RESOLVING DISPUTES WITHIN THE PARISH: THE ROLE OF GREEK ORTHODOX PRIESTS AS THIRD PARTIES

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ABSTRACT

RESOLVING DISPUTES WITHIN THE PARISH: THE ROLE OF GREEK
ORTHODOX PRIESTS AS THIRD PARTIES

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Third party intervention, as a process intended to facilitate the resolution of disputes between two or more parties, does not appear in a vacuum. Rather, as any reaction to conflict occurrence and any perception of conflict and conflict behavior, is widely affected by a given cultural system, within which both the disputants and the third party live and act. The aim of this exploratory research was to reveal the role of Greek Orthodox priests as third parties in disputes involving members of Christian religious communities. The focus of the study was both on the process and on the outcome of this type of interventions. In an effort to achieve this task, fourteen priests from different cities and villages of Northern Greece were interviewed, answering both a series of open-ended questions and narrating intervention cases, which they most vividly remembered.

Firstly, this thesis provides an overview of the overall process by presenting priests' answers to a series of questions such as: why do Christians seek their intervention? What types of disputes are brought to them? Who

initiates the process? What are the techniques that priests use during the process? Secondly, an effort was made to reveal the factors that exert an influence on the behavior of the third parties. Finally, a series of determinants of the intervention outcomes were revealed and discussed, as well.

Throughout the analysis of the findings it was shown that priests, as important figures of a continuing and common network and being perceived as representatives of God on Earth, enjoy the trust and respect of the parties involved in interpersonal disputes. Central, both for the process and for the outcome, is the emphasis given by priests during the intervention on the inspiration of love between the disputants. Moreover, it was revealed that a) the nature of the dispute and b) the relationship between the parties and the mediator, do constitute determinants of mediation strategies in the context concerned, whereas the outcome of the intervention is influenced by a) the relationship between the disputants and the third party, b) the strategy employed by the third party, and c) the context of mediation. Finally, it was shown that of central importance is the existence of a Confessor-Confessant relationship between the priest and the Christians involved in disputes; a relationship with various implications, both for disputants' and for the third party's behavior, as well as for the outcome of the intervention.

ÖZET

KILISEYE MENSUP CEMAATLER ARASINDA ÇATIŞMALARIN ÇÖZÜMÜ:
YUNAN ORTODOKS PAPAZLARININ ÜÇÜNCÜ TARAF OLARAK ROLÜ

Athanasios Gatsias

İki veya daha fazla taraf arasında olan çatışmaların çözümünü kolaylaştırmayı amaçlayan üçüncü taraf müdahalesi rasgele ortaya çıkmıyor. Uyuşmazlık ve uyuşmazlık davranışı anlayışı ve uyuşmazlık oluşuna herhangi bir tepki gibi üçüncü taraf müdahalesi de çatışmacıların ve üçüncü tarafın içinde yaşadığı ve hareket ettiği belirli bir kültürel sistemden geniş çapta etkilenmektedir. Bu keşif niteliğindeki araştırmanın amacı Yunan Ortodoks papazlarının Hıristiyan dini cemaat üyelerini içeren çatışmalardaki üçüncü taraf türünden rolünü ortaya çıkarmaktı. Bu tür müdahalelerin hem süreçleri hem de sonuçları bu çalışmanın odak noktası olmuştur. Bu görevi yerine getirmek için Kuzey Yunanistan'ın farklı şehir ve köylerinden on dört papazla

açık uçlu soru dizilerine cevap verme ve en iyi hatırladıkları müdahale olaylarını anlatma yoluyla röportajlar yapıldı.

İlk olarak, bu tez papazların "Neden Hıristiyanlar onların müdahalelerini bekliyor? Onlardan hangi tarzda uyuşmazlıkları çözümlemeleri istenmiştir? Süreci kim başlatıyor? Çözüm sürecinde papazlar hangi teknikleri kullanmaktalar?" gibi soru dizilerine verdiği cevaplardan yola çıkarak tüm sürecin genel bir açıklamasını yapmaktadır. İkinci olarak, üçüncü tarafların davranışlarını etkileyen faktörleri ortaya çıkarmak için gayret gösterilmiştir. Son olarak da, müdahale sonuçlarının belirleyici öğeleri ifşa edilerek tartışılmıştır.

Bulguların analizi sürekli ve ortak bir şebekenin önemli figüranları olan ve Tanrı'nın yeryüzündeki temsilcileri olarak algılanan papazların kişilerarası çatışmalardaki tarafların güven ve saygınlığını kazanmış olduklarını gösteriyor. Papazlar tarafından müdahale zamanı süreç ve sonucun her ikisi için de ortak noktanın taraflar arasında sevgi esinin olması vurgulanmıştır. Ayrıca, a) uyuşmazlık niteliğinin ve b) taraflar ve arabulucu arasındaki ilişkinin ilgili bağlamda arabuluculuk stratejilerinin belirleyici öğelerini oluşturduğu, nitekim a) tartışmacılar ve üçüncü taraf arasındaki ilişkinin, b) üçüncü tarafın kullandığı stratejinin ve c) arabuluculuk bağlamının müdahale sürecini etkilediği ortaya çıkarılmıştır. Son olarak, bu bağlamda en önemli unsurun papaz ve çatışmaya karışan Hıristiyanlar arasında hem çatışmacıların ve üçüncü tarafın davranışları için, hem de müdahalenin sonucu için farklı çıkarımları olan "günah çıkartan-günahı çıkarılan" ilişkisinin mevcutluğu olduğu gösterilmiştir.

To Thomai,

who is ready to start an adventurous voyage with me

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<u>INTRODUCTION</u>

Over the last decades many steps have been taken to the systematic study and analysis of third party intervention in disputes, which facilitates resolution of conflicts between two or more parties. Third party intervention in several types and forms has been practiced around the world since the beginning of recorded history, as conflict, since the Biblical murder of Abel by his brother Cain, seems to be present at different levels (intrapersonal, interpersonal, inter-communal, international) of all human societies. Its historical and present-day applications vary, depending, *inter alia*, on the type of the conflict, the parties involved and the social and cultural context, within which conflict takes place. It is an indisputable reality that culture exercises great influence on the development of perceptions, behavior and expectations, as it provides the system of meanings to individuals, who live together and interact with each other. Socio-cultural norms, values and expectations constitute key determinants for the way a society approaches conflict, as well as for the processes considered acceptable/desirable for its resolution. Thus, if one wishes to develop a comprehensive understanding of conflict perceptions and behaviors within a society, it is critical to attend to the indigenous cultural understanding of `being` and `action` (Avruch & Black, 1993).

Religion, which provides an analytical interpretation of the world and the place of human beings in it, is considered an indispensable part and one of the central aspects of culture. Historically, it has constituted the cornerstone upon which many human societies have developed their structures and norms. Consequently, religion provides a series of accounts on the ways a society develops perceptions of conflict, conflict behavior, and accepted/ preferable mechanisms of its resolution. Thus, it is not uncommon for those mechanisms

to be associated with religious rituals and practices, usually under the guidance and with the involvement of religious figures such as priests, rabbis, ulama[1] and ministers, depending on what the role of the latter within the religious community is perceived to be. These individuals act as Social Network Mediators -third parties, who are asked to intervene, because they enjoy the respect and trust of the parties involved in a dispute, and with whom the disputants have an ongoing relationship.

In the context of Greek Orthodox religious communities (parishes) this role is often undertaken by priests. In this environment, perceptions on, and responses to conflict occurrence are, up to a large extent, influenced by Christian values and norms. Faithfuls commonly bring their disputes before priests, asking for their advice or their direct intervention as third parties. During the process, the given system of values and norms interact with a series of other factors, such as the nature of the dispute, the characteristics of the parties and the mediator's behavior, and influence both the process and the outcome of the intervention examined.

This study aims to provide an analysis of the third party intervention process conducted by Orthodox Christian priests in disputes involving members of the religious communities. An effort is made to address the following questions: *Why are priests requested to intervene as third parties in disputes? What types of disputes are brought to them? What is their role as third parties during the process? What are the techniques they use and strategies they employ as third parties? What is defined as the desirable outcome of the intervention?* Therefore, the objective of this study is to shed light both on the process and on the outcome of the third party intervention in the context examined. The main intention is to reveal in which ways cultural/ religious systems of values and norms exert an impact on the behavior of the

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[1] Islamic scholars "that keep harmony and concordance of Islamic societies, congruence with Islamic rules and principles" (Köse, 2002: 11).

disputants and the mediator, as well as on the development of perceptions on the expected/ desirable outcome.

In the first chapter a review of the literature concerning the main concepts, which are considered critical for the understanding of this study, will be presented. Issues related to the impact of socio-cultural environment on the development of perceptions on conflict and conflict behavior, are examined. Here, special mention is made on the importance of religion, as a fundamental aspect of culture and human identity. Moreover, a series of concepts related to the process and outcome of mediation, are reviewed. Finally, the role of priest in Greek orthodox communities and the importance of `love` and `forgiveness`, within the Christian value system are analyzed.

In the second chapter methodological issues of the present study are explored. Firstly, the research question is presented. The methodology used for the collection of the data, as well as the research strategy for the analysis of the data are discussed, in an effort to explain how the intended task was accomplished.

Chapter four is divided into two parts. The first section, descriptive in nature, provides an overview of key-aspects of the third party intervention process in the examined context. The second, analytical part constitutes an effort to discover regularities occurring during the process. The focus is on the determinants of the choice of mediator's strategy, as well as on the determinants of the outcomes of the intervention.

Finally, after the analysis of the data, in the fifth chapter concluding remarks and further comments on the findings are made.

<center>**CHAPTER 1.**</center>

<center>**LITERATURE REVIEW**</center>

1.1. Socio-cultural Environment, Conflict & Mechanisms of its Resolution

Undoubtedly, culture constitutes a significant element of human identity, a fundamental feature of being human, as "humans, unlike (many but not all) animals, are cultural beings" (De Waal, as cited in Inglis, 2005: 4). Much time and effort have been spent on defining culture and analyzing its characteristics and its importance for human societies. For Inglis (2005) no society can exist without its members sharing certain "ideas, values, beliefs and ways of thinking. Another way of saying that is that every society is in part made up of, runs on the basis of, and requires `culture`" (p:5). Similarly, Augsburger (1992) argues that "cultures embody the authenticity and unique purposes of each community. Each culture seeks to express a people's values, sensitivity and spirituality" (p:7). Furthermore, Inglis (2005) offers the most general aspects of culture as following:

1. Culture comprises the patterns of ideas, values and beliefs common to a particular group of people, their `characteristic` way of thinking and feeling.
2. The culture of one group differentiates it from other groups, each of which has its `own` culture
3. Culture contains meanings

<center>4</center>

4. The ideas, values and beliefs of a group are profoundly implicated in motivating people to act in certain ways.

5. The ideas, values and beliefs of a group are embodied in symbols and artefacts

6. Culture is learned

7. Culture is arbitrary

8. Culture and forms of social power are intimately bound up with each other.

In an effort to define and describe the mechanism of its creation or cultivation Simmel refers to culture as the "formed intentional subjectivity that emerges out of human life and its interactions and is created by human beings as objectified contents or entities in language, religion, normative orders, legal systems, traditions, artistic artifacts and so on" (as cited in Frisby & Featherstone (eds.), 1997: 5). On its turn, culture exercises great influence on the development of social life, as it offers the meaning systems within which individuals interact with each other and build their shared identity and community. It provides the certain "patterns of traditions, beliefs, values, norms and symbols that are passed on from one generation to the next and are shared to varying degrees by interacting members of a community" (Ting Toomey & Oetzel, 2001: 9).

Furthermore, it is the cultural norms that form individual's sense of normality and create the collective expectations of what is a proper or improper behavior under given circumstances: "humans all across the world do the same kinds of things –eat, sleep, defecate, make love and so on. But, the specific ways in which they do those things, and the manners in which they think about those things, vary from one society to another and from one cultural context to another" (Inglis, 2005: 5). Edward Hall (1989) using a metaphor argues that one of the functions of culture is "to provide a highly selective screen between man and the outside world. In its many forms,

culture therefore designates what we pay attention to and what we ignore" (p: 85)

According to Avruch & Black (1993) if one wishes to understand conflict behavior within a society, it is both useful and important to attend to the indigenous understandings of being and action, which people use in the production and interpretation of social action. "The sets of understandings about conflict held by the people involved in a dispute are crucially important" (1993: 8). For Mayer & Boness (2004), "conflicts can be observed as a universal feature of our conditio humana and they interconnect all persons. How persons in different cultural contexts express and reveal conflicts, however, and what kind of conflict resolution they prefer, must be considered in their specific cultures" (p: 15). This is because different societies may have formed different conceptions of even the most universal aspects of human life (Hsien Chin Hu, 2001). Fry and Fry (1997) argue that these conceptions are being reproduced through socialization and social learning processes, which, finally, shape individual's behavior toward conflict. Through these processes "individuals acquire views as to what the world is like, adopt a particular set of values and gain an understanding of the cultural meaning of events and actions" (Fry & Fry, 1997:15). Since disputes are, up to an extend, cultural events, they evolve within a framework of rules and values about what is worth fighting for (honor? pride? dignity? money?), what is the normal or moral way to fight –what is the *process* to be followed for the resolution of conflict (violent vs. peaceful means, reference to an authority?), what kinds of wrongs warrant action, and what kinds of remedies are acceptable (restitution? blood-money? apology-forgiveness?) (Ross, 1997, Merry & Silbey as cited in Grillo 2001: 84).

Furthermore, the process by which a society resolves conflict is closely related to its social structure and characteristics (Grillo 2001, 85). Interesting at this point is Triandis (1990) classification of societies into collectivist and individualist, according to the importance/ priority each society gives to

individual's or group's interests, social norms or individual preferences and decisions, and the unit that serves as point of reference (individual vs. group). Moreover, following Edward T. Hall's classification of cultures into High Context Communication and Low Context Communication cultures, Stella Ting Toomey (1985) argues that the cultural differences presented in these two categories have serious implications for conflict and the conflict resolution processes that a society follows, as communication is one of the most important aspects of these processes. "Casting this conceptual framework (HCC vs. LCC) in analyzing conflict and culture, conflict interaction takes on different meanings and interpretations depending on whether the conflict has occurred in the LC system or the HC system" (Ting Toomey, 1985: 46). However, although this might be a helpful categorization, it is true that can be considered as simplistic.

For Fry and Fry socialization process is crucial here too, as "attitudes and ideas about conflict and how to deal with it, as well as patterns of behavior, begin early in life and tend to persist into adulthood" (1997: 15). Finally, Gadlin (1994) argues that agreement and disagreement, conflict and cooperation are all dependent upon and given meaning by the culture within which they occur; similarly, expectations of the mediator also differ for different groups. More specifically, in environments, where forgiveness lies at the core of the value system, the *outcome* of the intervention is expected to have the form of apology-forgiveness, as the latter is the value which the third party uses as a reference point. Similarly, in systems where restorative justice is central the outcome will possibly have the form of restitution.

It could be said that dispute resolution has deep roots in human history and has long played an important role in many cultures across the globe. It is, also, true that various "versions" of such mechanisms has been formed within the specific context of different cultures. The *"ho'oponopono"* ("set things right") of Hawaiian islanders (Meyer, 1995), the Jewish *Bitzua* (mediation) (Barrett, 2004), the *Musalaha* (reconciliation) and tahkim (arbitration) in

Islam (Barrett, 2004, Moussalli, 1997), the *Becharaa* of Semai tribe, the *Divano* and *kris* that Gypsies use for settling disputes (Weyrauch & Bell, 2001, Gronfors, 1997), are all dispute resolution mechanisms, developed by traditional societies to preserve harmony among their members, recognizing the benefits of peacefully settling every-day life disagreements. William Zartman (2000), providing an overview of studies on traditional practices used by African societies to deal with conflict, lists a plethora of them: the Nigerian Igbo's village tribunals (Uwazie, 2000), the *benyaogba ukpikator* (a type of mediation) of Buem tribe of Ghana-Tongo borders (Mensah, 2000), the services of *du nku* or *agbadjigbeto* (the community eye) of Ouachi people in Ghana, Tongo and Benin (Kouassi, 2000), the *arara* process (reconciliation) conducted by the *jarsa biya* (elders of the community) of the Oromo people in South-eastern Africa (Tuso, 2000), the *ajaweed* (tribal leaders acting as mediators) in Sudan (Deng, 2000) are only some of the examples of indigenous mechanisms of conflict resolution in Africa. Finally, Paul E. Salem (1993) and Mohammed Abu-Nimer (1996) provide analyses of conflict resolution approaches from non-western, middle-eastern perspectives. In all the above examples of traditional mechanisms of dispute resolution different values (forgiveness, justice, harmony etc) are emphasized as reference points both during the process and as desirable outcomes of the intervention.

1.2 Religion & Conflict

Undoubtedly, one of the central aspects of culture and important source of values is religion. Many scholars have theorized about religion, providing a series of definitions, as well as describing its general characteristics and functions. For C. Geertz "religion is a system of symbols which acts to establish powerful, pervasive, and long-standing moods and motivations in men by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic" (as cited in Bowie, 2000: 23). Furthermore, Yandel (1999) offers a definition that provides a more clear

account of the social implications of religion as a system. For him "a religion is a conceptual system that provides an interpretation of the world and the place of human beings in it, bases an account on how life should be lived given that interpretation, and expresses this interpretation and lifestyle in a set of rituals, institutions and practices", and he goes on by underlining that "this is a functional definition; it views religions as providing persons with accounts of their world and their place in it –interpretations that are relevant to day-to-day living and that are given life in institutions, practices and rituals. It recognizes the importance of religious activities" (1999: 16). Through these accounts/interpretations of the world we live in, religion diagnoses the problems/ `illnesses` we suffer from and provides the proffered cure, so as to allow us attain salvation or enlightenment. In that respect, "religious faith is at its core an acceptance of the diagnosis and cure proposed by some religious tradition accompanied by an attempt to live in the light of that tradition's teachings" (Yandel, 1999: 343). It is this mechanism that sets religion as the cornerstone upon which many societies have developed their social structures and norms. Important here is the role of religious practices which, on their turn "invoke religious ideas, shape emotions, and create social contexts that perform social functions" (Bowen, 1998, p: 3).

Consequently, religion provides numerous implications for the ways a society approaches conflict, as well as for the mechanisms used for its resolution. Many scholars in the field of CR have examined the influence of religion both in a society's behavior towards conflict and its resolution processes. Marc Gopin (2001) offers examples of the interplay between religion and view of conflict in different societies, underlining the central place that forgiveness has in the three `Biblical Religions` (Judaism, Christianity and Islam). "Believing in the forgiveness is a sine qua non of believing in the living reality of God. This makes its role as a conflict resolution device hard to distinguish, in certain cases, from its role as a means of teaching or spreading the faith" (Gopin, 2001:88). Abu-Nimer (1996), Moussalli (1997) and Köse (2002) make reference to the importance of

Islamic values and principles in resolving conflicts within Muslim communities. Geertz (1973) provides an interesting comparison between Morocco and Indonesia, two countries with Muslim population: although the religion is shared, the mechanisms of resolving conflict differ as different views and aspects of religion are emphasized in each country (uncompromised rigorism in Morocco and absorbency in Indonesia).

Geertz continues by arguing that religion consists of a *worldview* and an *ethos* that combines and reinforces each other: worldview sets a system of beliefs about what is real, what is good, what gods exist, whereas ethos provides a set of moral values and emotions, which guide people in their life (as cited in Pals (ed), 1996: 255). Both the above are really important for the part of social life examined in this study: the attitude of a society towards conflict occurrence and the mechanisms used for resolving conflicts.

Furthermore, Carol Greenhouse (1986) and Laura Nader (1990) examine how Christian beliefs and values, by putting an emphasis on social harmony, play an important role in reducing the rate of conflict in Christian communities they examine –not always for good as they lead to conflict avoidance –an imposition of Harmony ideology. Similarly, Confucian concept of harmony affects the behavior toward conflict and CR mechanisms within Confucian societies (Leung, Koch & Lu, 2002). For some theorists harmony, as a cultural or religious value, equals to conflict avoidance in order to maintain smooth interpersonal relationships between the members of a community (Chen & Chung, 1994, Chen & Pan, 1993 as cited in Leung et al, 2002). These approaches "see conflict as dysfunctional and threatening to the social order, a phenomenon to be diffused" (Nader, 1998). Carol Greenhouse argues that sometimes "harmony has a somewhat negative cast, in that its meaning has more to do with the silencing of disputes than with the absence of disagreement" (1986: 197). All the above are clear examples on how religious/ cultural norms shape, or at least affect the socially acceptable responses to conflict occurrence.

1.3. Third Party Intervention

Third party intervention in conflict, particular of the non-binding, non-coercive character is in many ways as old as conflict itself (Bercovitch & Houston, 1996:11). According to Rubin (1981) third party is an individual (sic) who is in some way external to a dispute between two other parties, and who interposes between them. The role and involvement of a third party are thus typically peripheral to the primary relationship. When it becomes centrally involved in the relationship it transforms a dyad into a triad.

Keashly & Fisher (1996) offer a taxonomy of third party intervention types as following: a) *conciliation* –a trusted third party provides an informal communication channel between the disputants in order to identify the major issues, lower the tension and encourage them to move toward direct interaction, b) *consultation* –a skilled and knowledgeable third party attempts to facilitate creative problem solving through communication and analysis of the conflict, c) *pure mediation* –a skilled and experienced third party intervenes in order to facilitate a negotiated settlement to the dispute, d) *power mediation* –also includes the use of leverage or coercion in the forms of rewards or punishment, e) *arbitration* –a legitimate and authoritative third party provides to the parties a binding judgment, and f) *peacekeeping* –the third party provides military personnel to supervise and monitor a ceasefire between the disputants.

