Kukeri in Toronto (Mummer’s day), celebration with dance and masks; guest Chilean dance group</td>
<td>St. Dimitar church hall</td>
<td>Folklore group “Igranka”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 April</td>
<td>Pop concert: Toni Dimitrova</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Canadian-Bulgarian Centre “Zornitsa” &amp; Radio Bulgarian Voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 April</td>
<td>Opera concert: Verdy with participation of Mila Ionkova</td>
<td>College Street United church</td>
<td>Opera by Request, non-diaspora initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 May</td>
<td>Fundraising concert and dance-dinner party to help a Bulgarian musician</td>
<td>St. Troitsa</td>
<td>Private initiative &amp; Balkanto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 May</td>
<td>Concert of folk orchestra “Thracia” Montreal</td>
<td>St. Dimitar church hall</td>
<td>Canadian Bulgarian Association &amp; Dance group “Igranka”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 May</td>
<td>Concert of the popular Children vocal group “Pim-Pam” from Bulgaria in honour of June 1\textsuperscript{st}, the Child’s day</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Radio Bulgarian Voice, church and Balkanto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 June</td>
<td>Bulgarian movie night</td>
<td>Hart House</td>
<td>Bulgarian Student Association University of Toronto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 July</td>
<td>Summer discothèque, fundraising party for a Bulgarian musician</td>
<td>St. Troitsa</td>
<td>Private initiative with the support of DJ Emo &amp; Balkanto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 July</td>
<td>Yearly picnic</td>
<td>park</td>
<td>Bulgarian-Canadian Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Sept.</td>
<td>Pop-folk folk concert: Anelia</td>
<td>The Mob Club Theatre</td>
<td>Balkanto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Oct.</td>
<td>Concert: Slavi Trifonov and Ku-Ku band</td>
<td>Queen Elizabet Theater</td>
<td>Balkanto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Oct.</td>
<td>After-the-concert party</td>
<td>Gossip restaurant</td>
<td>Balkanto</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 31 Oct.    | International Halloween Party                                         | Spirale Banquet Hall                                                    | Balkano & &
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Translation Inc.</th>
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<tr>
<td>13 Nov.</td>
<td>Folklore concert of ensemble “HORO” Chicago</td>
<td>St. Dimitar Church hall</td>
<td>Folklore dance club “Na Horoto” &amp; Balkanto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov-Dec.</td>
<td>Art exhibition: Yanitza Vassileva</td>
<td>Crystalline Gallery</td>
<td>Crystalline Gallery</td>
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<tr>
<td>17&amp;20 Nov</td>
<td>Opera with participation of M. Ionkova</td>
<td>University of Toronto</td>
<td>Opera by Request</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Nov.</td>
<td>Theater “Nirvana”</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Radio Bulgarian Voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Nov</td>
<td>Concert-celebration of the 6th Birthday of dance group “Igranka” with guests Greek and Brazilian dance groups</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Folklore Dance group “Igranka”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Dec</td>
<td>New Year’s Eve</td>
<td>Royal Niagara Golf Club, Niagara-on-the Lake</td>
<td>Private initiative (Niagra Bulgarian community)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Dec</td>
<td>New Year’s Eve</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Not disclosed</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Translation Inc.</th>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 Feb.</td>
<td>Experience Bulgaria: a great cultural evening with amazing party</td>
<td>Ryerson University</td>
<td>The Bulgarian Student Associations at Ryerson, UofT, and York University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Feb.</td>
<td>Concert of the children folklore dance group “Bularche” to celebrate Baba Marta (March 1st)</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Mathody church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 March</td>
<td>Folklore concert: Valia Balkanska to celebrate national day of Bulgaria, 3rd March</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Bulgarian-Canadian Society &amp; Newspaper Bulgarian Horizons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 April</td>
<td>Yearly meeting of Canadian-Bulgarian Association</td>
<td>St. Dimitar church hall</td>
<td>Canadian-Bulgarian Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 April</td>
<td>Kukeri celebration</td>
<td>Markham district Veteran Association</td>
<td>Folklore dance group “Igranka”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 April</td>
<td>Bulgarian Art Festival: concert of folk dance groups and dance night</td>
<td>St. Dimitar church hall</td>
<td>Festival committee, General Consulate of Bulgaria in Toronto, and Balkanto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 April</td>
<td>Bulgarian Art festival: gala opening with art exhibition and</td>
<td>Columbus Centre</td>
<td>Festival committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Organizer</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 April</td>
<td>Bulgarian Art festival: Rock Night concert</td>
<td>Cadillac Lounge</td>
<td>Festival committee, Balkanto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 April</td>
<td>Bulgarian Art Festival: classic concert featuring E. Vladigerova and S. Ivanova</td>
<td>St. George Church hall</td>
<td>Festival committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 April</td>
<td>Bulgarian Art Festival: Jazz concert-trio S. Yankulov and Vladigeroff Brothers</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Festival committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 May</td>
<td>Bulgarian Art Festival: movie night and cocktail</td>
<td>St. Troitsa church hall</td>
<td>Festival committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 May</td>
<td>Rock concert: Diana express</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>United Bulgarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 June</td>
<td>Folk concert: Maya</td>
<td>Flamingo Bar</td>
<td>Balkanto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 June</td>
<td>Picnic</td>
<td>park</td>
<td>Bulgarian-Canadian Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Sept.</td>
<td>Fundraising concert for a child in need</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Balkanto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Sept.</td>
<td>Concert, A. Vladigeroff trumpet in Balkan Breakbeat Gypsy</td>
<td>The Great Hall</td>
<td>Small World Festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Oct.</td>
<td>Fundraising to support an orphanage in Bulgaria</td>
<td>Electronic venue</td>
<td>Private group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Nov.</td>
<td>Meeting: Healthy way of life, lectures on yoga and food</td>
<td>Arizona Bar and Grill</td>
<td>Bulgarian-Canadian Society &amp; private initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Nov.</td>
<td>EU Film Festival: Bulgarian movie</td>
<td>Royal Cinema</td>
<td>EU Film Festival in Toronto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-26 Nov</td>
<td>Alumnae Theatre: “Sylvia” directed by Maria Popoff</td>
<td>Royal Cinema</td>
<td>Non-diaspora initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Dec.</td>
<td>Lecture on alternative medicine</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methody Church Hall</td>
<td>Private initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Dec.</td>
<td>Evening of Bulgarian folk dance</td>
<td>St. George church hall</td>
<td>Bulgarian folk dance club-North York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Dec.</td>
<td>New Year’s Eve</td>
<td>St. George Church hall</td>
<td>Balkanto</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Appendix IV

