

MARIN ILIEȘ GRIGORE HERMAN NICOLAIE HODOR

ȘTEFAN BAIAS ALEXANDRU ILIEȘ

THE DYNAMICS, STRUCTURE AND SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE
RELIGIOUS CHOICES OF THE ROMANIAN ETHNIC COMMUNITY IN
THE POST-SOCIALIST PERIOD (1992-2011)

Marin Ilieș

Babes-Bolyai University, Faculty of Geography, Sighetu Marmăției Extension, Sighetu Marmăției, Romania
E-mail: marin_ilies@yahoo.com

Grigore Herman

University of Oradea, Faculty of Geography, Tourism and Sport, Department of Geography, Tourism and Territorial Planning, Oradea, Romania
E-mail: grigoreherman@yahoo.com

Nicolaie Hodor

Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, Faculty of Geography, Cluj-Napoca, Romania
E-mail: nicuhodor@yahoo.com

Ștefan Baias

University of Oradea, Faculty of Geography, Tourism and Sport, Department of Geography, Tourism and Territorial Planning, Oradea, Romania
E-mail: sbaias@uoradea.ro

Alexandru Ilieș

University of Oradea, Faculty of Geography, Tourism and Sport, Department of Geography, Tourism and Territorial Planning, Oradea, Romania
E-mail: alexandruilies@gmail.com

Abstract: The fall of the socialist system in Romania in December 1989 and the establishment of a democratic political system was a process with major effects on the ethnic components as well as denominational ones. The homogeneity or heterogeneity of the ethno-confessional models on the Romanian territory are the result of some historical events that determined, depending on the political administration, voluntary or forced combinations between ethnic groups and denominations. On a background of Romanian majority (89.5%), religious proselytism changed in certain historical periods the confessional structure of the main ethnic groups. In this study, the Romanian community is analyzed, based on data from post-socialist censuses (1992, 2002 and 2011), in terms of spatial distribution, dynamics and ethno-confessional structure. Correlated with the demographic trend at Romanian country level, the Romanians experienced differentiated evolutions at the level of confessional communities with implications on the spatial distribution and in the proportions of these communities in the group confessional structure and in Romania.

Key words: Romanian ethnic community, ethno-confessional structures, Orthodox community, traditional churches, neo-Protestant churches, non-Orthodox community.

1. Introduction

Frequent changes in the political boundaries of a geographical area, together with changes in political, social and economic doctrines, are reflected in most cases at the societal level through profound changes in the ethnic and religious structures of the counties' and localities (Ghețău, Damian, and Simion 2016, 244-248) that make up the territorial system as a whole (Cândea and Bran 2001; Neaguț 2008; Ianoș 2010). In the Romanian political area, the most important events of this type, in the last century of the second millennium and in the first years of the third, especially in Banat (Munteanu 2006), Transylvania (Pop and Bolovan 2013) Crișana, Maramureș and Bucovina were the two world wars, the banning of the Greek Catholic Church and neo-Protestant cults with the establishment of the communist regime, the emigration of important communities among ethnic Jews (Costachie 2003) and Germans in the years 1940-1970 (Andreescu 2005), the fall of the communist system in December 1989 and the restoration of a system social and political democracy marked by economic decline (Ungureanu et al. 2002), decrease of the living standards (in the first part of the period), Romania's accession to the EU and increasing the degree of permeability of the European space borders for Romanian citizens, etc. This freedom of movement at European level (Ostergren and Rice 2004) has determined the temporary or permanent emigration of over 4 million Romanian citizens of various ethnicities and religions. In the context of the present study, the fall of the Iron Curtain in Central and Eastern Europe and the restoration of political pluralism and civil liberties (Frunză 2004), increasing ethnic and religious tolerance (Sandu 2003), had the effect of restoring the full rights of the traditional Greek Catholic church and increasing the number of neo-Protestant cults, etc. In addition to these causes independent of the people's will, considered external, an important role in defining the relations between the ethnic and denominational component was generated by ethnically mixed marriages (Bolovan and Bolovan 2010, 107-133), fertility differentiated by ethnicity and religion (Ghețău 2007, 47), the baptisms of children resulting from them or taking up another religion by the grown up population or by entire families (Brie 2008). If in the case of traditional churches, in a family nucleus, the children resulting from marriages with partners belonging to the same cult usually take up the religion of the parents, in the case of adults, a significant number of them, there is this phenomenon of passing to neo-Protestant cults. Besides this there is an increase in the number of people with undeclared religion, atheists and those without religion. The purpose of this study is to highlight at the level of the Romanian political area the dynamics and structure of the religious choices of the Romanian ethnic community, their spatial distribution, using data from the latest censuses conducted in Romania in 1992, 2002 and 2011 (Negruți 2014, 39-47), the guide prepared by the state