Moreover, Laue and Cormick (as cited in Laue, 1981) have identified five basic roles of interveners in conflict situations: Activist, Advocate, Mediator, Researcher and Enforcer. Rubin (1981) offers a list of third party roles based on dualistic oppositions/ distinctions: formal vs. informal, individual vs. representative, invited vs. non-invited, impartial vs. partial, advisory vs. directive, inter-individual vs. intra-group and inter-group, content oriented vs. process oriented, conflict-preventing vs. conflict-managing vs.

conflict-escalating, permanent vs. temporary and relationship-facilitating vs. relationship inhibitory roles.

1.3.1. Mediation

As mentioned above, one type of third party intervention is mediation. Mediation is assistance to two or more interacting parties by third parties who usually have no authority to impose an outcome (Wall, Stark & Standifer, 2001: 370). For Bercovitch, mediation is "a reactive process of conflict management whereby parties seek the assistance of, or accept an offer for help from, an individual, group or organization to change their behavior, settle their conflict or resolve their problem without resorting to physical force or invoking the authority of the law" (1996: 13). C. Moore defines mediation as "the intervention in a negotiation or a conflict of an acceptable third party who has limited or no authoritative decision-making power but who assists the involved parties in voluntarily reaching a mutually acceptable settlement of issues in dispute" (1996: 15). Wall et al. argue that the occurrence of mediation is dependent upon two separate processes: "first the interacting/ disputing parties must request or permit a third party to mediate; second, the third party must agree to mediate" (2001: 371). In general, there are many definitions of mediation in CR literature, each of which focuses on different aspect of the process.

Furthermore, Paffenholz (2001), provides a paradigm of different types of mediation: a) provision of good offices, b) facilitation, c) consultation, d) negotiation, e) mediation (a more specific/ special term for mediation used by Paffenholz within the mediation range), f) power mediation, and g) non-official mediation. Boulle & Nesic (2001) make a distinction between four types of mediation: a) settlement mediation where the objective is to "encourage incremental bargaining towards compromise, at a `central` point between the parties' positional demands" (p: 28), b) facilitative mediation, where the mediator attempts to "avoid positions and

negotiate in terms of parties' underlying needs and interests instead of legal entitlements" (p: 28), c) therapeutic mediation, where the goal is to "deal with underlining causes of the parties' problem, with a view to improving their relationship as a basis for resolution of the dispute" (p: 28), and d) evaluative mediation, where the objective of the process is to "reach a settlement according to the legal rights and entitlements of the parties and within the anticipated range of court outcome" (p: 28).

Finally, C. Moore (1996) makes a distinction between three broad types of mediators: a) authoritative mediators, b) independent mediators and c) social network mediators. In the last type are included individuals who are sought because they are connected to the disputants, and they are generally part of a continuing and common social network. Such mediators may be, among others, respected community leaders, elders or religious figures. The common characteristic of all the above is that they enjoy respect, trust and recognition from the members of their community, and they are thought to be capable of maintaining harmony between the parties and within their social network. More analytically, as given by Moore (1996), social network mediators are characterized by: a) prior and expected relationship with the parties, b) they are not necessarily impartial, but rather they are perceived as fair, c) they have as a primary concern to promote stable long-term relationship between the parties, d) they are often involved in the implementation, e) they keep relationship with the parties after their intervention, and f) they use their personal influence to promote adherence to agreement. Important here is that the third party enjoys, what Wehr and Lederach (1991) define as *Confianza*. This is the trust which the mediator enjoys by the parties and derives from the ongoing personal relationship between the disputants and the third party before, during and after the intervention.

As it is easily understood important here is the influence that social norms and values exert (p: 42). In accordance with this, Wall et al (2001)

argue that literature indicates that there are two factors –norms and expected outcomes- which affect the occurrence of mediation. This means that both the request made to a third party and the acceptance by the third party to mediate are shaped by norms and expected benefits.

1.3.2. Determinants of Mediation

At this point, it would be both interesting and useful to take a closer look at the mediation process and observe what literature suggests about those factors, which exert, in one way or another, an impact on the process and the outcome of mediation. C. Moore provides a list of the most important variables which influence the task a mediator has to perform:

1. "the level of conflict development and the timing of a mediator's entry
2. the capability of negotiators to resolve their own dispute
3. the power balance of the disputants and the mediator's role as an equalizer and agent of empowerment
4. the negotiation procedures used by the parties
5. the complexity of the issues negotiated
6. the role and the task of the mediator as defined jointly by the parties and the intervener" (1996: 65).

Moreover, J. Bercovitch and J. Lamare (1993) in their article "The Process of International Mediation: An Analysis of the Determinants of Successful and Unsuccessful Mediation", after analyzing a data set on international disputes, they examine a series of aspects of mediation in international context. It could be argued that the framework they provide is more systematic. The authors argue that there are four clusters of factors that affect mediation: a) factors concerning the dispute itself (number and nature of issues, intensity, duration and timing of intervention), b) factors concerning the parties in dispute (identity, power relations, previous relationship), c) factors pertaining to the mediator (identity, previous relationship with the parties), and d) factors pertaining to mediation behavior (nature of mediation

strategy). Furthermore, they assert that the first two factors are related to the context of the dispute, whereas the third and the fourth concern the process of mediation.

1.3.3. Elaboration on Strategies -Approaches

As mentioned in the previous section one of the factors, which exert an impact on the mediation process is the strategy that the third party adopts. It would be useful at this point to examine how a mediation strategy is defined in CR literature, as well as which factors affect the choice of one strategy over another. For Bercovitch and Wells (1993) the "concept of strategy is employed in the context of decisions about means and ends. …it refers to a process of planning to deploy available means to achieve ends or objectives" (p: 4). Similarly, Kolb (as cited in Bercovitch & Wells, 1993: 4) argues that a strategy constitutes a plan, which a third party adopts in order to resolve a dispute; "it is the way the mediator intends to manage the case, the parties and the issues" (p: 5). Thus, after making a diagnosis of the ad hoc characteristics in a dispute, the third party chooses the proper strategy to be employed. Usually, mediators have a repertory of strategies, among which they adopt the one that fits better the dispute at hand. Bercovitch & Houston (1996) emphasize this "fundamental importance of matching mediation behaviors to the right type of conflict" (p: 198). This is because mediation takes place "within a system that is composed of the disputing parties, their relationship, the mediator, a number of concerned audiences or constituencies, and other factors such as societal norms, political institutions, and economic pressures" (Bercovitch, 1992: 18). Additionally, literature suggests that a strategy, as a part of the mediator's behavior, should not be viewed as a series of independent actions, but rather as a general plan/ approach to a dispute.

In relation to the question of what is the range of strategies that a third party can choose, a number of intervention strategies classifications can be

found in CR literature. Lewicki and Sheppard (1985) make a distinction between three dominant styles of intervention:

- Inquisitorial intervention, which is characterized by very active control of the dispute process and its outcome (high process & outcome control)
- Adversarial intervention, in which the third party decides how the conflict is to be resolved and enforces the decision if necessary. However, the third party does not try to actively control the process (high outcome control, low process control)
- Providing impetus, which is characterized by an initial `feeling out` of the parties to determine the source of their dispute, and then a mandate from the third party that strong punishment will be forthcoming if the parties don't solve the problem themselves." (low process & outcome control) (1985: 51).
- Finally they use the term `mediation` to describe a style of intervention, which is characterized by low control over the outcome, but high control on the process; a `facilitate interaction in order to help the parties come to their own solution (1985: 61)

Furthermore, Bercovitch and Houston (1996) provide a threefold classification of mediator approaches: a) communication-facilitation strategies, where the mediator facilitates the communication between the parties, adopting a rather passive role, b) procedural strategies, where the third party exerts control over the process and environment of mediation and c) directive strategies, in which the mediator affects the content and the substance of the mediation process. Similarly Touval and Zartman (1985) classify mediation strategies as: a) communication-facilitation strategies, b) Procedural/Formulation strategies, and c) Directive/Manipulation strategies (see Table 1). This classification will be used later in this study in an effort to

describe the strategies employed by the priests during the intervention process.

Table 1: Touval & Zartman's (1985) Taxonomy of Third-Party Behavioral Tactics-Strategies

Communication-Facilitation Strategies	Procedural-Formulation Strategies
1. Make contact with parties	1. Choose meetings site
2. Gain the trust and confidence of the parties	2. Control pace and formality of meeting
3. Arrange for interactions btw the parties	3. Control physical environment
4. Identify issues and interests	4. Establish protocol
5. Clarify situation	5. Suggest procedures
6. Avoid taking sides	6. Highlight common interests
7. Develop a rapport with parties	7. Reduce tensions
8. Supply missing information	8. Control timing
9. Develop a framework for understanding	9. Deal with simple issues first
10. Encourage meaningful communication	10. Structure agenda
11. Offer positive evaluation	11. Keep parties at the table
12. Allow the interests of all parties to be discussed	12. Help parties save face
	13. Keep process focused on issues

Directive-Manipulation Strategies	
1. Change parties' expectations	2. Take responsibility for concessions
3. Make substantive suggestions & proposals	4. Make parties aware of costs of non-agreement
5. Supply and filter information	6. Suggest concessions parties can make
7. Help negotiators to undo a commitment	8. Reward party concessions
9. Help device a framework for acceptable outcome	10. Change expectations
11. Press the parties to show flexibility	12. Promise resources or threaten withdrawal
13. Offer to verify compliance with agreement	

Whereas the term strategy refers to a general third party attitude within a conflict system, mediator's behavior can be, also, described in terms of specific tactics, used during the process. The term tactic refers to specific actions that a mediator takes during the process in order to stimulate attitudinal changes of the disputing parties. "Mediation tactics refer to actual mediator behavior, the practical measures, techniques, and instruments that are used in the pursuit of mediation objectives" (Bercovitch & Wells, 1993: 5). Simply put by Kolb (1983, as cited in Bercovitch & Wells, 1993: 5) tactics are the behavioral specifics of a strategy. It is important here to note that the terms `tactic` and `technique` are used in the literature interchangeably. During the process of mediation the various tactics "are wielded against: a) the disputants themselves, b) the disputants' relationship, and c) the disputants' relationship with others" (Wall et all, 2001: 375).

Dean Pruitt (as cited in Köse, 2002) provides a classification of the techniques used in western cultural context. However, this taxonomy is not totally applicable in indigenous cultural settings, where the context is not similar to this, in which this taxonomy has been developed. For that reason, James Wall (Wall & Callister, 1997, 1999), after conducting a series of studies in different non-western communities, modified this taxonomy and offered a classification of 40 mediator techniques in total, which reflect mediation practices in indigenous cultural settings (see Table 2, p: 14).

Table 2: Wall & Callister's (1999) taxonomy of third party techniques

Technique	Description
1. **Meet separately**	*Mediator meets with each disputant separately*
2. **Listen to disputant's side**	*Mediator has disputants state their points*
3. **Argue for concession**	*Mediator argues for or proposes a specific concession or agreement point and negotiates a compromise*
4. **Put disputants together**	*Mediator brings the disputants together for a meeting that otherwise would not take place*

5. Gather information	*Mediator collects or asks for information from the disputants or others and does research to obtain info*
6. Gather information from 3rd party	*Information, opinion and advise obtained from 3rd party*
7. Educate	*Mediator educates, persuades, or advises one disputant as to how s/he should think and act*
8. Meet with 3rd party present	*Mediator brings additional third disputants to a meeting*
9. Have 3rd party assist	*Mediator offers or gets 3rd party's assistance for the disputants or the mediator*
10. State other's point of view	*Mediator presents or argues the other disputant's point of view and asks a disputant to see the other's point of view*
11. Moral	*Mediator points out a specific moral obligation or societal norm*
12. Meet together with disputants	*Mediator meets together with disputants and requires disputants to state other's point of view: mediator also has disputant state his/her point of view to the other*
13. Apologize	*Mediator has one disputant apologize or acknowledge his/her fault*
14. Mediator assists	*Mediator personally offers or gives assistance and takes a specific action*
15. Obtain forgiveness	*Mediator asks one disputant to tolerate or forgive the other*
16. Relax	*Mediator makes specific statements to calm the disputants*
17. Have 3rd party educate	*Mediator has a third party educate, persuade or advise one or both disputants on how they should act or think*
18. Have 3rd party argue for concessions	*Mediator has a third party argue for or propose a specific concession or agreement*
19. Pray	*Mediator prays alone or with one or both disputants*
20. Break time	*Mediator stops the quarreling and has disputants rest*
21. Mediator's data	*Mediator provides objective data about the dispute or the environment*
22. Threat	*Any threat from the mediator*
23. Note cost to 3rd party	*Mediator points out costs of dispute to others, cites an obligation not to dispute (includes noting benefits of agreement to others)*
24. Get grasp of situation	*Mediator grasps the cause (analyses situation)*
25. Criticize	*Mediator criticizes a disputant's person*

	attitude & behavior or uses a specific label
26. Call for empathy	*Mediator enhances the other disputant or calls for respect of the other; mediator puts a positive face on the other*
27. Cite dependency	*Mediator expresses similarities or interdependence in disputant's goals, fates, and needs (includes mentioning personal costs of disagreement and benefit of agreement)*
28. Have drink with disputants	*Mediator has a drink with disputants prior to agreement*
29. Formalization	*Mediator caps the agreement with techniques other than a drink*
30. Provide logical explanation	*Mediator backs up any technique with logic*
31. Drink; capstone	*Mediator has drink with disputants to cap the agreement*
32. Analyze the disputants	*Mediator analyzes the disputants and grasps each disputant's characteristics*
33. Example	*Mediator cites example or similar case*
34. Praise disputants	*Mediator praises the disputant who is being addressed*
35. Reconcile	*Mediator negotiates a general compromise*
36. Quote law or rule	*Mediator quotes a specific law or rule that is relevant to the dispute*
37. Written agreement	*Mediator has disputants sign a quasi-legal written agreement governing their future behavior*
38. Being vague	*Mediator is intentionally vague when describing the situation or asking for concessions*
39. Have 3rd party criticize	*Mediator has a 3rd party criticize a disputant's person, attitude or behavior*
40. Separate disputants	*Mediator separates the disputants*

It is crucial to mention here, that a mediator's behavior during the process is directly depended on the resources that can be brought into the conflict system. "In the context of a voluntary relationship such as mediation, these resources may take the form of opportunities, acts and objects that can be used to affect a change in the behavior or perceptions of the disputing parties…..these resources depend upon the nature of the mediator and the social context of mediation….and affect both mediation strategy and the outcomes of the process" (Bercovitch & Houston, 1996: 19). This ability/

power to move the disputants from their initial positions and perceptions is referred to CR literature as `leverage` it is dependent on the mediator's identity, rank, status, or position (Bercovitch & Houston, 2000).

1.3.4. Determinants of Mediator' Strategy

As previously mentioned the choice of a mediation strategy is not randomly made, but rather depends on a series of contextual factors characterizing the conflict system. Usually, mediators "make a rational cost-benefit appraisal of the prevailing conditions in the conflict and adopt a strategy accordingly" (Bercovitch & Wells, 1993: 21). According to Wall et al. (2001) literature suggests that, in relation to the question of what are those factors influencing the choice of strategy, there are three types of mediator's approach determinants: a) environmental factors (among others culture, the power and status of mediators, time pressure, inter-dependence between the mediator and the dispute), b) mediators' effects (such as training, the acceptance of the rules that govern their practice, mediators' ideology), and c) disputant effects (the nature of disputants' past interaction and their relationship with the mediator). However, the authors propose four further factors that constitute determinants of mediator's approach: a) technique feasibility (mediators use techniques that appear feasible to them), b) the mediator's `cost-then-benefit analysis` of the techniques (compare the prospective costs to expected benefits of a technique), c) the mediator's decision strategy (heuristic Vs. compensatory strategies[2]), and d) the mediator's goals (Wall et al, 2001).

Moreover, Lewicki and Sheppard (1985) conducted a study in order to examine the impact of three contextual factors on the mediation approach a third party adopts. Specifically, they examined whether a) time pressure, b)

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[2] Heuristic strategies: use of minimal information and time, consideration of few alternatives Compensatory strategies: use of extensive amounts of information and time, consideration of a plethora of   alternatives (Wall et al, 2001).

expectation of future relations between the disputants, and c) the range of impact of the settlement on future conflict, influence the extend of control exercised by the third party either on the process (process control) or on the outcome (outcome control) of mediation. Their findings suggest that outcome control "was likely to be used when the third party experienced time pressure, when the disputants were not expected to be working in the future, and when the resolution of the dispute had a broad as opposed to a narrow range of impact" (Lewicki & Sheppard, 1985: 60). This means that all three factors (time pressure, expectation of future relations, and the range of impact of the settlement on future conflict) influence the extent of control the mediator exerts over the outcome. In terms of the mediation process, the second variable (expected future relations) was the only one in clear positive correlation with the extent of control over the process exercised by the third party. The results concerning the two other variables were not clear.

Finally, Bercovitch and Wells (1993) describe mediation as a `contingent behavior` and assert that the choice of strategy in any conflict is affected by: a) the nature of the dispute, b) the nature of the issues, c) the nature of the parties, and d) the identity and rank of the mediator. Also, for Bercovitch and Houston (2000) the type of conflict, the parties' alignment, the mediator's previous relationships with the parties, the mediation environment, and the duration of previous mediation efforts are the most significant factors influencing the choice of communication-facilitation or directive strategies (p: 192).

As can be induced from the above, literature suggests that the main factors affecting the choice of mediator's approach can be grouped into three clusters: a) characteristics of the dispute, b) characteristics of the parties involved, and c) characteristics of the mediator. Later in this study, these three clusters will be used in the analysis of the data, in an effort to define the factors, which one way or another affect the choice of strategy employed by priests during their intervention.

1.3.5. Outcomes of mediation

In general, literature suggests that mediation outcomes are influenced by factors pertaining to both the environment/context of a dispute and the actions and perceptions of the third party (Bercovitch & Wells, 1993). Wall et al. (2001) argue that eight factors determine whether a mediation process results in settlement: "conflict level, type of issue, stage of the conflict, disputants' relative power, mediator's resources, disputants' commitment to mediation, mediator's rank, and visibility of mediation" (p: 384). Furthermore, the authors conclude that, in addition to the above, "any factors that increase the power of the mediation process magnify the effectiveness of the mediation approaches currently being employed" (p: 385), and they argue that among those variables are: a) the formalization of mediation, b) the number of mediators handling the dispute, c) the length of time the mediation has been practiced, d) the size and power of the mediator's constituency, e) the extent of the mediator's network, f) the affability of the mediator, g) the perceived spiritual support of the mediator, h) and the absence of other dispute resolution mechanisms. For Whiting (as cited in Kelly, 1996) the relationship of the parties involved and the number of issues are of central importance for the outcome, as any mediation process that involves disputants with ongoing relationship, as well as multiple issue to resolve, "is more predictive of resolution than mediation involving single issue, non-related disputants" (p: 382).

A more elaborated analysis is provided by M. Kleiboer (1996), who distinguishes between four clusters of factors affecting mediation outcomes-at international level: a) characteristics of the dispute (conflict ripeness, level of conflict intensity, and nature of the issues), b) characteristics of the parties and

their interrelationship (their identification, their cohesiveness, their type of regime, their motivation to accept mediation, previous and ongoing relationship, and the distribution of power), c) characteristics of the mediator (impartiality, leverage, status), and d) the international context. This is a comprehensive framework, as it grasps the multiplicity of factors-determinants of mediation process. Although, as mentioned above, the framework concerns international disputes, it could be a useful analytical tool at different levels, as well. It will be used later in this study for the analysis of the outcome determinants of the third party intervention in the context examined.

1.3.6. Relationship between mediation strategy and mediation outcome

In the discussion over the relationship between mediation strategy and mediation outcomes literature suggests that two general trends emerge: first, a high activity level by the mediator produces desirable results. Second, in examining what type of `high activity` is more productive, the finding is that mediators are more effective when they attempt to improve the relationship between the disputants, rather than pushing for settlement or focusing on facts (Wall et al, 2001). Bercovitch and Lamare (1993) operationalise the mediation strategies/ behavior "on a continuum ranging from low to high intervention on the part of the mediator" (p: 299) (conciliation-facilitation, procedural, and directive strategies). After analyzing a data set of mediation cases –at international level- they conclude that "directive strategies are more likely to result in success than non-directive ones" (p: 299).

Beardsley, Quinn, Biswas and Wilkenfield (2006) conducted a comparative case study on the relationship between mediation styles and crisis outcomes (in international context). In their findings they confirmed their hypothesis that mediation is more likely to contribute to crisis abatement when manipulative style is employed. More specifically, "mediators are 20.30 percent more likely to have a positive effect on crisis abatement when

manipulation is the highest form than if they limit their activities to facilitation" (p: 80). According to their findings manipulation strategies are more linked to crisis abatement than formulation strategies, whereas the latter, on their turn, are more effective than styles centered on facilitation. However, the authors admit that the different mediation styles have unique comparative advantages, depending on what it is defined as the desirable outcome of the mediation process. Facilitative mediation is more effective in securing a reduction in post-crisis tensions, as well as, in resolving commitment problems, whereas "manipulation performs best at securing formal agreements and achieving overall crisis abatement" (Beardsley et al, 2006: 81). They also argue that, because of the above reasons, the most durable agreements are those, which were achieved with the less intrusion by the third party. However, one of their most interesting findings is that mediators, if they are to be effective, should use a balance of mediation strategies, as in this way they can combine some of the comparative advantages of each strategy.