Questions for Clergy

A. Experience in Bulgaria

*Structured portion*

1. How many years were you a priest in Bulgaria?
2. Where was your parish located: city or village?
3. How often were services held?
4. Did people regularly attend these services?
5. What was the level of religiosity of your parish? (on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is the lowest).
6. What was the average age of your congregants?
7. What was the predominant gender of the attendees?
8. Did you have social activities in your parish?
9. How important to the congregation were these activities? (on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is the lowest).
10. Which activities were more important for your congregation—the religious or social?

*Semi-structured and open ended portion*

11. How was the government of the church organized? What was your role?
12. What kind of changes did you see in your congregation after 1990?
13. Did your congregation have folklore beliefs and rituals and what kind? Which were the most popular and for which age groups?

14. What was the social stratum of your congregation?

**B. Experience in Canada**

*Structured portion*

1. How many years have you been a priest in Canada?

2. Where is your parish located?

3. To what diocese does it belong?

4. How many congregants in your parish?

5. What is the average age of your community? What is the predominant gender among the attendees?

6. How often are services held?

7. Do people regularly attend these services?

8. What is the level of religiosity? (on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is the least religious)

9. Do you have social activities held in the church?

10. What is the ration between social activities and religious?

11. How important to the parish are social activities? (on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is the least important)

*Semi-structured and open ended portion*

12. Please compare your church participation level now with the period before 1989 in diaspora.

13. Compare the church building and space with the church space in Bulgaria.
14. Which activities do you think are more important for the diaspora community—the religious or social? And for you personally?

15. How is the government of your church organized? What is your role?

16. Compare the role of the church board in the diaspora church and the one in Bulgaria.

17. Compare the services in the diaspora and those in the homeland.

18. Does your congregation have folklore beliefs and rituals? Which are the most popular and for which age groups?

19. What are the social strata of the church attendees?

20. What do you think is the most important reason for people coming to church?

21. Which saints are most popular in diaspora community?

22. Do you have any specific observations with regards to (a) church organization, structure and role now and before 1989, and (b) church organization, structure and role in the new homeland and in Bulgaria.

25. How do you feel as a leader of a diaspora church?

Questions for diaspora members

A. Background

Structured portion

1. Sex, age, education, profession (in Bulgarian and in Canada)

2. When did you come to Canada? Refugee or landed immigrant?

3. Did you live in urban or rural community prior the emigration?
4. Did you come with your family? Do you have children, where were they born? Is your spouse Bulgarian?