secretariat for cults (2018) as well as opinions extracted from the literature on the ethnic-religious relationship (Neguț 2011, 316, 318; Preutu and Enache 2018) and the types of existing structural combinations (Rotar and Hodor 1993, 118-122; Healey 2006).

2. General framework

The censuses carried out in the post-socialist period highlighted, in the Romanian political area a significant number of members: 17 ethnic groups and 18 denominations. Less than 10,000 people belonged to other ethnic groups, and at the confessional level (in 2011), 30,557 people were of another religion and about 50,000 were atheists, without religion or undeclared. The ethnic heterogeneity of geographical areas such as Banat (Crețan 1999; Crețan et al. 2008), Crișana and Maramureș (Ilieș 1998), Transylvania (Bodocan 2001; Șișeștean 2002), Dobrogea (Ipatiov 2001; Nicoară 2006), Bucharest or more homogeneous historical provinces such as Muntenia, Moldova (Muntele 1999) or Oltenia have generated in the last 30 years specific spatial typologies regarding the ethnic-confessional relationship, translating from classical ethno-confessional models to a wide variety of combinations (Voicu et al. 2012), especially through the emergence of neo-Protestant cults. Considerable substantial changes are more evident in the more heterogeneous and libertine urban environment, compared to the rural, traditionalist and conservative environment. Each ethno-confessional group has left its mark on an area generating regional ethno-cultural landscapes (Cocean and David 2014) with specific elements and imprints, including traditions and other elements of material culture such as the traditional clothing and stone or wooden churches (Pop and Porumb 2007; Godea 2012; Baias et al. 2014; Ilieș et al. 2016, 597-602).

All these structural changes took place on a general regressive demographic background, Romania's population decreasing in the period 1992-2011 by -11.8% (-2.688 million people) the major causes being: low birth rate, high death rate, negative natural balance and "tendencies to decrease the family" (Ghețău, Damian, and Simion 2016, 224, 230). In the case of ethnic communities, on a mixed background of natural increase and negative migratory (Ghețău 2016, 233), the most important decreases were registered: Romanians -3.6 million (-17.7%), Hungarians -0.397 million (-24.4%), Russians-Lipovans -15,199 (-39.1%), Ukrainians -14,844 (-22.5%), Slovaks -5,940 (-30.3%), Serbs -1,132 (-38.5%) etc and on the background of dominant migratory increase: Germans -69.8% (-83,420) and Jews -63.5% (-5,648). The Roma people had the most spectacular increase in terms of demographic growth, with 54.97% (+220,486), increasing more than 8 times between 1966-2002 (Ghețău, Damian, and Simion 2016, 244) and the Croatians the lowest 32, 4% (1,323), and on a migratory background the Italians (3,203) and the Chinese (2,017). Regarding the religious communities, all churches recorded a negative demographic

balance, especially between 2002-2011, although in the first period 1992-2002 the trend was positive for Pentecostals (+ 64.0%), Baptists (3.0 %) and Adventists (4.4%). The most significant decrease (1992-2011) characterize the Orthodox churches -11.8% (3.495 million), Roman Catholic -25.0% (0.291 million), Reformed -25.1% (-0.201 million) and Greek-Catholic -32.6% (73,000) etc.

3. Ethno-confessional and confessional-ethnic majorities

A relevant image of the ethno/confessional heterogeneity of the population on the Romanian territory (Ilieş 2018, 955-1028), based on the data from 2011, is reflected by the ethnic structure of the denominations (Figure 1) and the confessional structure of the ethnic groups (Figure 2). At the level of the main ethnic groups, in the case of Romanians (83.46%) and Roma (76.36%) there is a certain ethno-Orthodox homogeneity, and in the case of Hungarians, they are almost equally divided between the Reformed churches (45.91 %) and Roman Catholic (40.77%).