Furthermore, Slaikeu, Culler, Pearson & Thoennes (as cited in Kelly, 1996) after analyzing a set of videotapes of custody mediations, conclude that mediation process is more likely to lead to an agreement when the mediators are "more active in structuring the process, focus more on problem-solving, discuss options and solutions rather than facts, and maintain flexible control" (p: 382). Finally, for Kelly (1996) mediation is more effective when the third parties "intervene more frequently when conflict is high; have greater communication competence; shape communications in productive, agreement-oriented directions; and focus on interests" (p: 382).

So far in this review the impact of culture and religion –as a constituent characteristic of the former- on the formation of perceptions and attitudes towards conflict, has been presented. Moreover, a series of concepts related to the process and outcome of mediation were explored. At this point it would be both interesting and useful to briefly present what the role of the

priests within the Christian Orthodox communities is, as well as what the key-values governing the Christian *worldview* and *ethos* are.

1.4. The role of Priests in Orthodox Communities

1.4.1. General Background

Since the very first weeks after Jesus Christ's resurrection the Christian Church was established. The word church refers not only to the gathering of people in one place, but also to the community of faithfuls that have responded to the calling of Jesus Christ. Parish is the `molecular` being of the Church, "where the faithfuls experience in a given place and time the actualization of the Church -a society of people, united in the name of Christ in one body, one confraternity, one family" (Gikas, 2005: 50). Basic axis is the Holy Communion which takes place in the Church and it is the realization of the Jesus Christ's society (the unification of the humans' society in the name of Christ). There, Christians participate in the Holy Service and unite themselves in the Communion cup. Especially, the parish should function as a pedagogic community, calling and embracing all people. It is a place that hosts all the faithfuls (ISEE, 2007). The goal is for the Church to serve better the faithfuls and bring into success its ultimate mission: lead the faithfuls to salvation in Christ.

Within the Church there is a basic distinction between the faithfuls in general and those ones who have a special place given to them by Jesus Christ through the disciples (Christ's students) in order to ensure the better serving of the laity (Rodopoulos, 1996). Throughout the centuries clergy has played an important role within the Christian communities. They have been both the spiritual leaders and the servants of the laity and they have constituted reference points for the faithfuls. It would be useful to take a closer look at their pastoral role in the communities.

The term pastoral service (pimantiki) is related to the verb shepherd (pimeno) and it refers to any type of care by the `shepherd` (pimenas) towards the faithfuls, the people of God, the minded flock (Gikas, 2005). In the New Testament, especially in the gospels, Christ Himself appears as the shepherd in an absolute sense. He declares: I am the Good Shepherd (Gikas, 2005: 17). Jesus Christ, as the Pattern of Virtue and perfect example of shepherd was the first to conduct the pastoral service. The expression of this example can be found in Christ's actions in the Gospels as well as in His speeches to the disciples. From this pastoral activity of Jesus are drawn the duties, as well as the rights, that were inherited by Him to the disciples. Jesus Christ after His resurrection appears to His students and gives the grace of the Holy Ghost, thus, rendering them responsible successors of His work –he nominates them shepherds of the Church (Gikas, 2005). This why the shepherd (priest, presbyter or bishop) of a community takes action within the Church having as an example the Christ. He puts all the effort into imitating Jesus Christ.

Since the very foundation of the Christian Church the term `shepherd` has been established as the image of the `notable` in first Christian communities. The term is also used by St Peter who prompts the presbyters to herd the flock of God (Rodopoulos, 1996: 2). Apart from the disciples, their first successors, bishops and presbyters, are established in the conscience of the community as the shepherds appointed to undertake the responsibility of spiritual guidance. The leading bishop is the ecclesiastic shepherd.

In Jesus Christ's words the term pastoral service refers to the personal interaction between the shepherd and the laity in order to satisfy the spiritual - and even the material- needs of the faithfuls. This interaction can possibly reach the extent of self-denial and sacrifice. Vasilios the Great uses the term `care for the soul` (cura animarum) in order to define the content of the pastoral service (Gikas, 2005: 19). The shepherd is the spiritual leader of the parish and, therefore, he is responsible for guiding the faithfuls to truth and salvation. He is the bosom and patron of all parishioners. "The good shepherd

may lay down his soul for the sheep" (The Bible, John 10: 11). He should fulfil his duty with disinterestedness and self-sacrifice. He has to spend himself having as a goal to guide the faithfuls to salvation, without calculating his rights and interests. Pastoral service above all should: a) guide the faithfuls in their everyday life by asking them to follow God's commandments. This can be achieved through b) the instruction of the authentic faith, which can be found in the Holy Gospel. Necessary as well is c) the participation of the faithfuls in the mysteries of the church, where they receive the divine grace (Gikas, 2005: 60).

The shepherd is supposed to inspire and interpret to the laity all these attributes which are necessary in order to follow the example of Jesus Christ; that is love, continence, self-effacement, obedience, patience. However, he should have in mind that he is not an authority. "The work he is responsible for is supernatural and divine" (Gikas, 2005: 32). The priest takes the responsibility of leading people to salvation not through human actions but through the mystery of priesthood, which makes him a shepherd, having a special pastoral duty; a duty that is not described in legalistic terms, but it constitutes an expression of love towards Jesus Christ Himself and towards the laity. Pastoral service in the Church should not constitute a system of codified commandments and laws, which the faithful needs to follow under the guidance/supervision of the clergy. The spiritual life is above and beyond laws. It is a big mistake to put the ecclesiastical laws above the salvation of a person, as "laws are made to serve the individual and not vice versa" (ISEE, 2007: 170).

The priest should keep in mind that his mission is not to exercise authority over the laity but to fulfil his duty/service as an agent of God, being the servant of the faithfuls. His first and main mission is to serve the faithfuls and lead them to benediction (Gikas, 2005: 75). To achieve this task he can use religious instruction, heart to heart talking, exhortation, advice and penance based on religious laws, but above all he is called to inspire genuine

love among the laity (Kalliakmanis, 2005). The pastoral care and the religious instruction is above all `work of guidance` and therefore `work of love`. The church above all should be a school of love towards God and towards the near-by as well, as love towards God is not autonomous; it passes through the love for the near-by (Kalliakmanis, 2005, Rodopoulos, 1996).

Moreover, it could be argued that the Pastoral Service of the Church is of dual nature. Every pastoral activity is being taken in the name of Christ. Jesus Christ is the starting point of every pastoral action, as well as its centre and its final destination. This is why it is said that the nature of the pastoral service is Christo-centric, but not only that. This work is of human-divine nature. The shepherds in the name of Christ (Christo-centrically) take the responsibility to help human (anthropocentrically) to experience the new human-divine life, which takes place in the society of blessed and with the presence of God in the Church (Gikas, 2005: 65). Finally, the function of pastoral service, as it was established by Christ himself is three-fold: blessing, didactic (educating), and administrative/ pastoral (Rodopoulos, 1996: 3).

1.4. 2. Attributes of the shepherd

The capstone of the attributes that a pastor should posses is the perfect love towards God. This love will bring, as a result, love for the near-by. It is impossible to have love for God without loving the near-by, and vice-versa (Gikas, 2005: 76). Self-effacement is a fundamental attribute of every Christian. The priest must be inspired by the example of Jesus Christ, who several times emphasized to his students that He was there among them as a minister/ servant. His attitude should be as of a father not of a judge. He should express love and understanding following the example of Jesus. One of the attributes is the capability of instruction. Sermon is one of the most important duties of the priest. Thus the shepherd, who is responsible for herding the minded laity, should preach endlessly and with genuineness the `word of truth`, the `word of salvation`. The content should be clearly

understood so as to make possible for the faithfuls to integrate it and use it when facing the problems of their everyday life. In his sermon the priest does not appeal only to the mind but also to the heart of the laity (Rodopoulos, 1996).

1.4.3. The shepherd and the mystery of confession

The mystery of confession/penance is a God-established action during which God through the priest forgives the sins of the confessant. Necessary condition is the sincere penitence of the latter. Simple and secret confession before God is not enough since the faithful is in need of the instruction and advice of the priest. The current practice of the mystery of repentance and confession constitute an amalgam of two different axis of the long ecclesiastic history. "On the one hand there is the mystery of confession and forgiveness and on the other hand there is the spiritual guidance and instruction" (ISEE, 2007: 87). The religious instruction and advice by the priest during the mystery of confession are important as they refer to issues of spiritual progress. The shepherd through his words fulfils a task of salvation, since he is guiding the faithfuls to the Kingdom of Heaven. However the advice he gives concerning everyday affairs is not to be underestimated, since "every human action can either hinder or facilitate the spiritual progress of a person" (ISEE, 2007: 86).

The relationship developed between the priest and the confessant is similar to the relationship between a father and a child. The nature and the purpose of the mystery, the character of the relationship between the confessor and the faithful, and the fact that the confessant bears his/her soul to the priest renders necessary the secret/ confidential character of their interaction. The attitude of the priest should be one of love and tenderness towards the confessant and not one of criticism (Rodopoulos, 1996).

Important here is the personalization of the pastoral care. Undoubtedly, the commandments and the canons avert the sins and they cure their negative consequences, as well. Their nature is preventive and curative. However, with the contribution of the shepherd the canons take in a personalised character in order to meet the specific needs of each faithful. The priest takes into consideration the different attributes and characteristics of each person in order to render the spiritual instruction and cure more effective (Kalliakmanis, 2005). Thus, the pastoral service takes a personal character (Rodopoulos, 1996). Central here is the role of Oikonomia. Oikonomia is the provisional deviation from the religious canons in order to ensure the salvation of the faithful, since not all humans have the same strengths. Oikonomia is being experienced and applied depending on each case. It is an expression of the philanthropism, acquiescence and the spiritual freedom that prevails within the Church. Of course it can be applied only to the extent that it does not offend the truth of the faith (Kalliakmanis, 2005).

Apart from the above reasons that make the presence of priests of central importance to the community we could list two further historical reasons in order to supplement what has been previously presented. Firstly, until the Edict of Milan in 313 AD, issued by Constantine the Great, and the adoption of Christianity as official state religion, Christians avoid to take their issues/ disputes to the state courts. On the one hand they considered inappropriate to solve their disputes using the institutions of a pagan state, and on the other hand they were afraid of being abused by Roman authorities. Thus, Christian priests used to substitute the Roman judges, putting in the same time an emphasis more on the reconciliation of the disputants rather than imposing a decision. Secondly during the Ottoman Ages the Church acquired an ethnarchic position. Among its duties was the trial of cases –even civil cases- concerning differences between the Christians and thus, church courts were formed for that reason. Consequently, responsible for the religious, as well as for the civil law was the same person: "the bishop as spiritual leader and the bishop as a judge" (Kalliakmanis, 2005: 147).

1.4.4. The importance of Love in Christianity

As mentioned in the previous section the priest is responsible for the spiritual guidance of the laity and he is the one who takes care of their souls (cura animarum). The shepherd bases the instruction of the faithful primarily on the Bible as well as on hagiologies and the scripts of ecclesiastic fathers. In his epistle to Galatians Paul lists the attributes that constitute the essence of the Christian truth: The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, continence. Against such there is no law (The Bible, King James Version, Galatians 5:22). The fact that love is listed first is not random. Among the most important duties of the priest is to inspire love to the members of the community, as this is defined by Christ Himself as the only path to salvation. Love is of central importance in Christianity and this is indicated in an emphatic way in the Scripts, especially in the Gospels where the life and word of Jesus Christ is narrated. The examples found in the scripts are innumerable and it would be useful at this point to cite some of them:

The Bible, Matthew 5:43-44: *You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who mistreat you and persecute you*

The Bible, Matthew 19:19: *'Honor your father and mother.' And, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'*

The Bible, Mark 12:30, Luke 10:27: *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment.*

The Bible, Mark 12:31: *The second is like this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these.*

The Bible, Luke 6:27: *But I tell you who hear: love your enemies, do good to those who hate you.*

The Bible, John 13:34: *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, just like I have loved you; that you also love one another*.

The Bible, Paul's Epistle to Romans 13:8-10: *Owe no man anything, save to love one another: for he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: love therefore is the fulfillment of the law.*

The Bible, John's 1st Epistle 4: 7-8: *Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.*

Illustrating for the significance of love is the following quotation from Paul's First Epistle to Corinthians which is widely known as the `Hymn to Love` (The Bible, King James Version, Corinthians, 13: 1-8):

> "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal; and if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing. Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away".

It is clear from the above that love is the first and most valued quality in human effort to reach salvation. When the faithful lives in love s/he does not seek for the satisfaction of her/his interest, rendering her/himself as the center of her/his actions, but rather sets as a goal the satisfaction of the near-by. The example of Jesus Christ, who sacrificed himself, is to be followed. Jesus became a man out of his love for human and love is the key to the new

life He offers. Thus, it is reasonable that inspiring love among the members of the community is the reference point of pastoral service.

1.4.5. The Importance of Forgiveness in Christianity

Another value of importance in Christianity is Forgiveness. The faithful is continuously called in everyday life to demonstrate forgiveness or ask for it and restore his relationship with the fellow beings. Forgiveness of the others is connected in Christianity to the forgiveness the faithful will receive in the heavens, as it is considered an oxymoron to ask the mercy of God without the Christian forgiving the sins of those who have harmed him. It is important here to note that forgiveness in Christianity is not related to justice. It is the product of the love for the fellow humans and it is to be shown as such, even in cases when the Christian is harmed. In the previous section it was mentioned that the new order that Christ gave to his students was to love, not only their friends, but also their enemies. The achievement of this task passes through forgiveness. This value is widely emphasized in the religious instruction and guidance by the shepherds and there are many examples of passages in the Scripts that underline its importance Christian life.

The Bible, Matthew 18:21-22: *Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?" Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.*

The Bible, Luke 6:37: *Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven*

The Bible, John 20:22-23: *Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.*

The Bible, Matthew 6:14-16: *For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.*

The Bible, Mark 11:25: *And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.*

The Bible, Colossians 3:13: *Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another.*

The Bible, Luke 17:3-5: *So be careful how you live. If your brother offends you, take him to task about it, and if he is sorry, forgive him. Yes, if he wrongs you seven times in one day and turns to you and says, 'I am sorry' seven times, you must forgive him.*

The Bible, Matthew 6:12, A part of what is known as The Lord's Prayer: *Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.*

The Bible, Ephesians 4:31-32: *Let there be no more bitter resentment or anger, no more shouting or slander, and let there be no bad feeling of any kind among you. Be kind to each other, be compassionate. Be as ready to forgive others as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you.*

The Bible, Matthew 16:19: *I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.*

As mentioned previously in this section the priest, as the spiritual leader of the parish and responsible for the guidance of the faithfuls, targets through the pastoral service to the inspiration of love –and forgiveness, as its product- among the members of the community; and this is illustrated in every aspect of the pastoral activity such as sermon, religious instruction, social care and the mystery of Confession. This is what is defined as the way to salvation.

This chapter was an effort to familiarize the reader with the central concepts related to this research. The importance of culture and religion –as a part of the former- in `shaping` the understanding of conflict and of the

mechanisms of conflict resolution was presented. Moreover, mention was made to key-issues concerning the process and outcomes of mediation. A brief description of the role of priests as `shepherds` within the religious communities and the emphasis they give on the inspiration of love and forgiveness among the laity was offered, as well. The intended task was to demonstrate that mediation process does not occur in a vacuum, but rather takes place within given cultural/ religious systems of rules and values, which on their turn, exercise an impact both on the process and on the outcome of the intervention, especially when religious figures act as third parties. In chapter three I will make an effort to present the ways in which the process examined in this study is influenced by the given Christian value system, where emphasis is given on the values of love and forgiveness. Through this perspective, the role of priests as third parties will be better explained and illustrated. Finally, I will make an effort to reveal the implications, which this interplay between the Christian value system and the role of priests during the process has for the outcome of the intervention examined.

CHAPTER 2.

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter methodological issues of the present study are explored. The research question and the scope of the research, as well as the method used for the accomplishment of the intended task, are presented.

2.1. Research Question

This study aims to provide an analysis of the third party intervention process conducted by Orthodox Christian priests in disputes between the members of the religious communities. The focus of the study is not only on the process of these interventions, but also on their outcome. An effort is made to address the following questions:

Why are priests requested to intervene as third parties in disputes between parishioners?

What types of disputes are brought to them?

What is their role as third parties- What are the strategies they employ and the techniques they use during their intervention?

What are the determinants of their behavior?

And finally, what is defined as the desirable outcome of the process?

Therefore, the objective of this study is to shed light on the process and outcome of third party intervention in the environment examined. A classification of the disputes brought to priests according to their nature, as well as a systematic description of the intervention process, will be provided. Furthermore, the roles of priests as third parties and the strategies and techniques they employ –in relation to the nature of the conflict, the characteristics of the parties, and the characteristics of the mediator- during the process will be described and classified. Finally, an effort will be made to explore what is defined as desirable outcome in the context concerned, as well as to reveal a series of determinants of the actual outcomes of the intervention.

2.2. Research Approach

This study is a qualitative exploratory research, since the intention is to deepen the understanding of the third party intervention process in the environment examined. There were no propositions or hypotheses to be confirmed or rejected, since the research question of the study is a matter of `exploration`. The best way to accomplish the intended task is a field study, combining interviews and participatory ethnographic research (as ethnographic research is the one which means to describe, among others, events and processes in a specific culture and reveal their main characteristics through participation in the daily lives of those, who are observed). The former was a helpful tool as it allowed the collection of qualitative data through a series of questions directed to a number of priests acting as third parties. Of course, in terms of validity it would be better to include in my interviewee sample a number of people, who had sought the intervention by priests. However, it would be impossible for the researcher to engage such people in the task, as the nature of the disputes is usually very personal and they would be unwilling to participate in the interviews. Additionally, a number of interventions, actually, take place during the mystery of confession, which is characterized by a high degree of confidentiality between the confessor and the confessant. Thus, confessors can neither reveal a great deal

of personal info about the participants, nor, of course, direct the researcher to them.

Furthermore, participant observation of the process could reveal a great deal of information concerning the third party intervention. However, the two contextual factors mentioned above constituted serious obstacles to my participation as an observer during the mediation process. Firstly, most of the disputes brought to priests are interpersonal and, consequently, they are private in nature. In the context of the examined communities people are highly sensitive in publicizing issues of private character, as public and private spheres are hardly overlapping. Secondly, most of the cases, that priests are called to deal with, come up during the mystery of confession, a basic principle of which is confidentiality. Thus, no third person should be present during the mystery.

For the above reasons, I collected my data through semi-structured interviews, which included a series of open-ended questions and extended case narrations. The interviews took place during August-September 2007 in Northern Greece. Due to financial limitations of the research, the interviews were not conducted throughout the whole country. However, the absence of significant differences between the religious communities within the country allows safe generalizations to be made. Additionally, the group of the interviewees was not randomly selected. The technique used for this study was snowball (network/ chain referral/ reputational) sampling technique, through a process of consultation with already familiar priests. It is a fact that the use of snowballing sampling technique can be a drawback of the research in term of the generalization of the findings. However, the extent of differences between the communities examined is not as high as not to allow a satisfactory extent of generalization.

In total the sample comprised of fourteen priests serving in different parishes throughout Northern Greece. Seven of them serve in villages and the

rest seven in cities. I had face to face contact with all of my interviewees. I met five priests in their houses, eight in the churches of their parishes, whereas one of them was interviewed while being a visitor in the church of the parish I live in. Eleven of the interviewees were graduates of Theological Universities, two of them of Church High Schools, and one of them did not have a secondary education. Nine interviews were tape-recorded, whereas five priests were disinclined to tape record, so I kept detailed notes of our discussions.

The interview protocol used for the present study (see APPENDIX 1) comprised of two parts. In the beginning there were a series of open-ended questions in order to collect general information about the intervention process and outcome. This first part of the protocol included 4 sections:

A. Interviewee Background/ Personal Info
B. Questions related to the nature of the disputes brought to priests
C. Questions about the intervention process itself: 1) third party role, and 2) techniques and strategies used
D. Questions about the outcome of the intervention

In the second part of the protocol (Section E.) the interviewees were asked to narrate mediation cases that they most vividly remembered. In addition, during their narrations in section E., I posed the informants a series of broad-based, open-ended questions that would help the respondents to focus on the related parts of the case they would narrate, and avoid what is described by Willis (2005) as `non-response error`[3]. In total, my informants narrated thirty cases of disputes that had been brought to them.

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[3] `Non response error` occurs when the interviewees fail to provide the information they have, either because they tend forget or because they tend to give information that is salient to them. This error is highly to occur in case narrations, and can be avoided through asking clarifying questions.

2.3. Analysis of the Data

The analysis of the data collected through the interviews will be developed in two dimensions. The first part, descriptive in nature, will be a presentation of the third party intervention conducted by priests. Based on the responses of the interviewees an effort will be made to answer the following questions:

Why are priests asked to intervene?

What types of disputes are brought to them?

Who initiates the process? Answers to these three questions will be drawn from the direct responses of my interviewees to questions from section B of the protocol.

What are the techniques they use? The taxonomy offered by Wall & Callister (1997, 1999) will be a useful tool for the classification of the techniques used by priests. Moreover, techniques used by the third parties specifically in the context concerned, will be added in the list (see Table 3). Answers here will be drawn from the direct responses of my informants to a series of questions from section C. of the interview protocol. Moreover, through analysis of the cases narrated in section E. I will make an effort to describe which techniques are mostly used in different types of disputes.

What is defined as the desirable outcome? Answers to this question will be drawn from the responses of the interviewees in section D. of the protocol.