5. Do you teach your child Bulgarian language-at home or at school?

6. Which language do you use at home? Do you think it is important to keep the native language?

7. Do you feel established in Canada? If yes, how long did it take?

8. How well integrated do you and your family feel?

9. How often do you return to Bulgaria?

10. Would you consider returning for good especially after Bulgaria is part of the EU?

11. Do you follow the Bulgarian news? Are you interested in Bulgarian politics? Do you participate in Bulgarian elections?

12. Do you support family there?

_Semi-structured and open ended portion_

13. Are your friends mainly Bulgarians? Why? If not, why not?

14. Do you feel nostalgia? What do you miss from your life in Bulgaria.

15. Do you feel strong connection to Bulgaria? To Canada? Please compare.

**B. Religious experience in homeland**

_Structured portion_

1. Do you believe in deity?

2. Do you consider yourself Eastern Orthodox?

3. What was your connection with religion in Bulgaria?

4. Do you affiliate with any other religion?

5. Did you attend church?
6. Any one in particular or wherever it happened?

7. How often did you attend? Did you go for services?

8. For how long did you participate in religious activities?

9. Are your parents (and grandparents) religious and do they attend church?

10. What did you celebrate?

11. Was religion part of your life? Please describe.

C. Religious experience in Canada

Structured portion

1. Do you attend church? Any one in particular?

2. Do you consider yourself a member of this church?

3. How often do you attend? Has your attendance change while in Canada?

4. Do your children attend Sunday school?

5. Do you think it is important to raise your children in Eastern Orthodox tradition?

6. Did you make friends through the church, or work, neighborhood?

7. Do you feel a need to go to a church?

8. Do you have religious objects in your home?

Semi-structured

9. Why do you attend the diaspora church? For a service or community gatherings? Which one is more important to you?

10. Has your attendance changed compare to the first years after you came to Canada?

11. What is your outlook towards the Bulgarian churches in Canada?

12. What do you think of the diaspora community in Toronto?

13. How do you compare the church in Toronto with these in Bulgaria?
14. Please describe your religiosity.

15. Do you observe folklore believes and superstitions?

**D. Icons**

1. Do you have an icon in your home? In Canada? In Bulgaria?

2. Do the icon have a special place in your home? Where?

3. Do you make a sign of a cross in front of it? Do you pray in front of it?

4. Is your icon blessed? Is the icon a holy image for you?

5. Do you believe that icons facilitate miracles?

6. What does an icon mean for you?
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Maps

Map 1. The Geographical regions of Macedonia and Thrace
The geographical regions of Macedonia and Thrace are divided into three areas: Thrace—Eastern (in Turkey), Western (in Greece), and Northern (in Bulgaria); Macedonia—Western or Vardar Macedonia (in Macedonia), Eastern or Pirin Macedonia (in Bulgaria), and Southern, or Aegean Macedonia (in Greece).

Map 2. Bulgarian state borders according to the Treaty of San Stefano (March 1878) and the Berlin Treaty (July 1878)

Map 2. The black line shows the borders of Bulgaria according to San Stefano Treaty (March, 1878); the thinner line shows the borders according to the Berlin Treaty (July, 1878), which reduced the Bulgarian territory by almost two-thirds and returned it to the Ottoman Empire with small parts to Serbia and Romania. The Berlin Treaty created new borders without following the principle of nationality and returned massive territories with Christian
inhabitants back to the Ottoman Empire. As a result, numerous revolts, liberation movements, resettlements, and emigration continued until the first quarter of the 20th century.

Map 3. Revisions of Bulgarian state borders between 1878-1919

Map 3. The Bulgarian borders were redrawn six times between 1878 and 1919 by the Treaties of San Stefano (1878), Berlin (1878), London (1912, Balkan Wars), Constantinople (1913), Bucharest (1913, Balkan Wars), and Neuilly (1919, WWI). In fact, border changes continued during WWII. This resulted in massive resettlement and emigration movements in the Balkans for more than half a century. [http://www.archives.government.bg/images/karta.jpg](http://www.archives.government.bg/images/karta.jpg), public domain, accessed on 18 July, 2013)
Map 4. Balkan Peninsula: nationalities by language at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century

Map 5. Ethnic map of the Balkans, 1898

Map 5. Ethnic map of the Balkans, end of 19th century showing in green the areas with Bulgarian population. The first wave of immigrants came predominantly from the circled area on the map. Published 1898 in Historie et Geographie, Atlas General Vidal-Lablache, Librarie Armand Colin, Paris (public domain).