At the level of churches and religious communities in Romania, the ethnic structure of the main denominations is characterized by more homogeneous ethno-confessional models in terms of the proportions and number of dominant ethnic groups with two types: *mono-dominant*: Romanian Greek-Catholic, Hungarian Reformed and Romanian Baptist etc, and *bi-dominant*: Romanian Orthodox and Roma Orthodox; Hungarian Roman Catholic and Romanian Roman Catholic; Romanian Pentecostal and Roma Pentecostal etc. The analysis in this study focuses only on the Romanian ethnic community and its confessional structure.

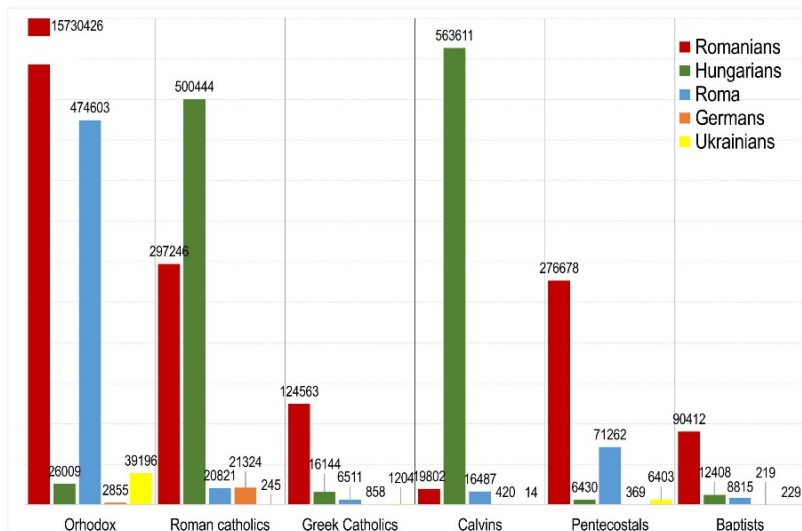


Figure 1: Romania. The ethnic structure of the main confessions in 2011 (data source: www.insee.ro, 2011)

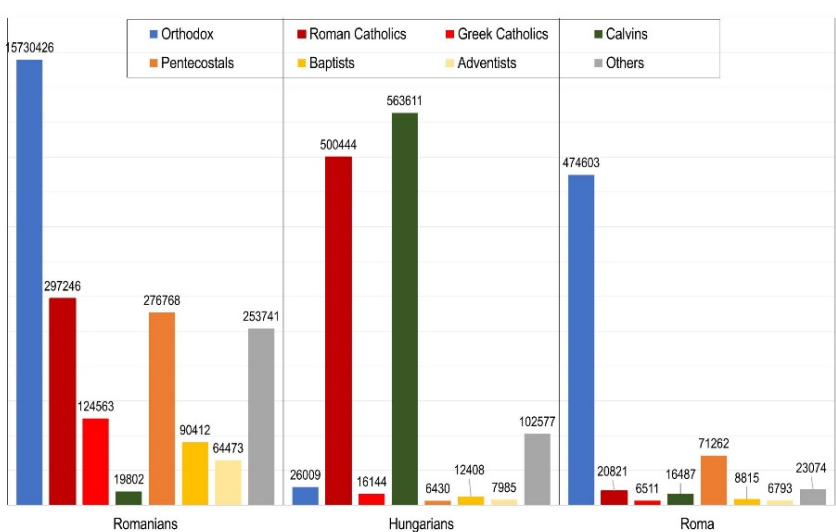


Figure 2: Romania. The confessional structure of the main ethnic groups in 2011 (data source: www.insee.ro, 2011)

4. The Romanian ethnic community

The Romanians, the majority in the Romanian political space (Figure 4), have experienced, in just 20 years (1992-2011), the most drastic demographic decline in the post-socialist period (-17.7%), from 20.41 million to 16.79 million (-3.328 million compared to the general decrease of the population of 2.688 million by -11.8%), with profound mutations in the ethnic structure of the Romanian population (from 89.47% to 83.46%) (Figure 3). The main causes of these decreases are the accentuated negative demographic increase, the external migration, correlated with a high degree of demographic aging of the population, especially in the rural area.