In the second part of the analysis an effort will be made to explore regularities that occur during the intervention process. The focus in this part of the analysis will be both on the process and on the outcome of mediation. In terms of the process, the intention is to reveal a series of factors, which influence the choice of mediation strategy employed by the priests during their intervention. In order to define strategies the conceptual framework provided by Touval & Zartman (1985) will be used. Their taxonomy of

mediation strategies into a) Communication –Facilitation strategies, b) Procedural/Formulation strategies, and c) Directive/Manipulation strategies, will be a useful tool for the categorization of the third parties' behavior in the intervention process examined. The distinctive characteristics of each strategy (see Table 1) are the basis of this categorization.

In an effort to define the forces, which influence the choice of mediation strategy, I will use three clusters of factors, which, as noted in previous chapter, literature suggest that constitute determinants of the choice of mediator's approach. These clusters are categorized as following:

a) Characteristics of the dispute

b) Characteristics of the parties involved, and

c) Characteristics of the mediator

The main task will be to explore in what ways factors from these three clusters affect the mediator's behavior; what is the impact of the characteristics of the dispute, the characteristics of the parties, and the characteristics of the mediator on the choice of mediation strategy. Conclusions here will be made through analysis of the 30 cases narrated by my interviewees in section E. of the protocol.

As far as the outcome of the intervention is concerned, there will be an analysis of those factors which exert an impact on the outcome of mediation. As mentioned in the literature review section, Kleiboer offers a taxonomy of four clusters-determinants of the mediation outcome:

a) characteristics of the dispute (conflict ripeness, level of conflict intensity, and nature of the issues)

b) characteristics of the parties and their interrelationship (their identification, their cohesiveness, their type of regime, their motivation to accept mediation, previous and ongoing relationship, and the distribution of power)

c) characteristics of the mediator (impartiality, leverage, status), and

d) the context

The intention is to explore those factors that, in the context examined, constitute determinants of the outcome of the third party intervention process by Greek Orthodox Priests. Again here the conclusions will be drawn from the cases narrated by my informants in section E. of the interview protocol.

CHAPTER 3.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

In this chapter I will make an effort to achieve a dual task. On the one hand I will try to explore and provide answers in a series of issues related to the mediation process examined in the present study. The aim is to provide an overview of key-aspects of the intervention in the environment concerned. The nature of this first section is descriptive, as it is intended to present the overall mediation process. The answers will be drawn both from the direct responses of the priests during the interviews (open-ended questions, sections B-D of the interview protocol) and from the analysis of the cases narrated by my informants (section E of the protocol). In this first descriptive part of the chapter answers will be given to the following questions:

- Why are priests asked to intervene? What types of disputes are brought to them? Who initiates the process? (answers are drawn from section B of the interview protocol).
- What are the techniques they use? (answers drawn from section C of the protocol, as well as through analysis of the intervention cases narrated in section E).
- What is defined as the desirable outcome? (answers here are drawn from section D of the protocol).

On the other hand, in the second part of this chapter I will attempt to discover regularities that occur during the process. The focus will be mainly

on the factors affecting the choice of *mediation strategy* and those that exercise an impact on the *outcome* of mediation. For the achievement of the first tasks three clusters of factors will be used in order to define the factors which affect the choice of mediation approach: a) characteristics of the dispute, b) characteristics of the parties, and c) characteristics of the mediator. The data here are drawn from the direct responses of my interviewees to the open-ended questions of section C of the interview protocol, as well as through analysis of the intervention cases narrated in section E. The framework of four clusters that affect mediation outcomes (characteristics of the dispute, characteristics of the parties, characteristics of the mediator, and the context), provided by M. Kleiboer (1996), will be a useful tool in an effort to carry out the second task; define the factors, which affect the outcome of the mediation process examined here. The data are drawn from the responses of my informants to the open-ended questions of section D and through analysis of the cases narrated in section E.

3.1. Description

3.1.1. Reasons behind Priests' Intervention

The first question to be answered is related to the reasons that prompt Christians involved in disputes to seek for the help of priests. Undoubtedly, the optimum would be to ask disputants themselves to answer this question. However, due to contextual limitations explained earlier in this study, it wasn't possible to achieve this task. For this reason I will try to illustrate this point based on the direct responses of the third parties in this process. My interviewees had the right to give more than one answer. According to the data collected through the interviews (direct responses of priests to the open-ended questions of section B of the interview protocol) the basic reason for Christians bringing their cases to priests is that they are perceived as the representatives of God on Earth, not as physical persons, but as the `shepherds` of the laity. As shown in Chart 1, this was the most common

among all responses my interviewees gave: faithfuls have developed feelings of *respect* and *trust* (recourses of central importance for any third party) towards the spiritual leaders of the community. Therefore, asking priests' help appeals as a preferable option to them. The development of such feelings is similar to what Lederach and Wehr (1991) describe as confianza. "Its legitimacy and effectiveness come from the continuing personal connection of the mediator with the conflict parties before, during and after the mediation" (p: 85).

This takes us to the second answer given by my respondents to this question. Nine priests out of fourteen noted that Christians engaged in disputes prefer to seek for their intervention prompted by and based on the personal relationship they have developed with them. As presented in the literature review chapter, such everyday personal contact is a part of the pastoral activity and strengthens even more the trust that priests enjoy. Therefore, the priest is perceived as a trusted third party, having personal connection with the disputants and being aware of the environment within which the dispute takes place. Moreover, six out of fourteen interviewees responded that one of the reasons that faithfuls resort to their help is their hope that the damaged relationship will be restored. Within the context examined, love and forgiveness are values of central importance. As opposed to problem-solving mediation, the goal here is not just to reach a mutually accepted settlement of the immediate dispute, but rather to restore and improve the relationship of the people involved in a dispute.

Additionally, according to four respondents, the fact that priests are perceived as impartial plays a central role in the decision of the disputants to ask for their help. "Priest is the father of all parishioners. Thus, they all know that he is impartial, he will distance himself from both parties and he will not favor one party over the other", responded father G. (interviewee no. 3, Despilio, 30/08/07). Three priests replied that the confidentiality that binds them during and after the process is a factor that disputants take into

consideration and influence their decision. It is common for priests to become aware of a certain dispute during the mystery of confession, which is characterized by absolute confidentiality. Thus, priests are bound not to reveal any information about the dispute to third persons. Finally, an equal number of interviewees (3) responded that an additional reason for being asked to intervene is that this process is no-costly.

As it is induced from the responses of my informants, their identity is characterized by all this attributes pertaining to Social Network mediators as it is defined by C. Moore (1996). The fact that they enjoy the trust and the respect of the parties involved in a dispute, prior and expected relationship with the disputants, expectations of the parties that mediator's primary concern is to promote a long-term relationship between them, lie at the core of the reasons for asking priests' intervention.

Chart 1. Reasons for Asking the Intervention of Priests
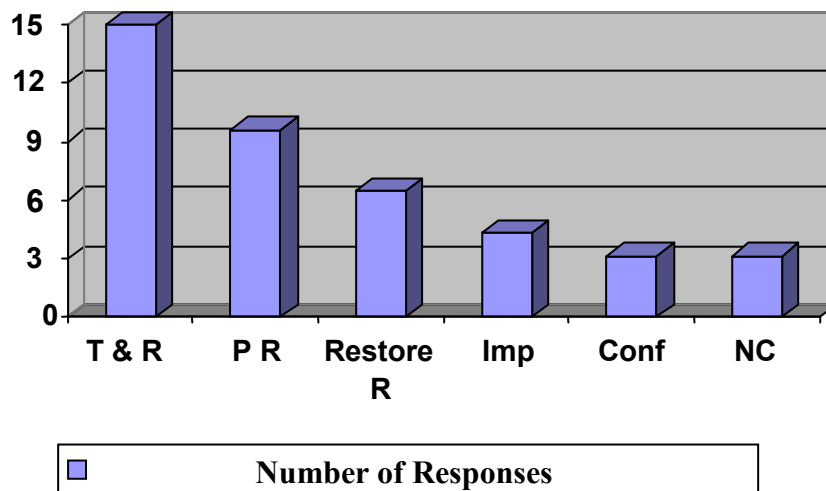
1. Trust, respect for the priest as representative of God in Parish (T & R): 14 responses
2. Personal relationship (PR): 9 responses
3. There is hope that the relationship will be restored (Restore R): 6 responses
4. Impartiality (Imp): 4 responses
5. Confidentiality (Conf): 3 responses
6. No-costly option (NC): 3 responses

Finally, it would be interesting to note here that five of my informants responded that Christians engaged in disputes may follow other options (psychologists, family advisors etc) in parallel of the process examined in this study.

3.1.2. Nature of Disputes Brought to Priests

The answers for this question are drawn from the direct responses of the priests in section B of the interview protocol. Again, here my informants had the right to more than one answers. According to the responses of the interviewees the most common type of disputes brought to them (13 responses) is the involvement of a third person between the spouses. This may be an extra-marital relationship or the involvement of relatives –most commonly parents in law- in everyday life of the couple. Disputes of economic nature are also commonly brought to priests (10 responses). Under this category the disputes are mostly about legacy and property sharing issues. Eight of the interviewees responded that they are called to intervene in disputes related to the choice of the name of a child to be baptized. The common practice in Greece is to name the child after the grandparents (expression of gratitude or honor), starting from the father's side. However, in many cases parents either do not like the grandfather's name or do not –for several reasons- want to name the child after him/her. This fact causes tension between the couple and their parents and even between the spouses.

Furthermore, five of the interviewees responded that they also intervene in marital disputes. Under this category there are disputes between the spouses, caused not by the involvement of a third person but mainly by the spouses themselves. They are issues related to everyday tension created either by the alienation between husband and wife or by disagreements over handling household issues (expenses, housework etc). An equal number of priests (5) responded that they are asked to intervene in disputes between neighbors caused by a series of reasons, such as competition between them,

dog barking, loud music and more. Three of the interviewees replied that disputes between parents and children are also commonly brought to them. Other types of cases include disputes involving colleagues from the working environment (two responses) and parents that are negative to/ do not approve the wedding of their children (two responses). Finally, one priest responded that he especially deals with issues of emotional nature (affairs) involving young people.

Chart 2. Nature of Disputes (Direct Responses)

☐ Number of Responses (out of 14)
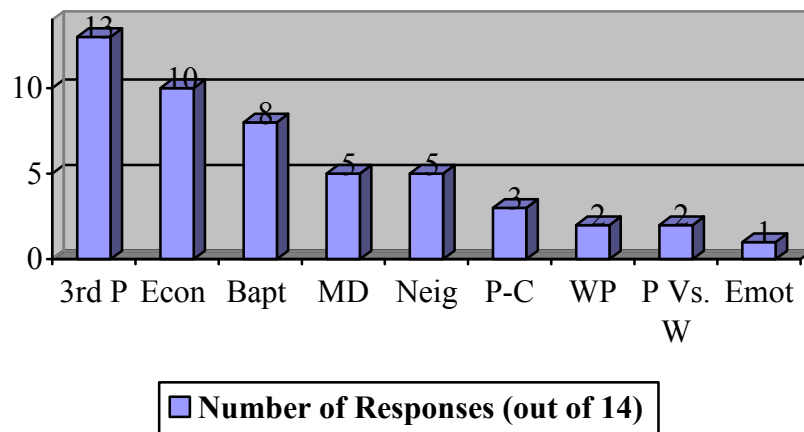
1. Involvement of a third person between the spouses (3rd P): a) extra-marital relationship, b) parents in law, relatives: 13
2. Economic (Econ): 10
3. Baptism (Bapt): 8
4. Marital disputes: tensions between spouses (MD): 5
5. Tension between neighbors (Neig): 5
6. Parents-children (P-C): 3
7. Colleagues from the workplace (WP): 2
8. Parents against the wedding (P Vs. W): 2
9. Emotions (Emot): 1

Apart from the direct responses of my interviewees, which reveal what the general tendency is, it would be useful to examine here what the nature of the disputes was in the 30 cases narrated by my informants in section E of the protocol. The following chart depicts the types of the thirty disputes narrated

by my informants. I chose to cite both charts, as the number of cases narrated was limited considering that this process is an everyday practice, which takes place within the parishes. Thus, there was a possibility that the narrated cases could not reflect the whole spectrum of disputes, in which priests are asked to intervene.

Chart 3. Nature of Narrated Cases
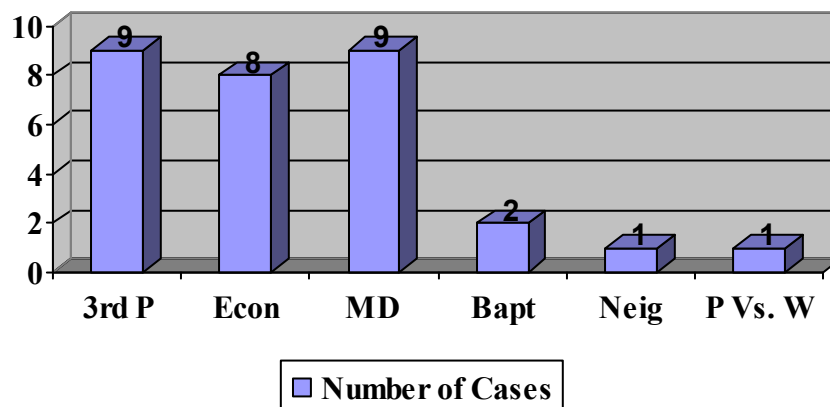
1. Involvement of a third person between the spouses (9): a) extra-marital relationship (5), b) parents in law, relatives (4):
2. Economic: 8 related to husband and wife
3. Marital disputes: tensions between spouses: 9
4. Baptism: 2
5. Tension between neighbors (competition): 1
6. Parents against the wedding: 1

3.1.3. Initiator of the process

The answers here are drawn from the direct responses of my interviewees to the open-ended questions of section B of the interview protocol. In relation to this question my informants replied that there is no standard trend for the initiation of the process. However, the general tendency is that one of the disputants presents his/ her case to priest, sometimes, as presented in the literature review chapter, during the process of confession. Moreover, nine priests out of fourteen responded that they have, in general,

mediated cases where both parties came simultaneously and asked for their intervention (in such cases the disputants are, usually, spouses or close relatives). Furthermore, six priests have entered a mediation process prompted by a 3rd person outside of the dispute. This person might be a close relative or friend of the disputants, who cares about the resolution of the dispute. Seven informants responded that they have regularly been engaged in a mediation process as a result of their own initiative. Having an active role in the community, priests become aware of disputes involving parishioners. Considering it a part of their pastoral activity, they take action in order to smoothen the relationship between Christians, in cases where this relationship is not harmonious, and to inspire love among the laity. On the other hand six priests noted that they do not prefer to take such initiatives (although sometimes they do so), as their involvement as non-invited third parties may not be welcomed and may jeopardize their relationship with the disputants. "When there is no confessor-confessant relationship it is very difficult to initiate the process", father V. replied (interviewee no 5, Thessaloniki, 12/08/07). Finally, for the same reasons one informant responded that he never takes such an initiative.

Chart 4. Initiator of the Process

One of the Ds: 14, Both Ds: 9, 3rd P-O: 6, Priest: 7, Priest (R): 6, Never Priest.: 1

Number of Responses (out of 14)
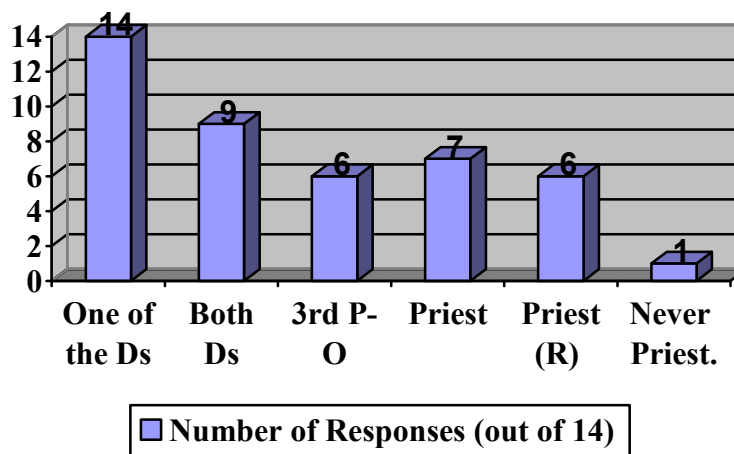
1. One of the disputants (One of the Ds): 14 responses
2. Both of the disputants (Both Ds): 9
3. A third person -Outsider (3rd P-O): 6
4. Priest's initiative (Priest): 7
5. Rarely Priest's initiative (Priest (R)): 6
6. Never, third party initiative (Never Priest): 1

After presenting what the general trend for the initiation of the process is, it would be useful to see who the initiator was in the cases I examined. The following chart shows who the initiator of the third party intervention process was in the cases narrated by my informants (data drawn from section E of the protocol).

Chart 5. Initiator of the Process in the Narrated Cases
(out of 30)
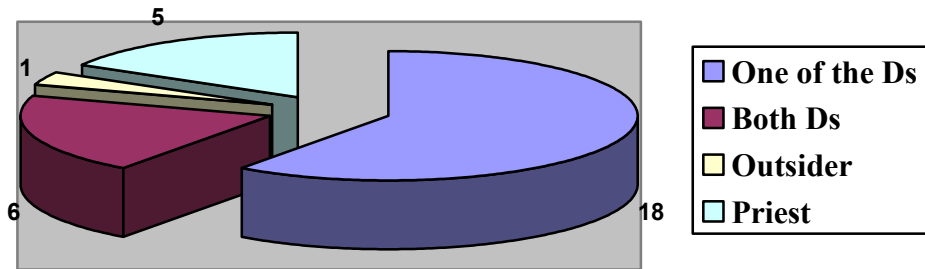
1. One of the disputants: 18
2. Both of the disputants: 6
3. An outsider: 1
4. Priest's Initiative: 5

3.1.4. Techniques used during the process

In this part the techniques which are most commonly used by priests are presented. As mentioned in the previous sections the behavior of the third parties can be described in terms of specific tactics they use during the process. "Mediation tactics refer to actual mediator behavior, the practical measures, techniques, and instruments that are used in the pursuit of

mediation objectives" (Bercovitch & Wells, 2001: 5). For the achievement of this task I will use the taxonomy of techniques provided by Wall and Callister (1999). The authors offer a classification of 40 techniques, which reflect mediation practices in indigenous cultural settings. I consider this classification a useful tool for the description I intend to offer, as it is culturally sensitive and, therefore, it can give a better overview of the techniques used during intervention process examined in this study. Additionally, in an effort to give a more complete overview of the techniques spectrum employed by priests, I included three more techniques (namely use of Jesus Christ's example, use of metaphors, and meet in mediator's house) used by third parties in the context examined. It is important to note here that I did not offer the table/ taxonomy presented by Wall & Callister as a checklist to my interviewees, as this could render the collected data biased. Rather, I included in section C of my interview protocol a series of open-ended questions about the techniques that priests make use of. Firstly, I will present the techniques which according to the direct responses of my interviewees are employed during the process (as mentioned data are drawn from the responses in section C of the protocol). Secondly, I will examine which techniques are mostly used in different types of disputes based on the data I collected through the narrations of my informants (cases narrated in section E).

The following table shows the techniques used by priests according to the direct responses of my informants.

Table 3: Techniques used by priests during their intervention (adopted by Wall & Callister (1999)).