Map 6. The Bulgarian Exarchate in pink, 1870 (before the liberation of the country). With a Sultan’s decree the former Bulgarian Church was restored to the borders at the moment when Ottoman Empire conquered the Bulgarian state (14th century), thus releasing it from Greek supremacy. The Greek clergy and Greek language liturgy were replaced with Bulgarian. (Ishirkov, A, Vasil N. Zlatarski, and Dimităr K. Rizov, 1917). Public domain.
Map 7. Dispora Macodono-Bulgarian and Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox churches in Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area (GTA)

Map 7. Two of the churches, Sts. Cyril and Methody and St. George, are situated at the heart of downtown Toronto, Holy Trinity is in proximity, while St. Dimitar is in the suburbs.
Figures

Figure 1. Interior organization of space in an Eastern Orthodox Christian church.

![Diagram of Eastern Orthodox Christian church interior](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Orthodox-Church-interior.jpg)

Figure 2. The light and sfumato effect in an Eastern Orthodox Church: Arbanasi, Church of the Nativity
Figure 3. Exterior of Sts. Cyril and Methody Eastern Orthodox Macedono-Bulgarian church, Toronto

Figure 3. Sts. Cyril and Methody Church is situated on Dundas Street close to the intersection with Parliament Street, downtown Toronto. (Photo by Nina Kaloforova, used with permission.)
Figure 4. St. George Church is situated on Regent Street, close to the intersection of Dundas Street and Parliament Street, downtown Toronto. (Photo by Nina Kaloferova, used with permission.)
Figure 5. Exterior of Holy Trinity Eastern Orthodox Macedono-Bulgarian Church, Toronto

Figure 5. Holy Trinity Church is situated in proximity to downtown Toronto, close to the intersection of Danforth Avenue and Greenwood Avenue. (Photo by Nina Kalofero, used with permission)
Figure 6. Exterior of St. Dimitar Eastern Orthodox Bulgarian church, Brampton (GTA)

Figure 6. Exterior of St. Dimitar Church, Brampton, Greater Toronto Area. The building is octagonal; while traditional, this is a rarely used architectural design. Used by permission.
Figure 7. Connectedness between sacred and communal spaces: floor plans of the four diaspora churches

Figure 4 The floor plans show how the sanctuaries connect with the community halls: Sts. Cyril and Methody—direct connection between the nave and the hall situated on the same level; St. George and St. Dimitar—stairs from the narthex; Holy Trinity—from the nave through the office area.
Figure 8. The abundance of light suggests spatial connectedness with the outside realm. Here is shown the south part of the “wall of fame:” a collection of canonized historical figures signalling turning points in Bulgarian history from about the 9th century onwards, who have been an intrinsic part of its political, ethnic, and cultural development. (Photo by Nina Kalofeurova, used with permission.)
Figure 9. Due to the octagonal shape the dome functions as a natural centre of the nave, covering the seating area; most of the images usually depicted on the walls or iconostasis now appear on the dome surface. The walls are relatively unadorned, painted in pale yellow which intensifies the daylight. The lack of an apostolic row and the Last Supper on the altar screen is compensated for by the depictions on the dome; upon entering, the unique architectural perspective integrates the images of the dome and the iconostasis. (Photo by Nina Kaloferova, used with permission.)
Figure 10. Confluence of spaces (view from the church hall): children’s Christmas party at Sts Cyril and Methody Church

Figure 10. The buffet is situated in front of the first open nave door, close to the iconostasis. Through it one can see the candelabras with lit candles in front of the iconostasis and a few people praying. The second door between the nave and hall, seen in the picture, is open as well and allows for unobstructed access to the sacred zone. (Photo D. Karaboychev, used with permission.)
Figure 11. Confluence of sacred and communal zones (view from the sacred area): Palm Sunday at Sts. Cyril and Methody

Figure 11. Through the door which is close to the iconostasis can be seen part of the hall; people sit for luncheon around the tables or move between the sacred and secular zones.
Figure 12. “Bulgarianness:” Logos of St. Dimitar Eastern Orthodox Bulgarian Church, Brampton, GTA

Figure 12. Announcement for a celebration of March 3, national day of Bulgaria: location, official representatives from the Canadian and Bulgarian government, entertaining program, and menu. Two logos surround the text. The top logo combines the Bulgarian state coat-of-arms, framed by the church title and a semi-circular inscription: “Around the hearth of the Bulgarian-ness.” The bottom logo uses as a background the national Bulgarian flag; the title of the church is written over the first colour; the same coat-of-arms is positioned in the middle with two pictures of people in folk costumes, and over the third colour is the motto “Let us together retain the Bulgarian-ness.”