Against such a regressive background, the confessional choices of the Romanian population also experienced important changes in terms of quantity and structure. In just two decades, the Romanian Orthodox community decreased by -18.6% (-3.6 million), from 19.3 million (94.68% of the confessional choices of Romanians) to 15.7 million, remaining however, the dominant ethnic group in the Orthodox Church, with 93.67%. It is the most important decrease in the structure of the Orthodox Church, which as a whole in the population of Romania decreased from 19.80 million (86.81%) parishioners to 16.31 million (81.04%).

Throughout this period, it is noteworthy that from 1,086,495 non-Orthodox Romanians (5.32%) in 1992, in two decades their number remained relatively constant at 1,062,442 people, but with a higher percentage, representing 6.33% of the Romanian community. How many

Romanians have moved away from the traditional church? It is a question to which we hope to provide an answer based on the interpretation of official statistical data, by applying specific methods of analysis (Erdeli and Dumitrache 2001, 202, 207-209; Vert 2001; Staşac 2014, 61-62) or by correlating the results of other specialized studies (Davidson and Caddel 2018; Popescu 2011, 1-4; Lazăr 2012, 481; Grama and Stupariu 2014, 63-65; Hatos and Ştefănescu 2019, 75-91).

After almost half a century of socialism, a period in which the declared confessional affiliation was limited, it gradually returned to a society free in expression, marked by the return into daily life of some forbidden traditional churches (Greek-Catholic Church) and the entry into Romanian space of neo-Protestant cults (Pentecostals, Baptists, Adventists, etc.). The confessional structure of the ethnic space on the territory of post-socialist Romania is rendered for 2011 (Figure 4).



Figure 3: Romania. The evolution of total population, the Orthodox community, the Romanians and the Romanian Orthodox in 1992, 2002 and 2011 (data source: www.insee.ro, 2011)

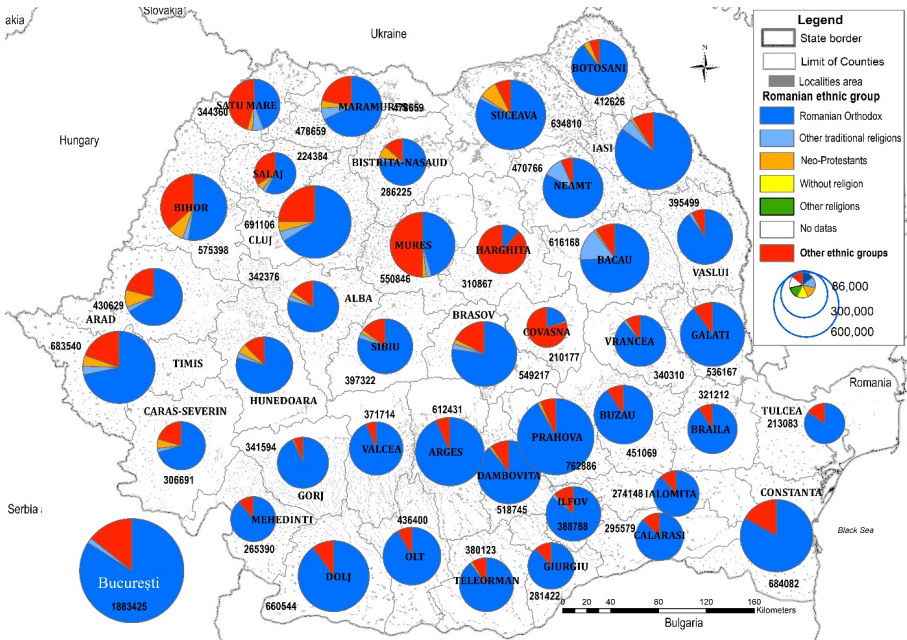


Figure 4: Romania. Total population, Orthodox Romanians, non-Orthodox Romanians, Romanians, Orthodox Romanians and non-Orthodox Romanians at county level in 1992 (data source: www.insee.ro, 2011)

5. Orthodox Romanians versus non-Orthodox Romanians

Throughout the analysed time period (1992-2011), on a regressive demographic background, both at national level (-11.78%) and differentiated by ethnicity, the dominant confessional choice of the Romanian ethnic community remained an Orthodox one (Figure 5). Thus, on a negative trend of the Romanian ethnic community (deficit of -3.61 million; growth rate of -17.7%), not less than 19.32 million Romanians (94.6% of the community) in 1992 and 15.7 million (93.67%) in 2011, embraced this cult. In the same sense, the evolutionary trend of the Romanian community in the ethnic structure of the Orthodox Church is in line, from 97.6% in 1992 to 94.5% in 2011, with a negative growth rate in this interval of -18.6%, much more accentuated than that of the Romanian community as a whole (-17.7%).