Technique	Description	No of Priests Using Technique (out of 14)
1. Meet separately	*Mediator meets with each disputant separately*	14
2. Listen to disputant's side	*Mediator has disputants state their points*	14
3. Argue for concession	*Mediator argues for or proposes a specific concession or agreement point and negotiates a compromise*	13
4. Put disputants together	*Mediator brings the disputants together for a meeting that otherwise would not take place*	5
5. Gather information	*Mediator collects or asks for information from the disputants or others and does research to obtain info*	12
6. Gather information from 3rd party	*Information, opinion and advise obtained from 3rd party*	7
7. Educate	*Mediator educates, persuades, or advises one disputant as to how s/he should think and act*	13
8. Meet with 3rd party present	*Mediator brings additional third disputants to a meeting*	0
9. Have 3rd party assist	*Mediator offers or gets 3rd party's assistance for the disputants or the mediator*	4
10. State other's point of view	*Mediator presents or argues the other disputant's point of view and asks a disputant to see the other's point of view*	11
11. Moral	*Mediator points out a specific moral obligation or societal norm*	13
12. Meet together with disputants	*Mediator meets together with disputants and requires disputants to state other's point of view: mediator also has disputant state his/her point of view to the other*	11

13. Apologize	*Mediator has one disputant apologize or acknowledge his/her fault*	9
14. Mediator assists	*Mediator personally offers or gives assistance and takes a specific action*	2
15. Obtain forgiveness	*Mediator asks one disputant to tolerate or forgive the other*	13
16. Relax	*Mediator makes specific statements to calm the disputants*	13
17. Have 3rd party educate	*Mediator has a third party educate, persuade or advise one or both disputants on how they should act or think*	0
18. Have 3rd party argue for concessions	*Mediator has a third party argue for or propose a specific concession or agreement*	0
19. Pray	*Mediator prays alone or with one or both disputants*	14
20. Break time	*Mediator stops the quarreling and has disputants rest*	0
21. Mediator's data	*Mediator provides objective data about the dispute or the environment*	1
22. Threat	*Any threat from the mediator*	3
23. Note cost to 3rd party	*Mediator points out costs of dispute to others, cites an obligation not to dispute (includes noting benefits of agreement to others)*	13
24. Get grasp of situation	*Mediator grasps the cause (analyses situation)*	12
25. Criticize	*Mediator criticizes a disputant's personal attitude & behavior or uses a specific label*	3
26. Call for empathy	*Mediator enhances the other disputant or calls for respect of the other; mediator puts a positive face on the other*	12
27. Cite dependency	*Mediator expresses similarities or interdependence in disputant's goals, fates, and needs (includes mentioning personal costs of disagreement and benefit of agreement)*	9
28. Have drink with	*Mediator has a drink with disputants prior to agreement*	4

disputants		
29. Formalization	*Mediator caps the agreement with techniques other than a drink*	0
30. Provide logical explanation	*Mediator backs up any technique with logic*	0
31. Drink; capstone	*Mediator has drink with disputants to cap the agreement*	0
32. Analyze the disputants	*Mediator analyzes the disputants and grasps each disputant's characteristics*	14
33. Example	*Mediator cites example or similar case*	14
34. Praise disputants	*Mediator praises the disputant who is being addressed*	0
35. Reconcile	*Mediator negotiates a general compromise*	14
36. Quote law or rule	*Mediator quotes a specific law or rule that is relevant to the dispute*	12
37. Written agreement	*Mediator has disputants sign a quasi-legal written agreement governing their future behavior*	0
38. Being vague	*Mediator is intentionally vague when describing the situation or asking for concessions*	0
39. Have 3rd party criticize	*Mediator has a 3rd party criticize a disputant's person, attitude or behavior*	0
40. Separate disputants	*Mediator separates the disputants*	0
41. Example of Jesus Christ	*Mediator uses the example of Jesus Christ, as one to be followed by the disputants*	14
42. Use of Metaphors	*Mediator uses metaphors in order to make their points simpler, easily understood*	14
43. Meet in mediator's house	*Mediator asks disputants to meet at his house, in order to enhance trust and make them feel more comfortable*	7

Techniques used according to direct responses

Here, a brief presentation of the techniques employed more frequently by the third parties will be made. For better organizing my data I grouped the techniques used into three clusters. This classification does not exist in the literature. However I consider it useful for the reader in order to develop a better understanding both of the use and of the reasons behind the employment of specific techniques: a) *organizational techniques*: this cluster refers to practices that are related to the way priests handle the process in terms of organization. They are not employed in order to cause perceptional and attitudinal changes to the disputants. B) *Techniques not directly related to religious values*: This cluster of techniques is employed by the third parties in order to cause perceptional and attitudinal changes of the parties involved. Moreover, the techniques included in this category do not directly derive from given religious values, but rather could be meaningfully used in a secular context, as well. C) *Techniques used in the specific religious context*. This cluster of techniques employed by priests is directly related to Christian values, and should be understood in the specific context. Of course, as in the previous cluster, these techniques are meant to cause perceptional and attitudinal changes to the disputants.

Organizational Techniques

Meet separately: usually, priests meet the disputants separately, especially, when the tension of the dispute is high. According to the responses of my informants this practice allows them to get familiar with the details of the dispute in a calmer environment. "Sometimes, when the disputants come and see me together, they make me feel like a judge; this is not helpful in terms of spiritual progress. It is not a matter of deciding who is right, but rather of finding a way to help them both. This is why I prefer –at least in the

beginning- to meet them separately" father G. responded (interviewee no. 6, Thessaloniki, 19/ 09/ 2007).

Listen to disputant's side: priests have the parties involved in disputes to present their case in their point of view. They listen to the arguments that disputants make and they make an effort to understand what the perceptions of the parties about their cases are.

Get grasp of the situation: Over the process of their intervention priests put an effort into getting the grasp of the situation and analyzing several parameters in order to discover the causes of the dispute and any specific characteristics of the conflict system. `Reading` the situation allows them to develop a better understanding of the case and its environment, search for available alternatives, and come up with meaningful suggestions.

Analyze the disputants: while listening to the stories of the parties involved and after becoming familiar with the cases, the priests try to analyze the disputants. Special emphasis is given on their personal qualities and emotional situation. As mentioned in the previous parts of this study, pastoral activity has a personalized character in order to meet the specific needs of each faithful. This is why priests put special effort into grasping the attributes and emotions of each disputant, in order to come up with suggestions that can help them both to resolve their disputes and to facilitate their spiritual progress.

Gather information: in accordance with the above, priests, while listening to the parties, ask a number of questions in order to develop a better understanding of them and their cases. Although sometimes they try to obtain info from disputants' environment (third person, relatives, friends) –always in an indirect way, the majority of my interviewees responded that they avoid to do so, as their position is very sensitive and they do not want to jeopardize the trust they enjoy by the disputants.

Techniques not directly related to religious values

Argue for concession: priests in their effort to change the behavior of the disputants usually employ this technique. Especially in cases where the parties involved are in everyday interaction, priests underline the importance of `smoothing` their behavior by making small compromises in order to avoid tensions. Additionally, they note that there is no need for the disputants to keep their attention and insist on petty annoyances occurring in everyday life, as this would be damaging for their relationship and spiritual progress.

Relax: one of the first techniques employed by the priests is to calm the disputants. Through discussion they try to convince the parties that the first step in order to help themselves is to relax and view their case collectedly. "In this way they can look at their dispute in a different perspective, recognize the mistakes they have made and, of course, be more open to our advice", said father A. (interviewee no. 14, Thessaloniki, 16/09/07).

Note cost to 3^{*rd*} *party*: Noting the consequences that disputants' behavior has in third parties is another technique commonly used by priests. This enables the disputants to distance themselves for a moment from the immediate dispute and take into account the expectations and needs of other parties in the conflict system. In this way they might realize that their actions affect people not directly involved in the dispute (children, relatives, friends etc). Such reminders can act as deterrence factors for negative behavior of the disputants and can facilitate cooperation between them.

Example: priests use examples from their experience in order to let disputants understand that their case is not unique, without of course overlooking the particularities of each case. Usually, they cite cases with negative outcomes as examples to be avoided and cases with positive outcomes as ones to be followed. Additionally, citing examples makes them appear experienced

before the eyes of the disputants, a resource necessary for any third party in order to enhance the trust of the disputants.

Use of Metaphors: this technique enables priests to make their points and give their advice in a simpler and easily understood way. Such metaphors are drawn either from the Bible, or from the life of important religious figures (saints, prophets, martyrs) or even from everyday life.

Call for empathy: priests use this technique in order to make the parties view their case through the perspective of the other party. This enables disputants distance themselves from their positions and understand the needs of the other side. "It is very important for a relationship with everyday interaction to step in the other's `shoes`. Is makes us less egocentric" commented father E. (interviewee no. 7, Kastoria, 31/08/07).

Reconcile: several times during the process priests ask disputants to acknowledge their mistakes, forgive each other and move forward. They place an emphasis not on maintaining justice, but rather on helping the parties restore their relationship.

Techniques used in the specific religious context

Educate: although priests perceive the occurrence of conflict among the Christians as a phenomenon which occurs naturally in everyday human interaction, they believe that Christian faith and values provide a framework within which all disputes can be resolved. A person, who leads her/ his life in a Christian ethos, has all the qualities (above all love) to handle conflicts. During the process priests try to educate the faithfuls about this system of beliefs and values that constitute the Christian orthodoxy and ask them not to deviate from it. This religious instruction is an integral part of their activity, inseparable from the pastoral service. "Priest should not forget that he is

responsible for the instruction and salvation of all parishioners", noted father A. (interviewee no. 1, Kardia, 09/09/07).

Quote law or rule: during their intervention priests remind disputants of specific laws, which they break when they insist in their conflicting behavior. Most commonly they quote laws related to the most important values of Christianity (love & forgiveness). This is not done in a legalistic way but rather they urge the disputants to love and forgive each other.

Moral Obligation: Similarly, priests remind disputants of certain moral obligations that they need to meet and stem from the Christian orthodoxy.

Pray: this is a sine qua non of being a priest. Of course, prayers are not perceived as techniques neither by the priests nor by the disputants. Both during and after the process priests pray to God to inspire them to give proper advice, to help the Christians resolve their dispute and ultimately they pray for the salvation of the disputants. They also ask the parties themselves to pray for getting the strength and inspiration to take the proper steps for resolving their disputes.

Obtain forgiveness: as mentioned previously disputants are asked to apologize and forgive each other. "Those who humble themselves in order to preserve a relationship, take a major step towards their spiritual progress", responded father A. (interviewee no. 13, Xanthi, 18/09/07). Priests urge the disputants to forgive reminding them of Mathew 16:19: *whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven* (The Bible, King James Version).

Example of Jesus Christ: Jesus Christ as a perfect God and perfect (sinless) human, stands as the example for every Christian. Several times during the intervention priests urge disputants to follow the example of Jesus and abstain from sinful behavior. I chose to differentiate this technique from the use of

examples in general (no. 33), as here the reference point is Jesus (God) Himself, and therefore the expected effect of this technique on disputants' behavior is greater.

Techniques used in the narrated cases

At this point it would be both interesting and useful to examine which techniques are mostly used in different types of disputes based on the 30 narrations of my informants (section E of the interview protocol). The narrated cases were categorized as presented in Chart 3. Each italicized word corresponds to one technique from the taxonomy offered by Wall and Callister (Table 3, p. 41). Under each category I included the most commonly used techniques in each type of disputes, based on analysis of the 30 cases narrated by my informants in section E of the interview protocol. By most commonly I refer to techniques used in more than half of the narrated cases from each category. In this way I make an effort to present what the general tendency is, according to each type of disputes.

Involvement of a 3ʳᵈ person between the spouses (9 cases): Firstly, I need to make a distinction between two causes for such disputes. On the one hand there are conflicts between spouses that emerge as a result of an extra-marital relationship that one of the spouses has. In such cases priests, mediating between the spouses, try to *relax* the disputants, noting that any action taken under the influence of anger will be damaging for the disputants individually and for the marriage. Marriage is considered as sacred in Christian Orthodox church, as it is the unification of two faithfuls into "one flesh" with the blessing of God. This sacred union was insulted by the extramarital relationship and it needs to be restored. Priests try to *educate* the one who committed the adultery, reminding her/ him of the 6ᵗʰ commandment (Thou shall not fornicate), and noting that after the wedding there are certain *moral*

obligations to be met. They put effort into making this party empathize with the spouse and understand that such behavior is disrespectful to her/ him. They urge the fornicator not only to *apologize* and ask for *forgiveness* but also to be careful not to deviate again from the divine *law*. Moreover, priests *argue for concession* and *reconciliation* and ask the other party to *relax* and *forgive* the fornicator. When they meet both disputants, priests *cite their interdependence* within the frames of the marriage and, in cases where the disputants are parents, they note *the cost of conflicting behavior* to their children. Furthermore, priests along with disputants *analyze the situation* and find the reasons that led the fornicator to seek for a relationship outside the marriage. Thus, they try to help disputants to avoid similar developments in the future.

On the other hand, under this category there are disputes that emerge as a result of the involvement of relatives (most commonly parents in law) or friends in the everyday life of the spouses. These third persons are closer to one of the spouses and at the same time do not have harmonious relationship with the other one. When their involvement in the life of the couple makes one of the spouses feel uncomfortably (an illustrative example are the directions given by mother in law to a new bride in how to deal with the household), disagreements emerge and the party who is closer to the 3rd person needs to intervene and ask for concession. However, this intervention is perceived as taking sides and the conflict is taken between the spouses.

In such cases priests commonly meet both with the spouses and the third person, but not at the same time. They ask the third person to respect the privacy of the couple, reminding them that marriage is a sacred institution. They also urge them to "step in the shoes" of the couple and see the situation from their point of view. Additionally they suggest that the third person *apologize* and ask for *forgiveness*. "We also remind them of one of the wedding blessings: *the man shall leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife and they will become one flesh"*, in order to make them keep some

distance from the couple, commented father L. (interviewee no. 10, Plagiari, 10/09/ 2007). Moreover, priests ask the couple to *understand* the other party, noting that this involvement in their life stems from love, thus *putting a positive face* on the third person. Undoubtedly, this person has played a positively important role in their lives and they should allow themselves to blow out of proportion everyday petty annoyances. Thus, they suggest that the spouses should not put in danger their relationship with their relatives and friends and that they should *forgive* the third person in order to maintain this relationship, sometimes even by *tolerating* annoying behaviors and by making *mutual concessions*. Finally, priests draw their advice, among others, from values and principles of Christianity and thus, it could be argued that during the process they *educate* the disputants.

Economic disputes (8 cases): Under this category the disputes are mostly about legacy and property sharing issues, usually between siblings or between parents and children. One of the narrated cases is about issues related to economic disagreements in a family run company. In general, people involved in such disputes are relatives. Priests usually try to relax the disputants and help them analyze the situation. In this way they want the disputants to distance themselves from the conflict and view their situation in a collected mood. The basic technique that the priests use is to emphasize the importance of spiritual qualities over material wealth. In Christian Orthodoxy material affluence is considered a deterrence factor to spiritual progress. This is a notion widely found in Christian religious texts, which priest *cite* many times during the process. "What is the point in gaining the whole world and loosing our souls, I keep saying in people involved in such disputes", noted father G. (interviewee no. 6, Thessaloniki, 19/ 09/ 2007). Priests also *use metaphors-parables* from the bible or examples from their previous experience, especially about people that became rich and were attached to material wealth but in the end they were neither satisfied of happy and of course did not reach salvation. Thus, underlining the importance of being detached from material wealth, priests argue for a series of *concessions* in economic issues. They also

note to the disputants that maintaining a harmonic relationship with their relatives is more valuable than economic gains. "Do you prefer to gain something more from the family property over having a peaceful relationship with your sister? is the dilemma I posed to one of my parishioners", said father S. (interviewee no 4, Xanthi, 18/09/07). Finally, in such disputes priests sometimes make *specific suggestions* to the disputants as to how they should act.

Marital Disputes (9 cases): This category includes disputes between spouses emerging as a result not of the involvement of a third person but mainly of the alienation between husband and wife or of disagreements over handling household issues. Such disputes are related to negative behavior caused by bringing problems of the professional environment in the family, disagreements over family expenses, over sharing the housework or over the nurture of the children. In this type of disputes priests, after asking the parties to *relax*, try along with the disputants to *analyze* their situation, in order to find the causes of the tension, as it is common for the spouses to express their accumulated emotions in any handle given and in unproductive ways. Thus, they usually miss the real cause of the problems. Additionally, priests present to the parties *each other's point of view*, as their perspective is often distorted, *putting* in the same time *a positive face* on the other. They urge the spouses to *empathize* with each other, respect each other, understand each other' s needs, and even *tolerate* negative attitudes caused by reasons outside the family environment. "You need to be a part of the solution of the problems that the other faces in the workplace, by providing a way out in order to release the pressure felt" is one of the suggestions that father A. (interviewee no. 14, Thessaloniki, 16/09/07) usually makes. Priests also underline the *interdependency* of the spouses, and point the *moral obligation* the parties have towards their children, noting that tension within the family may have *negative consequences* for the children. The use of negative examples from their past experience is, also, commonly used.

Disputes over Baptism (2 cases): As mentioned previously these disputes are about the choice of the name given to a child to be baptized. Usually, the dispute is between the spouses and their parents. Disputes between the spouses themselves are not uncommon, though. The general attitude that priests adopt is that this choice should be made by the parents of the child and, thus, involvement of third persons is not justified. This is why in the examined cases priests' efforts were more focused on changing the perceptions and the attitude of the third persons. In both cases priest *criticized* the third persons for their behavior, urging them not to get involved in the choice on the name. They called for understanding the *other party's point of view*, and they suggested them to *apologize* and *respect* the choice of the couple. Additionally, priests talked to the spouses as well. They urged them to *tolerate* and *forgive* such behavior, emphasizing the importance of maintaining a peaceful relationship among the members of the wider family, through *mutual concessions*. "What I told them is that the child needs both her parents and her grandparents", said father L. (interviewee no. 10, Plagiari, 10/09/07).

Dispute between neighbors (1 case): The parties in this dispute were two men who were parishioners with close relation to the church. However, they were engaged in an ongoing competitive relationship over their social and economic status. The priest of the parish understood the problems existing in their interaction and initiated the process in an effort to `smoothen` their relationship. The fact that they were both close to the church allowed the third party to *criticize* them for their behavior: "I was strict to them telling them that it was hypocritical to call themselves Christians and behave to each other in such a way", said father E. (interviewee no 7, Kastoria, 31/08/07). He suggested them to "uproot" any resentment from their hearts, as hatred is an insuperable obstacle to spiritual progress. During the process the priest tried to *educate* them and inspire love and *forgiveness* for each other, *quoting rules* and citing a series of examples from the Bible, as well as *the example of Jesus Christ*.

Parents opposed to wedding (1 case): The parties in this case were a young couple who intended to get married and their parents, who opposed their wedding. The couple brought their issue to the priest of the parish asking for his help. After becoming aware of the problem the priest met the parents of the couple separately. He tried to *relax* them and make them *empathize* with the couple, asking them to take into account the feelings of their children. He also presented to the parents the good qualities of the youths, *putting*, thus, *a positive face* on them. The priest urged the parents to *respect* the decision of their children and give their blessing for the wedding. "I told them that in Christian Orthodox tradition we believe that the fundaments of a new house are set upon the blessing of the parents", said father E. (interviewee no 7, Kastoria, 31/08/07). Moreover, during the process he *educated* the disputants in accordance with Christian values, he used *examples* from his past experiences and *noted the cost* that their disagreement would have to their future relationship. The priest also advised the young couple to convince with their behavior their parents that their decision is well thought and mature and gain their respect. Additionally, he asked them to understand the reaction of the parents (see the situation from their point of view), *forgive* them and *reconcile* with them.

In this part of the study an effort was made to provide an overview of the variety of techniques employed by priests during their intervention. The nature of this section was descriptive. A more elaborated analysis of third parties' behavior during the process will be offered in the following section, where mediator's behavior is examined on the basis of the strategies (facilitation-communication, procedural-formulation, and directive manipulation) employed during the process. The determinants of mediator's choice are analyzed as well. Finally, an effort will be made to present what is defined by priests as the desirable outcome, as well as to analyze the outcome determinants of the intervention process examined.

3.2. Analysis

In this second part of the chapter I will explore issues related to the choice of mediation strategy employed by the priests, as well as to the determinants of mediation outcomes.

3.2.1. Strategies Employed during the Process: Determinants

Literature suggests that strategy is a plan, a general approach that a mediator adopts, and reflects the ways in which the third party "manages the case, the issues and the parties" (Kolb as cited in Bercovitch & Wells, 2001: 5). After making a diagnosis of the ad hoc characteristics in a dispute, mediator adopts the proper strategy to be employed. Touval and Zartman (1985) in an effort to present the spectrum of strategies available to third parties provided a classification of mediation approaches, as following: a) Communication/ Facilitation strategies, where the mediator facilitates the communication between the parties, adopting a rather passive role, b) Procedural/Formulation strategies, where the third party exerts control over the process and environment of mediation, and c) Directive/Manipulation strategies, in which the mediator affects the content and the substance of the mediation process. This classification will be used in this section in order to describe the approaches adopted by priests during their intervention. The distinctive characteristics of each approach can be seen in Table 2.

The main task in this part of the study is again dual. Firstly, I will attempt to discover which strategies priests in general prefer to employ. It is not necessary that any third party employs strategies from the whole spectrum of the available approaches. Third parties might use a single strategy even for different occasions and under different circumstances. Before starting my

research I was not aware of whether priests employ a variety of strategies for different cases, or they show preference just to one mediation approach. Answers to this question will be drawn from the direct responses of my informants (section C of the interview protocol). Again here, I did not offer my informants a check-list with the available strategies, as this could lead me to the collection of biased data. Rather, I included in section C of the interview protocol a series of open-ended questions related to the choice of mediation strategy. Secondly, if my data suggest that the third parties adopt different strategies for different cases, I will make an effort to reveal the factors that affect the choice of the mediator's strategy in the context concerned, based on the data drawn from the 30 cases narrated by my interviewees (section E of the interview protocol). In order to carry out the intended task I will examine three clusters of factors that –as presented in the literature review chapter- may affect the choice of the strategy: a) characteristics of the dispute, b) characteristics of the parties, and c) characteristics of the mediator.

The following table shows the strategies that the third parties prefer to employ in general during their intervention process (direct responses to open-ended questions of section C). The numbers show how many priests out of 14 employ the specific technique during their intervention.

Table 4. Strategies employed in general by priests

Communication-Facilitation Strategies	Number of Priests (out of 14)	Procedural-Formulation Strategies	Number of Priests (out of14)
1. Make contact with parties	7	1. Choose meetings site	0
2. Gain the trust and confidence of the parties	14	2. Control pace and formality of meeting	0
3. Arrange for interactions btw the parties	5	3. Control physical environment	0
4. Identify issues and interests	12	4. Establish protocol	0
5. Clarify situation	14	5. Suggest procedures	5
6. Avoid taking sides	10	6. Highlight common interests	14
7. Develop a rapport with parties	14	7. Reduce tensions	14
8. Supply missing information	1	8. Control timing	0
9. Develop a framework for understanding	13	9. Deal with simple issues first	2
10. Encourage meaningful communication	14	10. Structure agenda	0
11. Offer positive evaluation	0	11. Keep parties at the table	8
12. Allow the interests of all parties to be discussed	14	12. Help parties save face	0
		13. Keep process focused on issues	4

Directive-Manipulation Strategies:		Number of priests (out of 14)	
1. Change parties' expectations	11	2. Take responsibility for concessions	0
3. Make substantive suggestions & proposals	13	4. Make parties aware of costs of non-agreement	14
5. Supply and filter information	3	6. Suggest concessions parties can make	14
7. Help negotiators to undo a commitment	0	8. Reward party concessions	0
9. Help device a framework for acceptable outcome	13	10. Change expectations	12
11. Press the parties to show flexibility	14	12. Promise resources or threaten withdrawal	3
13. Offer to verify compliance with agreement	0		

As it is clear from the above table there is no specific strategy that priests always employ in their intervention. In different occasions and under different circumstances, the third parties adopt different approaches. Moreover, the table illustrates that most of the responses of my informants are concentrated in the behavioral specifics of two mediator approaches: communication/facilitation strategies and directive/manipulation strategies. In other words, during the third party intervention process examined in this research, priests either act as facilitators, serving as channels of communication and ensuring the ongoing constructive dialogue between the disputants, or adopt a manipulative style, contributing substantively to the process. Next, I will make an effort to define the factors upon which this

choice of the strategy is dependent, based on the data drawn from the *cases narrated* by my informants (section E of the interview protocol). In order to achieve this task I will look at three clusters of factors: a) characteristics of the dispute, b) characteristics of the parties, and c) characteristics of the mediator. As presented in the first chapter, literature suggests that these three clusters include the most important factors, which constitute determinants of the mediation strategy.

