

AFTERWORD

Romanian migration to Italy is one of the largest recent international migrations. The historical and linguistic affinities between Italy and Romania are a key reason why Italy has become the number one destination for Romanians. Since the year 2000, over one million Romanians have settled in Italy, making Romanians by far the largest migrant community in the country. Even though the countries do not neighbor each other, in Romania, a sense of shared Latin past is widely known. Romania's accession to the European Union and the Schengen Area in 2007 further accelerated migration. We find several similar historical and contemporary cases in Europe, for example between Ireland and the UK, Finland and Sweden, as well as Ukraine and Poland. Peter Gatrell's *The Unsettling of Europe* (2019) is a wonderful description of the moving European populations, and a useful reminder of how all such movements over time wane, become settled and forgotten. However, as we are now in the third decade of major Romanian settlement in Italy, let us not take a too big leap forward.

Immigrant Christianities: Religious Migration from Romania to Italy is a fine collection of chapters looking at many aspects of newly built Romanian religious lives and infrastructures in Italy. The texts provide much information of Orthodox, Catholic and Pentecostal Romanians experiences, as well as factual information of Romanian Church growth.

Marco Guglielmi's efforts to map, count and analyze the Romanian Christians' settlement in Italy is taking place exactly at the right time. He and his colleagues have been monitoring Romanian Churches already for a longer time, and witnessed the very rapid and extensive creation of a Romanian diasporic ethnoscape in Italy (cf. Appadurai, 1996). The analysis of Romanian lives moving from deterritorialization to the making of home away from home, and to the growth a new generation, provides ample opportunities to observe, learn and in many cases even support the people in question.

The volume's title *Immigrant Christianities* is a conscious choice to underline the formative character of mass migration on the religious practices of immigrants themselves and at times for the society at large. Already Ebaugh and Chafetz's *Religion and New Immigrants* (2000) highlighted the key role of changing religious majority–minority relations to understand the specifics of migrant settlement, but we should not forget that migrants need to recontextualize their own religious practice even in the case of those who enter the religious majority, as it soon becomes obvious that not only language differs, but often many customs as well. A major difference between the USA and Europe is the presence of historical State–Church relations that vary in their main denomination and precise nature between European countries.

The current volume is full of examples that show the whole spectrum of potential changes that often relate to both majority–minority and denominational positions. Guglielmi's Table 2.8 provides a typology of how to approach this diversity of positions, and how it may affect the migrant religious settlement processes. The differences in the opportunity structures between the Romanian Churches and Christian movements are notable. Romanian Catholics can without much difficulty enter local Catholic parishes and benefit from that. The Romanian Greek Catholic Church is also in communion with the Catholic Church that provides it many opportunities. The Romanian Orthodox Church is on positive terms with the Catholic Church, but its position is not as good as that of the Greek Catholic Church. The other Churches and Christian movements are in more precarious position in relation to the majority society and its resources. Guglielmi's work show clearly how important the specific denominational position of immigrant Christians is.

The volume is full great detail and observation, but I was particularly pleased to acquaint myself Adina Hulubaş discussion of Romanian folk beliefs (Chap. 5). Sociologists of religion often forget the long cultural

histories and local variations of people's supernatural beliefs, but luckily Hulubaş can illuminate to us the intermingling of Christianity and local, at times, very old, customs. She has interviewed 54 Romanian emigrants in four different European countries—though primarily in Italy—on what she calls “cosmic Christianity”. For example, the belief in evil eye is widespread, and Hulubaş tells us how Christian prayers and red-colored threads are used in particular ways to protect or to heal. The folkloristic sensitivity allows her to recognize such practices as well as the subtle changes in them that are taking place in a new context. I encourage sociologists to cooperate more across disciplines, as such collaboration is beneficial to all.

The main contribution of the *Immigrant Christianities* is, however, its very focus. This volume shows without a shadow of doubt that Christianity is a major immigrant religion in Europe, even though it has not been that much in focus in comparison to the study of European Islam, for example. Christianity is also not stable, it changes, adapts, finds new creative forms and becomes localized, just like any other migrant religion. For us who research migration and religion, *Immigrant Christianities* is a powerful reminder of the importance of the multiple forms of Christianity among today's migrants. We need more research on the topic.

University of Turku
Turku, Finland

Tuomas Martikainen

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