3.2.1. a) Nature of the Disputes

In relation to the first cluster, out of a series of factors I will try to examine how the nature of the dispute influences the choice of mediation strategy. Through analysis of the cases narrated by my interviewees in section E of the protocol, I will make an effort to discover whether the nature of the disputes exercises an impact on this choice. As mentioned in previous section, the types of the thirty disputes narrated by my informants can be classified as following: a) disputes related to the involvement of a 3rd person between the spouses, b) economic disputes, c) marital disputes, d) disputes over children's baptism, e) one dispute between neighbors, and f) one case were the parents opposed the wedding of their children.

Involvement of a 3rd person between the spouses (9 cases): As illustrated in Table 5 in disputes that emerge as a result of the involvement of a 3rd person between the spouses, priests use mostly Directive-Manipulation strategies. It is induced from the 9 cases of this category narrated by my informants that more behavioral specifics of this approach are used and in a higher number of cases, compared to the remaining two available strategies. However, a number of responses indicate that tactics pertaining to Communication-Facilitation strategies are, sometimes, used.

Table 5. Strategies employed by priests in disputes related to the involvement of a 3rd person between the spouses (9 cases)

Communication-Facilitation Strategies	Number of Cases (out of 9)	Procedural-Formulation Strategies	Number of Cases (out of 9)
1. Make contact with parties	2	1. Choose meetings site	0
2. Gain the trust and confidence of the parties	4	2. Control pace and formality of meeting	0
3. Arrange for interactions btw the parties	0	3. Control physical environment	0
4. Identify issues and interests	7	4. Establish protocol	0
5. Clarify situation	4	5. Suggest procedures	0
6. Avoid taking sides	0	6. Highlight common interests	9
7. Develop a rapport with parties	2	7. Reduce tensions	9
8. Supply missing information	2	8. Control timing	0
9. Develop a framework for understanding	4	9. Deal with simple issues first	0
10. Encourage meaningful communication	9	10. Structure agenda	0
11. Offer positive evaluation	0	11. Keep parties at the table	3
12. Allow the interests of all parties to be discussed	4	12. Help parties save face	0
		13. Keep process focused on issues	2

Directive-Manipulation Strategies: Number of cases (out of 9)			
1. Change parties' expectations	7	2. Take responsibility for concessions	0
3. Make substantive suggestions & proposals	8	4. Make parties aware of costs of non-agreement	9
5. Supply and filter information	6	6. Suggest concessions parties can make	9
7. Help negotiators to undo a commitment	0	8. Reward party concessions	0
9. Help device a framework for acceptable outcome	8	10. Change expectations	8
11. Press the parties to show flexibility	9	12. Promise resources or threaten withdrawal	0
13. Offer to verify compliance with agreement	0		

Economic disputes (8 cases): Table 6 shows that in interventions in economic disputes, priests usually adopt Communication- Facilitation strategy, as a higher number of responses concern the relevant behavioral specifics. On the other hand, Directive-Manipulative approach, although sometimes employed, is not the preferable.

Table 6. Strategies employed by priests in economic disputes (8 cases)

Communication-Facilitation Strategies	Number of Cases (out of 8)	Procedural-Formulation Strategies	Number of Cases (out of 8)
1. Make contact with parties	0	1. Choose meetings site	0
2. Gain the trust and confidence of the parties	5	2. Control pace and formality of meeting	0
3. Arrange for interactions btw the parties	3	3. Control physical environment	0
4. Identify issues and interests	8	4. Establish protocol	0
5. Clarify situation	7	5. Suggest procedures	0
6. Avoid taking sides	6	6. Highlight common interests	8
7. Develop a rapport with parties	5	7. Reduce tensions	8
8. Supply missing information	0	8. Control timing	0
9. Develop a framework for understanding	7	9. Deal with simple issues first	0
10. Encourage meaningful communication	8	10. Structure agenda	0
11. Offer positive evaluation	0	11. Keep parties at the table	0
12. Allow the interests of all parties to be discussed	8	12. Help parties save face	0
		13. Keep process focused on issues	0

Directive-Manipulation Strategies: Number of cases (out of 8)			
1. Change parties' expectations	5	2. Take responsibility for concessions	0
3. Make substantive suggestions & proposals	2	4. Make parties aware of costs of non-agreement	6
5. Supply and filter information	1	6. Suggest concessions parties can make	6
7. Help negotiators to undo a commitment	0	8. Reward party concessions	0
9. Help device a framework for acceptable outcome	6	10. Change expectations	3
11. Press the parties to show flexibility	7	12. Promise resources or threaten withdrawal	0
13. Offer to verify compliance with agreement	0		

Marital Disputes (9 cases): In marital disputes third parties choose to employ Communication-Facilitation strategies. After taking a look at the narrated cases it is clear that there is a positive association between marital disputes and the use of Communication-Facilitation strategies, as priests use the behavioral specifics pertaining to this approach. Directive-manipulation strategies are rarely employed. This conclusion can be easily drawn from Table 7.

Table 7. Strategies employed by priests in marital disputes (9 cases)

Communication-Facilitation Strategies	Number of Cases (out of 9)	Procedural-Formulation Strategies	Number of Cases
1. Make contact with parties	2	1. Choose meetings site	0
2. Gain the trust and confidence of the parties	6	2. Control pace and formality of meeting	0
3. Arrange for interactions btw the parties	0	3. Control physical environment	0
4. Identify issues and interests	9	4. Establish protocol	0
5. Clarify situation	8	5. Suggest procedures	0
6. Avoid taking sides	7	6. Highlight common interests	9
7. Develop a rapport with parties	8	7. Reduce tensions	9
8. Supply missing information	3	8. Control timing	0
9. Develop a framework for understanding	6	9. Deal with simple issues first	0
10. Encourage meaningful communication	9	10. Structure agenda	0
11. Offer positive evaluation	5	11. Keep parties at the table	2
12. Allow the interests of all parties to be discussed	9	12. Help parties save face	0
		13. Keep process focused on issues	5

Directive-Manipulation Strategies: Number of cases (out of 8)			
1. Change parties' expectations	2	2. Take responsibility for concessions	0
3. Make substantive suggestions & proposals	3	4. Make parties aware of costs of non-agreement	5
5. Supply and filter information	0	6. Suggest concessions parties can make	8
7. Help negotiators to undo a commitment	0	8. Reward party concessions	0
9. Help device a framework for acceptable outcome	3	10. Change expectations	2
11. Press the parties to show flexibility	9	12. Promise resources or threaten withdrawal	0
13. Offer to verify compliance with agreement	0		

Disputes over Baptism (2 cases): The sample of cases in this type of disputes is very small and, thus, generalizations cannot be made. However, it would be interesting to see what the general tendency in such cases is. The conclusion drawn from the analysis of the narrated cases is that priests in this type of disputes used mostly Directive-Manipulation Strategies, as they employed more behavioral specifics of this approach. Seven techniques pertaining to this approach were used during the intervention process in both cases, whereas just two techniques related to Communication-Facilitation strategies were employed. Table 8 is illustrating for the approaches used in such disputes.

Table 8. Strategies employed in disputes over baptism (2 cases)

Communication-Facilitation Strategies	Number of cases (out of 2)	Procedural-Formulation Strategies	Number of cases (out of 2)
1. Make contact with parties	0	1. Choose meetings site	0
2. Gain the trust and confidence of the parties	1	2. Control pace and formality of meeting	0
3. Arrange for interactions btw the parties	0	3. Control physical environment	0
4. Identify issues and interests	1	4. Establish protocol	0
5. Clarify situation	0	5. Suggest procedures	0
6. Avoid taking sides	0	6. Highlight common interests	1
7. Develop a rapport with parties	0	7. Reduce tensions	2
8. Supply missing information	0	8. Control timing	0
9. Develop a framework for understanding	1	9. Deal with simple issues first	0
10. Encourage meaningful communication	1	10. Structure agenda	0
11. Offer positive evaluation	0	11. Keep parties at the table	1
12. Allow the interests of all parties to be discussed	2	12. Help parties save face	0
		13. Keep process focused on issues	0

Directive-Manipulation Strategies: Number of cases (out of 2)				
1. Change parties' expectations	2	2. Take responsibility for concessions	0	
3. Make substantive suggestions & proposals	1	4. Make parties aware of costs of non-agreement	2	
5. Supply and filter information	2	6. Suggest concessions parties can make	2	
7. Help negotiators to undo a commitment	0	8. Reward party concessions	0	
9. Help device a framework for acceptable outcome	2	10. Change expectations	2	
11. Press the parties to show flexibility	2	12. Promise resources or threaten withdrawal	0	
13. Offer to verify compliance with agreement	0			

Dispute between neighbors (1 case): Again here the sample is very small and generalizations cannot be safely made. However, it would be useful to see what the strategy employed during the process was. The analysis of this case suggests that the approach adopted was Communication-Facilitative, as the third party used 9 techniques of this approach and just two and three from Procedural Formulation and Directive Manipulation approaches, respectively. Table 9 shows what were the behavioral specifics used during the process.

Table 9. Strategies employed in the dispute between neighbors (1 case)

Communication-Facilitation Strategies	Number of Cases: 1	Procedural-Formulation Strategies	Number Cases: 1
1. Make contact with parties	1	1. Choose meetings site	0
2. Gain the trust and confidence of the parties	0	2. Control pace and formality of meeting	0
3. Arrange for interactions btw the parties	1	3. Control physical environment	0
4. Identify issues and interests	1	4. Establish protocol	0
5. Clarify situation	1	5. Suggest procedures	0
6. Avoid taking sides	1	6. Highlight common interests	0
7. Develop a rapport with parties	1	7. Reduce tensions	1
8. Supply missing information	0	8. Control timing	0
9. Develop a framework for understanding	1	9. Deal with simple issues first	0
10. Encourage meaningful communication	1	10. Structure agenda	0
11. Offer positive evaluation	0	11. Keep parties at the table	1
12. Allow the interests of all parties to be discussed	1	12. Help parties save face	0
		13. Keep process focused on issues	0

Directive-Manipulation Strategies: Number of cases: 1			
1. Change parties' expectations	0	2. Take responsibility for concessions	0
3. Make substantive suggestions & proposals	0	4. Make parties aware of costs of non-agreement	0
5. Supply and filter information	0	6. Suggest concessions parties can make	0
7. Help negotiators to undo a commitment	0	8. Reward party concessions	0
9. Help device a framework for acceptable outcome	1	10. Change expectations	0
11. Press the parties to show flexibility	1	12. Promise resources or threaten withdrawal	0
13. Offer to verify compliance with agreement	0		

Parents opposed to wedding (1 case): Also, from this type of disputes the sample is limited and, thus, no safe conclusions can be drawn. However, as with the previous type the strategy employed during the intervention process will be presented. Table 10 suggests that the approach adopted in this case was Communication –Facilitative.

Table 10. Strategies employed in the case of parents who opposed the wedding of their children (1 case)

Communication-Facilitation Strategies	Number of Cases: 1	Procedural-Formulation Strategies	Number of Cases: 1
1. Make contact with parties	1	1. Choose meetings site	0
2. Gain the trust and confidence of the parties	1	2. Control pace and formality of meeting	0
3. Arrange for interactions btw the parties	1	3. Control physical environment	0
4. Identify issues and interests	1	4. Establish protocol	0
5. Clarify situation	1	5. Suggest procedures	0
6. Avoid taking sides	1	6. Highlight common interests	1
7. Develop a rapport with parties	1	7. Reduce tensions	1
8. Supply missing information	1	8. Control timing	0
9. Develop a framework for understanding	1	9. Deal with simple issues first	0
10. Encourage meaningful communication	1	10. Structure agenda	0
11. Offer positive evaluation	0	11. Keep parties at the table	1
12. Allow the interests of all parties to be discussed	1	12. Help parties save face	0
		13. Keep process focused on issues	0

Directive-Manipulation Strategies: Number of Cases: 1			
1. Change parties' expectations	1	2. Take responsibility for concessions	0
3. Make substantive suggestions & proposals	0	4. Make parties aware of costs of non-agreement	1
5. Supply and filter information	0	6. Suggest concessions parties can make	0
7. Help negotiators to undo a commitment	0	8. Reward party concessions	0
9. Help device a framework for acceptable outcome	1	10. Change expectations	1
11. Press the parties to show flexibility	1	12. Promise resources or threaten withdrawal	0
13. Offer to verify compliance with agreement	0		

From the data presented above it could be argued that there is a positive association between the nature of the disputes and the mediation approach adopted by the third party. For each type of disputes there is one strategy systematically employed by the priests in their effort to manage the conflicts. Communication-Facilitation approaches are usually adopted in marital and economic disputes. As mentioned previously, marital disputes usually emerge as a result of disagreements on daily issues or of alienation between the spouses. In such cases priests' intention is to promote meaningful communication between the disputants and, thus, improve their relationship, creating an environment within which the parties through discussion could search together for mutually acceptable settlements. Employment of directive approach would be of no use: a settlement achieved as a result of pressure

would be proved stillborn. Since the parties are engaged in daily interaction and their relationship is a major concern for them, the preferable approach to adopt is Communication-Facilitation (Bercovitch & Houston, 2000). The same strategy is employed in economic disputes. The nature of the disputes is not directly related to religious norms or rules, and therefore the influence of priests is limited. As a result their involvement is directed to the encouragement of meaningful communication and to the promotion of understanding between the disputants. Finally, this approach was, also, adopted in the case, where the parents opposed to the wedding of their children and in the dispute between the two neighbors. However, the size of the sample was limited and no safe generalizations can be made.

On the other hand, Directive-Manipulation strategies were employed in disputes emerging out of the involvement of a 3rd person between the spouses. As mentioned previously, the notion that marriage is a sacred institution is well-established in Christian value system. Therefore, it is not surprising that priests employ a manipulative strategy intervening substantively in the dispute in an effort to protect this sacred institution. Finally, the same approach was adopted in the two disputes over baptism. However, again the sample does not allow generalizations.

3.2.1. b) Characteristics of the parties.

After examining the impact, which the nature of the dispute exercises on the choice of mediator's approach, it would be useful to look at the second cluster of factors that may have an effect on this choice. According to Wall et al (2001) literature suggests that one type of factors affecting the choice of mediation strategy is the characteristics of the disputants. Moreover, he argues that these characteristics, which dictate the mediator's approach, are the disputants' past interaction and their relationship with the mediator.

Here, the impact of the relationship between the mediator and the disputants to the choice of mediator's approach could be examined on the following basis: whether there was a confessor-confessant relationship between the parties involved in a conflict and the priest, who mediated. Again, conclusions here are drawn from the 30 cases narrated by my interviewees in section E of the protocol.

It would be useful at this point to provide some further information about the mystery of confession and the important relationship which is being built between the confessor and the confessant. The bond developed between the priest and the faithful through the mystery of confession is very strong. As mentioned in previous section of this study, apart from penance and forgiveness, this mystery is about the spiritual guidance and instruction. The priest is responsible for the spiritual progress of the Christians and tries with love and tenderness and without criticism to provide advice to the faithfuls, not only in issues related to spiritual life, but also in everyday affairs, as since "every human action can either hinder or facilitate the spiritual progress of a person" (ISEE, 2007: 86). It is necessary here to provide some more information about the mystery of confession. Firstly, not all priests are confessors, as not all priests have the strength and the necessary qualities to undertake such a duty. Any priest, who intends to become a confessor, needs to ask for the permission and receive the respective blessing of the bishop of the region. Moreover, the common practice for faithfuls is to have only one father confessor with whom they develop a spiritual relationship similar to the natural bond of father and child. If the faithful wills to confess to another priest s/he needs to have the consent and blessing of her/ his father confessor. Taking into consideration the in-principle personalization of the pastoral care, it is easily understood that the bond created through this interaction is strong, and any advice/ suggestion by the confessor is seriously taken into account. Nevertheless, bringing a dispute to a priest asking for his intervention does not

depend solely on the existence of such a relationship, as the pastoral care is directed to all members of the laity.

Going back to our research, in 18 of the cases narrated by my informants there was a spiritual/ confessor-confessant relationship (CCR), whereas in 12 cases there was not. Using again the taxonomy of third party roles, offered by Touval and Zartman, I will make an effort to discover whether this variable (the existence of CCR) exercises an impact on the choice of mediator's approach. Table 11 shows the strategies employed by the third parties in disputes where at least one of the parties involved had CC relationship with the mediator.

Table 11. Strategies employed in disputes with CC relationship (18 cases)

Communication-Facilitation Strategies	Number of Cases (out of 18)	Procedural-Formulation Strategies	Number of Cases (out of18)
1. Make contact with parties	1	1. Choose meetings site	0
2. Gain the trust and confidence of the parties	6	2. Control pace and formality of meeting	0
3. Arrange for interactions btw the parties	1	3. Control physical environment	0
4. Identify issues and interests	15	4. Establish protocol	0
5. Clarify situation	9	5. Suggest procedures	0
6. Avoid taking sides	3	6. Highlight common interests	17
7. Develop a rapport with parties	5	7. Reduce tensions	18
8. Supply missing information	0	8. Control timing	0
9. Develop a framework for understanding	7	9. Deal with simple issues first	0

10. Encourage meaningful communication	17	10. Structure agenda	0
11. Offer positive evaluation	0	11. Keep parties at the table	6
12. Allow the interests of all parties to be discussed	13	12. Help parties save face	0
		13. Keep process focused on issues	4

Directive-Manipulation Strategies: Number of cases (out of 18)			
1. Change parties' expectations	16	2. Take responsibility for concessions	0
3. Make substantive suggestions & proposals	12	4. Make parties aware of costs of non-agreement	18
5. Supply and filter information	8	6. Suggest concessions parties can make	18
7. Help negotiators to undo a commitment	0	8. Reward party concessions	0
9. Help device a framework for acceptable outcome	18	10. Change expectations	15
11. Press the parties to show flexibility	18	12. Promise resources or threaten withdrawal	0
13. Offer to verify compliance with agreement	0		

As it is clear from the above table in disputes where a CC relationship exists it is more likely for third parties to employ Directive-Manipulation strategies, as the number of behavioral specifics pertaining to this approach is far higher, compared to the other two available approaches. Moreover, if we divide the 18 cases, which include a CC relationship according to the overall approach that the mediator adopts we will see that in 15 of them directive-manipulation strategies are employed, whereas in just 3 the third party chose Facilitative-communication techniques.

Furthermore, Table 12 illustrates the mediation approaches adopted during the intervention in the 12 disputes where there was no CC relationship between the disputants and the third party.

Table 12. Strategies employed in Disputes without CC Relationship (12 cases)

Communication-Facilitation Strategies	Number of Cases (out of 12)	Procedural-Formulation Strategies	Number of Cases (out of12)
1. Make contact with parties	4	1. Choose meetings site	0
2. Gain the trust and confidence of the parties	11	2. Control pace and formality of meeting	0
3. Arrange for interactions b/w the parties	4	3. Control physical environment	0
4. Identify issues and interests	12	4. Establish protocol	0
5. Clarify situation	12	5. Suggest procedures	0
6. Avoid taking sides	12	6. Highlight common interests	11
7. Develop a rapport with parties	12	7. Reduce tensions	12
8. Supply missing information	6	8. Control timing	0

9. Develop a framework for understanding	12	9. Deal with simple issues first	0
10. Encourage meaningful communication	12	10. Structure agenda	0
11. Offer positive evaluation	5	11. Keep parties at the table	2
12. Allow the interests of all parties to be discussed	12	12. Help parties save face	0
		13. Keep process focused on issues	3

Directive-Manipulation Strategies: Number of cases (out of 12)			
1. Change parties' expectations	1	2. Take responsibility for concessions	0
3. Make substantive suggestions & proposals	2	4. Make parties aware of costs of non-agreement	5
5. Supply and filter information	1	6. Suggest concessions parties can make	7
7. Help negotiators to undo a commitment	0	8. Reward party concessions	0
9. Help device a framework for acceptable outcome	3	10. Change expectations	1
11. Press the parties to show flexibility	11	12. Promise resources or threaten withdrawal	0
13. Offer to verify compliance with agreement	0		

As it is induced from the above table in conflicts, where the disputants are not connected to the third party with a CC relationship, mediators are more likely to adopt Communication-Facilitation strategies. The number of techniques used related to this approach is higher compared to the two remaining available approaches. Again, if we classify the 12 disputes where no CC relationship exists, we will see that in 8 cases Communication-Facilitation strategies were employed, whereas in 4 cases the third party chose a Directive Manipulation approach.

In this section an effort was made to present the ways in which the relationship of the parties involved in a dispute in the examined context affects the choice of mediator's approach. As it was illustrated, in disputes where the parties have a CC Relationship with the third party, it was more likely for the mediator to employ Directive Manipulative strategy. The nature of CC relationship allows the third party to make substantive suggestions, as on the one hand the priest feels personally responsible for the spiritual progress of the confessants and, on the other hand, the large extent of trust and respect he enjoys, allows him to press for the compliance of the disputants. It could be argued that a CC relationship gives the priests both the `power` and the `right` to intervene substantively in the disputes; a recourse that priests, usually, don't hesitate to make use of. Absence of such relationship is more likely to lead to the employment of Communication-Facilitation strategy.

3.2.1 c) Characteristics of the mediator

In the previous sections I presented the impact that the nature of the disputes and the characteristics of the parties exert on the choice of mediation strategy. Here, I will make an effort to illustrate how the characteristics of the mediators affect this choice. Insights on the identity of the priests and their role within the parish were analytically offered in the literature review

chapter. The constituent characteristics of priests' identity influence to a great extent their behavior during their intervention in disputes between parishioners. Priests are religious figures and this reality has two significant implications for the intervention process concerned. On the one hand, there is a given system of values and rules within which they live and act. The mediation process examined in the present study should be seen as a part of the pastoral activity and, therefore, the same values and rules are emphasized. During the process, the primary goal is the spiritual instruction of the faithfuls; priests intervene having as major concern the salvation of the Christians. Not only do they act as third parties, but also as pedagogues. On the other hand, this system of values and rules is dictated by an authority (God) external both to them and to the disputants. Thus, when the behavior of the disputants deviate from what is in accordance with the accepted values and the divine laws, priests need to intervene and attempt to bring them back to order, even by employing manipulation.

As it is understood from the above, priests' intervention is structured around two interlinked axes: a) inspiration of the valued attributes to the disputants, and b) compliance with divine laws. These two factors govern their behavior during the process. However, this impact is not expressed on the basis of choosing one strategy over another, but rather is illustrated by the use/choice of specific techniques within the strategies (cross-cutting the strategies). In relation to the value system provided by Christian worldview, as presented in the literature review section, love and forgiveness are of central importance in Christianity. These are the values that priests emphasize and try to inspire to the faithfuls during the process. This is why their focus is primarily on restoring the relationship of the parties involved. The techniques they employ are mostly relationship-building oriented, as the goal is to create an environment of harmonic interaction, favorable for promoting love between the faithfuls (techniques mostly from Communication-Facilitation strategies).

Table 4, which reflects the direct responses of my interviewees to open-ended questions from section C of the protocol (third party roles and techniques & strategies employed), indicates that during the intervention priests try to reduce tensions between the parties (14 respondents out of 14), they focus on the development of a framework for parties' mutual understanding (13 out of 14), they promote open discussion and encourage meaningful communication between the disputants (14 out of 14), they highlight parties' common interests (14 out of 14). It is induced from the above that a series of techniques that priests use during the process are pertaining to Communication-Facilitation strategies, as their goal is not to resolve the immediate conflict at stake but rather to help the parties develop a meaningful relationship on the basis of love. "If the parties cease being egoist and start loving each other, then the solution is not far away. Love never fails", said father A. (interviewee no. 11, Kastoria, 14/09/07). Moreover, during the process priests make no reference to the value of justice, which is considered of secondary importance in Christianity, as justice alone does not lead to salvation. "Since we are priests and not judges, our duty is to inspire love and not to dispense justice", responded father L. (interviewee no. 10, Plagiari, 10/09/07). Instead, priests suggest the party which has suffered the injustice to forgive the wrongdoer for the sake of building a positive relationship.

Furthermore, the fact that priests act in the frames of a given system of values and rules, which is dictated not by them but by an external, superior authority, influences their behavior during the intervention process, as well. In that sense, they do not have much room for maneuvering, and when the behavior of the disputants deviates from the given system, they need to intervene in substantive issues of the dispute and exercise pressure to the parties. This is also illustrated in Table 4, where a significant number of responses concerns behavioral specifics pertaining to Directive-Manipulation strategies. Priests over the process commonly suggest concessions that parties can (or should) make (14 respondents out of 14), press the disputants to show

flexibility (14 out of 14), make substantive suggestions and proposals (13 out of 14), and –as a form of leverage- make parties aware of the costs of non-agreement (14 out of 14). Thus, they make an effort to cause perceptional and attitudinal changes to the disputants.

As a conclusion it could be argued that the identity of the mediators in the process concerned influences their behavior in two ways. On the one hand, placing an emphasis on love, they favor meaningful relationship building between the disputants, and on the other hand they influence substantively the process, when it comes to deviation from the given system of values and rules. However, this impact that the identity of the mediator exercises on their behavior is neither clearly related to, nor reflected in the choice of one strategy over another. Rather, as presented in this section, it has implications for the choice and use of specific techniques across the available strategies continuum (mainly from Facilitation-Communication and Procedural-Formulation approaches).

3.2.1. d) Concluding Remarks on the Determinants of Mediator's Strategy

In this section I made an effort to define the determinants of mediator's strategy in the environment concerned in this study. For the achievement of this task I examined three factors, which according to literature constitute determinants of this choice: a) nature of the dispute, b) relationship between the parties involved and the mediator, and c) the identity of mediator.

In terms of the first factor a positive relationship was revealed between the nature of the dispute and the choice of mediation strategy. More specifically, priests are more likely to employ communication-facilitation strategies in marital and economic disputes, whereas in disputes, which

emerge as a result of the involvement of a 3rd person between the spouses they adopt directive-manipulation techniques.

As far as the relationship between the parties and the mediator is concerned, it was illustrated that when a confessor-confessant relationship exists between the priest and the disputants, it is more likely that the mediator adopts Directive-Manipulation approach, as the nature of this relationship allows the priest to intervene substantively in the dispute. In the absence of such relationship, priests are more likely to adopt Communication-Facilitation techniques.

Finally, it was illustrated that the identity of the priests (religious figures within the Christian value system) does not constitute determinant of the approach they adopt. However, it affects the choice of specific techniques within the strategies provided by Touval and Zartman (1985). On the one hand, prompted by the emphasis given on love in Christianity, they favor meaningful communication and relationship building between the parties. On the other hand they influence the process substantively, when the disputants deviate from the given Christian value system.

A finding that deserves special mention is the fact that priests in general do not make use of Procedural-Formulation strategies, apart from technique no.6 (highlight parties' common interests) and technique no.7 (reduce tensions). This choice could be attributed to two characteristics that govern priests' behavior during the process: a) the emphasis they place on the inspiration of love and forgiveness, and b) the pressure they exercise to the disputants to comply with the divine laws. As presented in the previous section (3.2.1.c) the first characteristic leads priests to employ techniques pertaining more to Communication-Facilitation Strategies, whereas in their effort to achieve parties' compliance to divine law they employ techniques from Directive-Manipulation strategies. Thus, the non-use of Procedural-Formulation strategies is a result of the preference priests have for the other

two available approaches. Finally, it could be argued that Procedural-Formulation strategies include a series of techniques (control pace and formality of meeting, control physical environment, establish protocol, control timing, structure agenda), which are of little use and interest in the given religious context.

3. 2.2. Outcome of the Intervention: Definition of the desirable outcome

In the previous section the determinants of mediator's approach in the context examined in this study were presented. In this part issues related to the outcome of the intervention will be explored. Firstly, it would be interesting to see what is defined as the desirable outcome of the process. Data were drawn from the direct responses of my informants (open-ended questions from section D of the interview protocol). The interviewees had the option to give more than one responses each, if preferred. In this question, 12 priests out of 14 responded that they define as the desirable outcome of their intervention the inspiration of *love* between the disputants. As presented in the literature review chapter love is a value of central importance in Christianity, as it is considered a safe way to salvation. "Love is the path which leads us to Jesus Christ. It is the way to let Christ live inside us", responded father G. (interviewee no. 6, Thessaloniki, 19/ 09/ 2007). Thus, it is not surprising that the majority of priests define love as the desirable outcome.

Special mention was also made to the importance of forgiveness, as a product of love, within the Christian worldview. This value is also emphasized in the religious instruction and guidance. The second common answer given by my informants is in accordance with this reality. Seven priests out of 14 defined among the desirable outcomes the development of *forgiveness* between the faithfuls. Justice is not sought during the intervention process examined here. Rather, Christians involved in disputes should seek for settlement in an apology-forgiveness pattern, as given in the Bible (King

James Version), Colossians 3: 13 "Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another".

Moreover, two priests out of 14 valued *peace* as one of the desirable outcomes, and an equal number responded that *harmony* is also of some importance. However, three of the interviewees, when the discussion during our meetings came to harmony replied that, in their opinion, harmony is not among the favored outcomes, as it is not related with spiritual progress and personal development. "Besides, harmony is boring. Can you imagine the Nature having just one type of trees?" father G. (interviewee no. 3, Despilio, 30/08/07) replied. Furthermore, revealing the *truth* was among the outcomes that one of my informants favors. Finally, five priests out of 14 defined as the desirable outcome of the process the imitation of Jesus Christ. "Christ should be our example. Any of our actions should reveal something of Him", added father A. (interviewee no. 2, Kipoupoli, 12/09/07). The general notion in Christianity is that Christ as a perfect, sinless man (along with perfect God) stands as an example to be followed by all Christians. This notion has its place in the intervention process examined here, as well.

Chart 6. Desirable Outcome
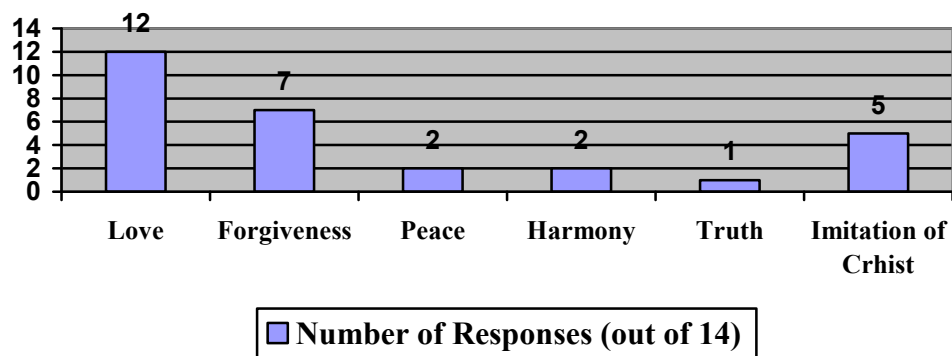
1. Love: 12 responses
2. Forgiveness: 7 responses
3. Peace: 2 responses
4. Harmony: 2 responses
5. Truth: 1 response
6. To imitate Christ: 5 responses

3.2.2. Outcomes of the Intervention: Determinants

After offering the definition of the desirable mediation outcome by priests, it would be both useful and interesting to examine a series of factors, which exert an influence on the outcome of the intervention.

In order to carry out this task a conceptual framework provided by M. Kleiboer will be slightly modified and used. Kleiboer (1996) offers four clusters of factors which constitute determinants of the mediation outcomes: a) characteristics of the dispute (conflict ripeness, level of conflict intensity, and nature of the issues), b) characteristics of the parties and their interrelationship (their identification, their cohesiveness, their type of regime, their motivation to accept mediation, previous and ongoing relationship, and the distribution of power), c) characteristics of the mediator (impartiality, leverage, status), and d) the international context. In her article Kleiboer refers to international level, and thus, among the factors she provides there are variables of little use (conflict ripeness) or irrelevant (type of regimes of the parties, cohesiveness of the parties) to interpersonal level. Thus, in an effort to define the factors that affect the mediation outcome I will examine the following factors:

a) Characteristics of the dispute: is there any relationship between the *nature of the dispute* and the outcome of mediation?
b) Characteristics of the parties: how does the *previous interaction* of the parties and their *relationship with the third party* affect the outcome?
c) Characteristics of the mediator: How does mediator's behavior affect the outcome?
d) Finally an effort will be made to explore the impact that the overall context has on the mediation outcomes.

As it is clear, apart from the last factor, the first three are the same ones I examined in order to define the forces that influence the choice of strategy by the third parties. Here, I will try to discover whether the same factors exert an impact on the outcomes of the intervention, and what this impact is. Finally, special mention will be made to certain aspects of the context that influence mediation outcomes. Conclusions here will be drawn from the 30 cases narrated by my informants in section E of the interview protocol.

3.2.2. a) Characteristics of the dispute –nature of the dispute

As mentioned previously in this study, love is defined as the desirable outcome of the mediation process examined. However, love as an outcome is a non-measurable quality. Thus, here the outcomes of the mediation will be described on the basis of whether an agreement was reached or not. Out of the thirty intervention processes narrated by my informants 19 resulted in an agreement between the parties, whereas 11 were unfruitful. Here, an effort is made to discover any relationship between the nature of the disputes and the outcome of the mediation process. As it is illustrated in Chart 7, out of nine disputes related to the involvement of a third person between the spouses, six could be considered successful as they ended with an agreement of the parties involved. Moreover, in six out of eight economic disputes the parties came to an agreement, whereas two interventions did not result in success. As far as marital disputes are concerned, four processes ended in settlement of the dispute and five were proved fruitless. Both interventions in disputes over baptisms were successful, as opposed to the dispute between the neighbors, in which there was no settlement reached. Finally, successful was the outcome in the case of the parents who opposed the wedding of their children.

As it is clear from the above, no regular pattern can be found so as to reveal any relationship between the nature of the dispute and the outcome of

the intervention. In the first and the third type of disputes a clear association between the nature of the cases and the outcome does not seem to exist, whereas in the last three types the size of the sample is very limited, so as not to allow generalizations. Only in economic disputes there seems to be a tendency for successful interventions; however no safe conclusions can be drawn.

Chart 7. Outcome of Narrated Cases According to their Nature
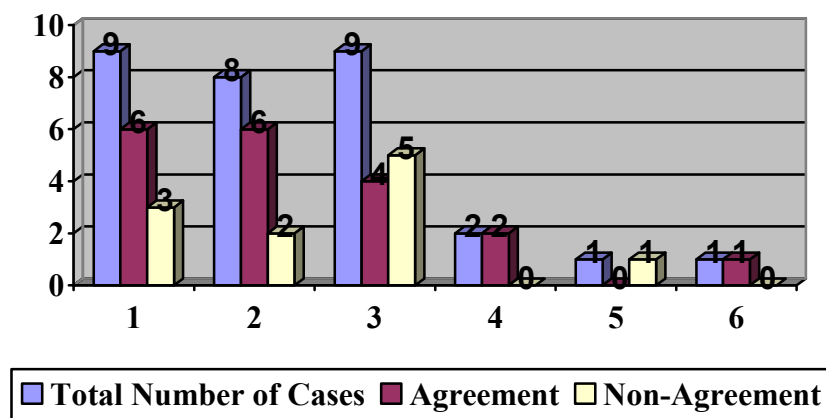
1. Involvement of a third person between the spouses (9)
2. Economic: 8 related to husband and wife
3. Marital disputes: tensions between spouses: 9
4. Baptism: 2
5. Tension between neighbors (competition): 1
6. Parents against the wedding: 1

3.2.2. b) Characteristics of the parties

In this part the impact of the relationship between the disputants and the mediator on the outcome of the process is examined. More specifically, I will make an effort to reveal whether the existence of Confessor-Confessant (CC) relationship constitutes a determinant of the mediation outcome in the context concerned, drawing my conclusions from the 30 cases narrated in section E of the interview protocol.

As presented earlier in this study in 18 of 30 cases narrated by my informants there was a CC relationship, whereas in 12 there was not. Table 18 shows the outcome of the narrated cases according to parties-mediator relationship. As it is illustrated there is a positive correlation between the existence of a CC relationship and successful outcomes of the mediation process. In 13 out of 18 interventions the parties came to an agreement, whereas just 5 mediations did not result in dispute settlement. This correlation can be explained on the basis of the nature of this relationship between the Christians and their father-confessor. Not only do faithfuls recognize that the confessor is responsible for their spiritual progress, but also they accept his advice and suggestions as coming from an `expert` in religious issues. Recognizing that the priest has no other intention but their salvation, disputants perceive his suggestions as a moral obligation. This is –*inter alia*- a result of the trust and respect developed in the frames of this relationship, whose main characteristics were described previously in this study. Moreover, it was presented earlier in the analysis that there is a positive correlation between the existence of CC relationship and the employment of Directive-Manipulation strategies. As it will be presented in the next section, this reality also contributes to the correlation between the existence of CC relationship and successful outcomes. It is worth noting, here, that in 2 out of the 5 cases, where a CC relationship existed and the process did not result in settlement, the CC relationship was interrupted.

Finally, as can be induced by Chart 8 there seems to be no specific pattern concerning the outcome of disputes where there is no CC relationship. In the twelve cases narrated by my interviewees the distribution between what can be defined as successful and unsuccessful interventions (considering whether there is an agreement or not) was equal.

**Chart 8. Outcome of the Narrated Cases According to
Parties-Mediator Relationship**
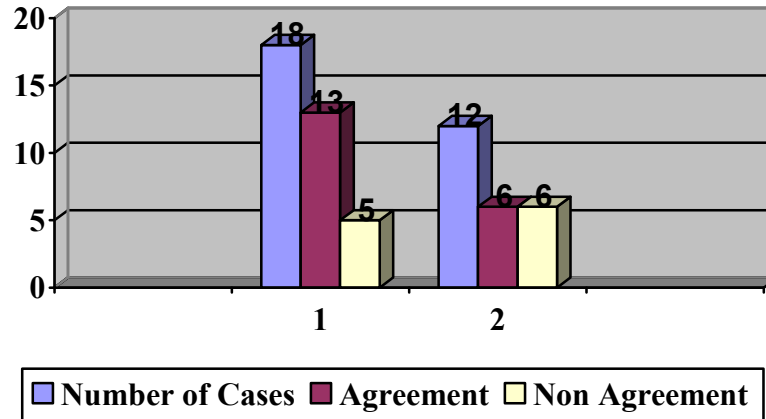
1. Cases involving a Confessor-Confessant (CC) Relationship
2. Cases without a Confessor-Confessant Relationship

### 3.2.2. c) Characteristics of the mediator –mediator's behavior

After having examined the impact that the nature of the disputes and the relationship between the parties and the mediator exert on the outcome of the process, I will attempt here to explore how the strategy employed by the third party affects the outcome of the intervention. Literature suggests that third party's behavior is an important determinant for the outcome of mediation. It was mentioned in previous parts of the analysis that during the process priests either act as facilitators enhancing communication and dialogue between the parties, or employ manipulative strategy, intervening in substantial issues of the dispute. Chart 9 presents the outcomes of the cases narrated by my interviewees according to the strategy employed by the third party. As shown, there is no clear association between the adoption of facilitative approach and a certain type of outcome. Communication-Facilitation strategy was employed in 11 cases, out of which 5 ended in an

agreement, whereas six interventions were unsuccessful. Thus, no pattern can be found connecting the use of facilitative strategy with specific outcomes, as there is a balance between successful and unsuccessful interventions.

On the other hand, an association between the use of Directive-Manipulation strategies and occurrence of a certain type of outcomes is revealed. Such approach was adopted by the third parties in 19 out of 30 narrated interventions. In 14 of these cases the outcome could be defined as successful, considering that the parties involved came to an agreement. This number is high enough to allow us generalize and argue that Directive-Manipulation strategies employed in the environment examined here, are associated with successful mediation outcomes. This finding is in accordance with a big part of the literature, which suggests that manipulative strategies are more likely to result in agreement (Beardsley et al, 2006, Bercovitch & Houston 1996, Bercovitch and Lamare, 1993). Of course it is important to note here that the above studies concern intervention processes conducted at international level. In the context concerned, the fact that Directive-Manipulation strategies are more likely to result in successful outcomes could be explained by the reality presented in the previous section: such approaches are usually employed in cases where a CC relationship exists. The existence of such relationship –for a series of reasons explained above- makes the parties more disposed to follow the suggestions made by the priest.

So far in our analysis, the influence that the nature of the disputes, the relationship between the disputants and the mediator, and mediator's behavior exert on the outcomes of mediation was presented. In the following section of the analysis the relationship between the context and the outcome of the intervention process is explored.

**Chart 9. Outcomes of the Narrated Cases according to
Mediator's Strategy**
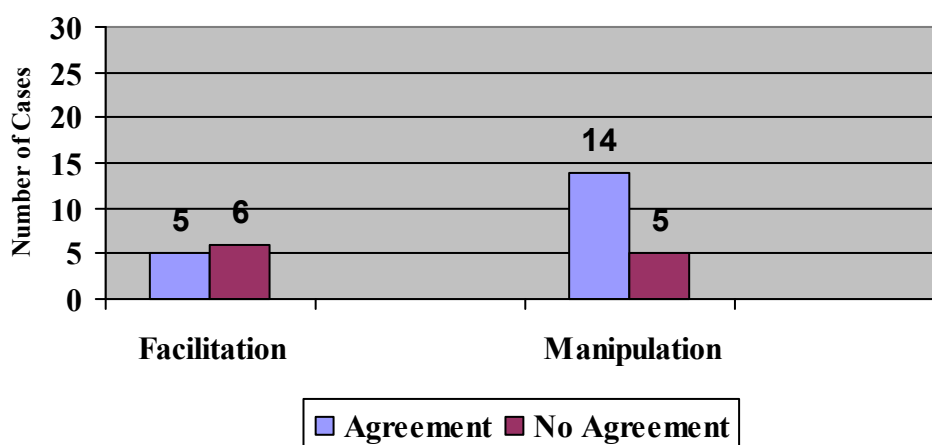
1. Communication-Facilitation Strategies: 5 out of 11 cases resulted
   in settlement
2. Directive-Manipulation Strategies: 14 out of 19

3.2.2. d) Mediation Context

As presented previously in this study the intervention examined takes
place within a given system of values and rules. Priests as religious figures
live and act within this system. It is therefore understood that the values and
rules governing this environment influence to a large extent the mediation
process. Priests see their intervention as a part of their pastoral activity, and
this is why over the process they use these values and rules as reference points
in their interaction with the disputants. Moreover, it was presented earlier that
the value of love is of central importance in Christianity and it is defined as
the desirable outcome of the priests' intervention. In this last part of the
analysis, an effort is made to understand – out of the cases narrated in section
E – how this context affects the actual outcome of the intervention.

As mentioned above the intervention conducted by priests has, as an ultimate goal, the inspiration of love between the disputants. However, in terms of analysis love is not a measurable quality, and therefore it cannot be actually confirmed whether love was inspired between the parties. Additionally, even if it was possible to measure love, in order to achieve this task the researcher would need to contact the parties themselves and not just the mediator. However, for reasons explained in the methodology chapter, direct contact with the parties was not possible. Thus, we cannot really confirm whether and in which cases the inspiration of love was the actual outcome of the intervention.

What can be seen, however, during the process is that priests in their effort to promote love between the disputants employ techniques targeted to the restoration or improvement of parties' relationship. In the discussion on the strategies they use during their intervention, it was presented that priests put an effort into meaningful relationship building between the disputants, so as to create the necessary environment for the promotion of love. The main intention was to reach an agreement not on the basis of justice or harmony, but rather –through forgiveness- on the basis of improving parties' relationship, as a means to enhance love.

In an effort to discover whether there is a relationship between this characteristic of the religious context and the actual outcome of the mediation process, I will focus on the 19 resolved disputes narrated by my informants and I will examine, how many of them were resolved on the basis of restoring disputants' relationship. In other words, my intention is to examine in how many disputes, the parties came to an agreement having as primary concern the restoration/ improvement of their relationship (in how many cases parties gave in something from their positions in order to restore/ improve their relationship). Of course, here the data are drawn from the narrations of the third parties, and thus, they may reflect only their point of view and their understanding of parties' behavior.

Chart 10 shows the primary reasons for the parties reaching an agreement. In 13 out of 19 cases with successful outcome, parties came to an agreement prompted by their desire to improve/ restore their relationship. Although the outcome might not be perceived as fair, or as serving the interests of the disputants, the latter chose to reach an agreement for the sake of their relationship with the other party. Interestingly, in 3 cases parties' compliance was a result of threat made by the priest. The third party threatened the disputants that he would end their Confessor –Confessant relationship, if they did not comply with his suggestions, urging them not to deviate from the given value system. Moreover, two cases ended in settlement, because the disputants perceived the agreement as fair. Finally, in one of the economic disputes the outcome of the intervention was successful because the third party proposed an alternative which appealed profitable to all parties.

As it is clear from the above, although love as an outcome cannot be measured, in the majority of the resolved disputes, the agreement was largely a result of the parties' will to restore their relationship. Thus, it could be argued that there is a positive correlation between the values emphasized within the given religious context and the outcomes of the intervention process concerned. Of course, this conclusion is not surprising, as it can be also explained by the fact that most of the disputes that are brought to priests are relational, and therefore it is sensible to have a focus on relationship building.

Chart 10. Primary Reason for Agreement
(out of 19 cases)
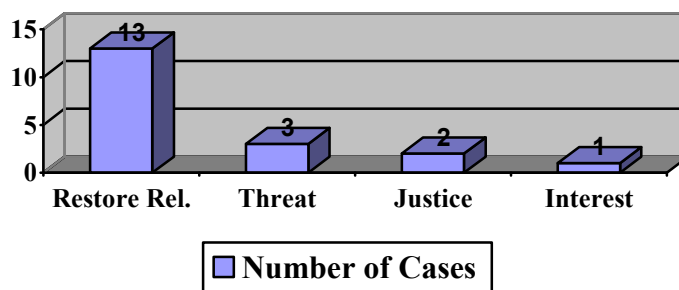
1. Restore Relationship (13)
2. Threat made by the 3rd Party (3)
3. Agreement Perceived as fair (2)
4. Agreement serves parties' interests (1)

Concluding Remarks on the Determinants of Mediation Outcome

In this last part of the analysis I made an effort to define the factors, which affect the mediation outcomes in the context concerned (based on the analysis of the 30 cases narrated by my informants in section E of the interview protocol). In order to explore the forces which `shape` the outcome of the interventions conducted by Greek Orthodox priests, I modified and used the framework of mediation outcome determinants provided by M. Kleiboer (1996). More specifically, I focused on the impact of four factors: a) nature of the dispute, b) relationship between the parties and the mediator, c) mediator's behavior, and d) mediation context. As successful outcome my interviewees defined the inspiration of love between the disputants. However, since love is a non-measurable quality, for the purposes of the study, I considered as successful interventions those, which resulted in an agreement between the parties.

In regards to the first factor, no association was found between the nature of the disputes and the outcome of mediation. With the exception of economic disputes, where a general tendency to have successful outcomes was revealed, the number of successful and unsuccessful interventions in the rest of the disputes was fairly equal. Thus, it could be argued that the nature of the disputes does not constitute a strong determinant of the mediation outcome in the examined context.

Moreover, it was illustrated that the relationship between the disputants and the third party exercises an influence on the outcome of mediation. Successful interventions are in positive correlation with the existence of Confessor-confessant relationship. The majority of interventions, in which the mediator and the disputants were connected with such relationship, ended in an agreement. Therefore, it could be argued that the second factor –when a CC relationship exists- is one of the determinants of mediation outcomes in the environment concerned.

As far as the third factor is concerned, it was revealed that a correlation exists between successful outcomes and the employment of Directive –Manipulation strategies. In the majority of the cases, in which the third party adopted a manipulative approach, the disputants reached an agreement. Moreover, no relationship was found between the mediation outcome and the use of Communication-Facilitation strategies.

Finally, the impact of the context on mediation outcomes was revealed through the analysis of the cases, which ended in an agreement. It could be argued that the given value system, prompts disputants to make concessions in order to improve their relationship with the other party. It was shown that in the majority of the resolved disputes, the parties complied with the suggestions made by priests, having as primary concern the development of love between them and the other party. The first step towards this end was the improvement of the relationship between the disputants. This explains,

according to my informants, why disputants complied with outcomes, which might not appeal as fair or profitable to them.

Examining the general trends occurring in the mediation process analyzed in this study, special mention should be made to a strong pattern, which occurs in relation both to the process and to the mediation outcome. As illustrated earlier, two factors, which affect both the process and the outcome of mediation, are the existence of confessor-confessant relationship and the employment of directive-manipulation strategies. When a CC relationship exists, third parties are more likely to employ manipulative strategies. Moreover, it was presented that both the existence of CC relationship and the use of manipulative strategies are positively associated with successful mediation outcomes. In an effort to explore the relationship between these two factors I listed the cases, in which both a CC relationship existed and manipulative strategy was employed and I examined what the outcome of the intervention was. It was revealed that out of 15 intervention processes, in which both factors existed, 12 ended with an agreement. Therefore, when the parties involved in a conflict are connected with a CC relationship with the mediator, and the latter employs manipulative strategy, it is very likely that the dispute will be settled (Figure I). On the other hand, no relationship can be found between the absence of both factors and the mediation outcome. In 8 cases, in which none of these factors existed, the outcomes were balanced (four agreements).

Figure 1. Relationship between CC Relationship, Manipulative Strategy and Successful Outcomes.
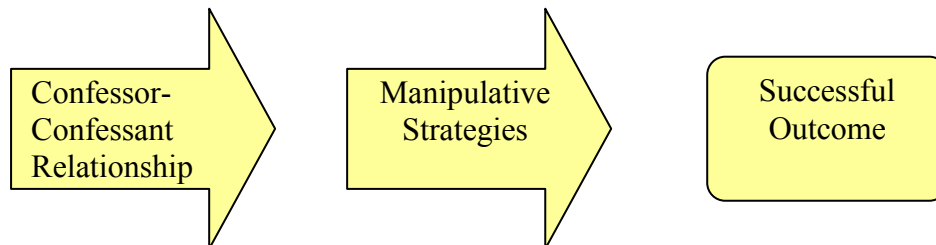
This chapter comprised of two sections. The first part, descriptive in nature, provided a brief overview of a series of key-aspects related to the mediation process, examined in the present study. The second part constituted an effort to present, through analysis of the empirical data, a number of process and outcome determinants of the third party intervention conducted by Greek Orthodox priests. In the following chapter concluding remarks of this study are presented.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

Over the last years, there is an increased interest on the systematic study of conflict resolution mechanisms in indigenous cultural settings. A considerable amount of research has been conducted in an effort to develop a better understanding of the implications of culture for the formation of conflict perceptions, behavior and mechanisms of conflict resolution. In this study an effort was made to provide a systematic analysis of the third party intervention conducted by Orthodox Christian priests in disputes involving members of the religious communities. The objective of this research was to shed light on the process and outcome of the third party intervention, within the given Christian system of values and norms. Through the analysis of the data a series of useful conclusions were drawn.

4.1. Priests as Social Network Mediators

Priests' position within Christian communities allows them through the pastoral activity to develop strong personal relationship with the faithfuls. Their co-existence and interaction with potential disputants start long before a conflict erupts, and usually continue after the dispute is settled. Priests, as all social network mediators, stand as an important part of a continuing and common network, within which they enjoy the respect and the trust of the

members (Moore, 1996, Wehr & Lederach, 1991). As religious figures, responsible for the spiritual progress of the faithfuls they perceive a personal obligation to assist the disputants, emphasizing the building of `smooth` interpersonal relationships. This reality is reflected in all stages of the intervention process examined in this study: a) initiation of the process: faithfuls bring their disputes to priests, prompted by the personal relationship developed between them, respecting them as religious figures, and perceiving them as trusted third parties. b) process: during their intervention priests place an emphasis on the improvement of disputants' relationship. They attempt to enhance communication and to promote understanding and empathy between disputants. c) outcome: the desirable outcome of the process is the inspiration of love between the disputants. Again, here they place an emphasis on maintaining smooth interpersonal relationships between the faithfuls, as a means to promote love.

4.2. Implications of the Christian Value System for the Third Party Intervention Process

Above all priests are religious figures. Their perceptions of, and responses to conflict are formed through the `lenses` of the given value system within which they live, as notions of agreement and disagreement, conflict and cooperation are given meaning by the cultural system within which they occur (Gadlin, 1994). Responses to conflict occurrence are contingent upon what is defined as the proffered `cure`, which facilitates faithfuls' salvation or enlightenment (Yandel, 1998). Priests acting within, and in accordance to the Christian value system, emphasize during their intervention the proffered `cure`, as defined in Christianity: love. This is the reference point during the process, as opposed to harmony in Confucian societies (Leung, Koch & Lu, 2002, Chen & Chung, 1994), or *adalet* (justice) emphasized in Islamic Mediation in Turkey (Köse, 2002). Thus, as presented

in the previous chapter, priests during their intervention employ specific behavioral tactics (mainly tactics pertaining to communication facilitation strategies) to promote –through forgiveness- love between the disputants.

Apart form the above implication, the religious character of priests' identity affects their behavior in another direction. As mentioned previously in this study, the Christian *ethos,* -the set of moral values and rules- is provided by an authority external to them (God). As representatives of this authority priests are `bound` to comply with the rules set and the moral values given and, furthermore, promote compliance to the other members of the common network. Religion is of prescriptive nature: as a conceptual system it provides an account of how life should be led (Yandel, 1999). This reality explains why priests –as shown in the analysis of the findings- employ Directive-Manipulation strategies when it comes to deviation from the core Christian values and rules. Their intervention is a part of the pastoral service: it is a means of religious instruction and guidance.

Illustrating for this impact that the Christian ethos exerts on the mediation process is the correlation between the existence of confessor-confessant relationship and the employment of Directive-Manipulation strategy. This pattern has implications both for the process and for the outcome of the intervention. On the one hand, as presented in the previous chapter, the existence of CC relationship renders very likely the use of manipulative approach by the third party. In such cases, priest uses his position and status in order to cause disputants' perceptional and attitudinal shifts, by emphasizing more emphatically the moral obligations disputants have to meet. On the other hand, it was revealed that CC relationship between the disputants and priest facilitates the settlement of the conflict. The parties respond positively to the suggestions made by priest, as through the perspectives of the given value system, these suggestions are, indeed, perceived as moral obligations.

As it is induced from this study, third party intervention conducted by Greek Orthodox priests does not occur in a vacuum. Rather, it takes place within the Christian value system, and this reality has numerous implications both for the behavior of the parties and the mediator during the process, and for the development of perceptions on the accepted/ desirable outcome.

4.4. Value of the study

This study constitutes the first research on this type of intervention conducted by Greek Orthodox priests within the Christian communities. It is the first effort to present –through the use of analytical tools offered by CR literature- the role of Greek Orthodox priests as third parties in interpersonal disputes involving faithfuls. The impact of a series of religious characteristics on the process and outcome of the third party intervention in the examined context were presented. In this regard, I consider the present study a contribution to the already existing literature on the influence of cultural/religious systems of values and norms on the perceptions of, and responses to conflict occurrence.

4.5. Limitations of the study

In this study an effort was made to draw a series of useful conclusions about, and develop a better understanding of the third party intervention conducted by Greek Orthodox priests. However, there are some concerns/ limitations that need to be discussed here. It is true that the sample of my interviewees, as well as the number of the intervention cases they narrated, could be larger so as to allow safer generalizations to be made. Considering that this type of mediation is an everyday practice for the priests, a larger sample size would strengthen the validity of findings. Moreover, as mentioned in the methodology chapter, the researcher contacted just the third parties of these interventions, the priests. Thus, the data collected reflect their

perceptions on the process. The perceptions of the parties involved in a dispute –due to limitations discussed in the methodology chapter- were not presented in this study. In this regard, it could be argued that the conclusions are based on third parties' understanding of the process. Furthermore, this absence of contact with the parties did not allow the researcher to make the connections between what the informants narrated and what actually happened during their intervention. Overall, contact with the disputants would render the findings more valid.

Finally, another issue to be discussed is the fact that the author of this study grew up in the specific cultural/ religious environment examined in this research. Consequently, even before the beginning of the research, there were some already existing assumptions and preconceptions in his mind. There is always a possibility that this reality affected the way I approached my data, not allowing me to be more open to discovering new ideas.

4.6. Implications for future research

Further elaboration of the findings of this study will allow comparisons between the third party intervention conducted by priests in Greek religious communities and traditional practices in different societies, both in terms of process and in terms of the desirable outcome. Such efforts can reveal a great deal of the impact on how different cultural and religious systems of meanings influence the development of perceptions on conflict behavior to one or another direction.

Moreover, as presented in this study the intervention examined takes place within a system of values, among which of central importance is love. However, this research is about the relationship between religious in-groups; the disputants are members of the same religious communities. As it has been historically observed, clergy -not only Christian- in many cases has not –in practice- promoted love towards out-groups. In fact, religion has constituted a

major source of division and conflict between different groups. Interestingly enough, a series of important values (such as love, respect, peace) are shared among different religions, which on the one hand may provide different interpretations of the world (worldviews), but on the other hand share, as mentioned above, a number of values in what Abu-Nimer (2001) calls their `secondary religious language`. This means that, theoretically, different religions argue about the importance of peace and call for love and respect towards all co-humans. These shared values do exist, although they have not been applied to out-groups, and could become a useful tool for Conflict Resolution –a `bridge` between individuals from different religious communities.

As a further step, the role of religious figures as agents of conflict resolution within the same community can be taken to another level: they can contribute, through a series of activities, to inter-religious conflict resolution and peacebuilding, acting in accordance with the values they themselves emphasize. In order to achieve this task, however, there is a need for research: a) on the reasons that historically did not allow clergy to use these values as the basis for development of CR mechanisms, and b) on exploring ways for using nowadays these values in inter-religious conflicts.

6. APPENDIX: 1. Interview Protocol

Sabanci University

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

MA Program in Conflict Analysis and Resolution

Master Thesis Research: *Maintaining Harmony within the Parish: The Role of Greek-Orthodox Priests as Social Network Mediators*

Interview Protocol

Institution/Parish: …………………………...………………………….........

Interviewee: Father…………………………………………...…………………..

Interviewer: Athanasios Gatsias, MA Student………………………………...

Sections
- A. Interviewee Background
- B. Nature of Disputes
- C. Intervention Process
- ➢ C1. Role of Third Party
- ➢ C2. Techniques and Strategies used
- D. Outcome of the Process
- E. Description of Cases

Other Topics Discussed..

Post-Interview Comments...

Introductory Protocol

       To facilitate my note-taking, I would like to audio tape our conversations today. For your information, only the researcher on this study will be privy to the tapes which will be eventually destroyed after they are transcribed. Please sign the release form. Essentially, this document states that: (1) all information will be held confidential, (2) your participation is voluntary and you may stop at any time if you feel uncomfortable, and (3) I do not intend to inflict any harm. Thank you for your agreeing to participate.

Introduction

       You have been selected to speak with us today because you have been identified as someone who has a great deal to share about the third party intervention process conducted by Orthodox Christian priests in disputes between the members of the religious communities, as well as about the outcome of this process. The objective of this study is to shed light on the process and outcome of the intervention in this context, classify systematically the nature of the disputes in which you are asked to intervene, and offer a brief description of your role as a third party, and of the strategies and techniques you employ during the process. Finally, an effort will be made to understand the importance of harmony within the community. My study does not aim to evaluate your role, techniques or experiences during the interventions. Rather, I am trying to learn more about the process and offer an analysis of it and its outcomes.

A. Interviewee Background/ Personal Info

How long have you been a priest?

How long have you been serving in this parish?

What is you educational background? What was your field of studies & your highest degree?

B. Nature of the disputes

What kinds of disputes are you asked to mediate in?

What are usually the causes of the disputes?

Who are usually the parties?

Whom the request comes from? Who initiates the process?

Are there any cases where the initiative is yours?

Why parishioners involved in conflicts come to you? Why not any other institution (court)?

Where do they know you from? (Why do they prefer you over other priests? Is it a matter of personal relationship, trust or reputation?)

Have you ever been a secondary party in a dispute? If yes, did this fact influence your decision to intervene or your behavior during the process?

C. Intervention Process
> ### C1. Third Party Role

After the decision to intervene is taken what are the steps you follow? Can you provide a sequential description?

Do you follow the same process for different types of disputes? If not, what are the differences and why different steps should be taken?

Are there any issues that during the process are defined by you or the parties as non-negotiable/ mediatable? What is the criterion for such a definition?

What form does your intervention usually take? (Advice, suggestion, decision, provision of alternatives)

How do you come up with the proper advice, alternative, suggestion, decision etc?

What is your position in cases where you feel that one of the parties is right? Do you stay neutral or try to influence the other side?

> ### C2. Techniques and Strategies used

Where do you meet the disputants?

Do you usually meet the disputants separately/ together?

Are there any religious laws, regulations, values, norms, principles that serve as reference points or are given emphasis during the process, so as to lead the parties reach an agreement?

Are there any religious texts/ references which you use to influence the parties' view of the dispute?

Do you use any specific technique in order to stimulate such changes?

Do you consult any other third parties (priests), in cases considered necessary?

When the parties provide contradictory views of the dispute, how do you obtain information?

After making a decision are there any sanctions on non-compliance? Any rewards?

In cases of compliance, what do you think makes the parties change their views of the dispute?

What is their motive for compliance? Why, in your opinion, do they believe that your advice, suggestion, decision is just/ justified?

D. Outcome of the Process

What is usually the outcome of the intervention?

What is defined as the desirable outcome (e.g. justice/ harmony/ honor/ forgiveness/ compliance with a divine law/ will of God)? Why?

Is this outcome defined, valued as an end/ ultimate value or as a means to an end? If it is valued as a means to an end, how is this end defined?

Do you follow up the cases?

Are there any cases of failure? Why was the outcome not the desirable one?

E. Description of Cases

Can you describe three of the cases that were brought to you?

(Stimulating questions used during the cases narration)

What were they about? Who were the parties?

What was your relationship with the parties?

Who did initiate the process?

Can you describe the process sequentially?

What tactics did you use to resolve the disputes?

What form did your intervention take? (Advice/suggestion/decision/provision of alternatives)

What were the values/ principles that you gave emphasis during the process?

What was the outcome?

Why, in your opinion, did the disputants comply/ not comply?

Other Topics Discussed……………………………………………………….
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Post-Interview Comments………………………………………………….
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6. APPENDIX: 2. Consent Form

Sabanci University

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

MA Program in Conflict Analysis and Resolution

Master Thesis Research: *Resolving Disputes within the Parish: The Role of Greek-Orthodox Priests as Social Network Mediators*

<u>Consent Form</u>

Audio Tape Release Form

      I voluntarily agree to be audio taped during the interview being conducted by Athanasios Gatsias, MA student in the Program of Conflict Analysis and Resolution, Sabanci University. I understand that the tapes will be used to gather information for the study he conducts, in order to partially fulfill the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Conflict Analysis and Resolution. Such information will be used to provide an analysis of the third party intervention process conducted by Orthodox Christian priests in disputes between the members of the religious communities. After the data is collected and transcriptions are made, the tapes will be destroyed.

_____   _____
         My Signature   Date

_____   _____
Signature of the Investigator   Date

Refusal to be Taped

      I do not agree to be audio taped during the interview conducted by Athanasios Gatsias, MA student in the Program of Conflict Analysis and Resolution, Sabanci University. I understand that I will not receive compensation. By refusing to be audio taped, I understand that I may not continue to participate in the study.

_____   _____
         My Signature   Date

_____   _____
Signature of the Investigator   Date

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