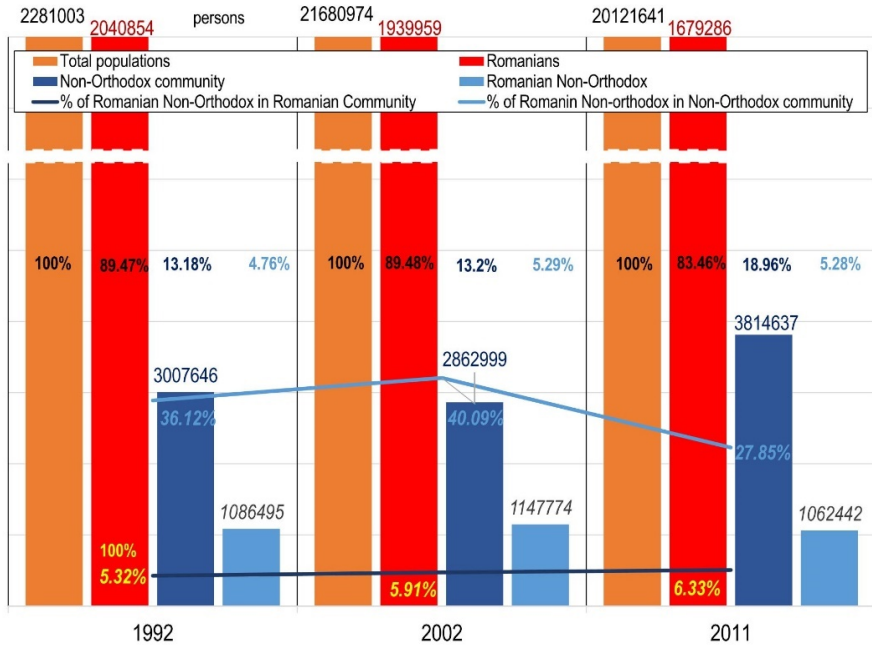


Figure 5: Romania. The evolution of total population, non-Orthodox community, Romanians and non-Orthodox Romanians in 1992, 2002 and 2011 (data source: www.insee.ro, 2011)

In Romania, 1,086,495 Romanians (5.32%) had in the first years of post-socialist democracy other religious choices than the Orthodox one. After a decade (1992-2002), on a background of national demographic deficit (-1.129 million; -4.95%) and of the Romanian community (-1.0 million Romanians; -4.94%), the number of non-Orthodox increased by 61,279 persons (+ 5.64%), reaching 1,147,774 persons (share of 5.92%). The demographic decline was accentuated in the next decade, with -1.56 million inhabitants (-7.2%) on the Romanian territory and -2.6 million (-13.4%) from the group of the Romanian ethnic community. In the same period, the number of non-Orthodox Romanians decreased by 85,332 people (-7.43%) reaching a total value close to that of 1992 of 1.0 million people (by 24,053 people less), but with a higher proportion, of 6.33% of the confessional choices of the Romanian ethnic community, other than the Orthodox one. What is important to highlight is the fact that, on a numerical regressive background at the level of the Romanian population and of the Romanian community in particular, the trend of the proportion of non-Orthodox in the total number of Romanians was a continuous ascending one. If as a whole, in the period 1992-2011, there was a slight demographic decline with -2.21% (-24,053 people) (Figure 5), the evolution was different each decade. In numerical terms, the first decade brought an increase of 85,332 people (+5.64%), and in the second there was a -7.43%

decline (-61,279 people). Consequently, the evolution of the Romanian Orthodox community has experienced a regressive evolution on all levels, both numerically and by proportion (Figure 5), the causes being multiple, but three are major: the demographic deficit generated by negative natural increase, external migration, especially of the young population, but also the "passage" of a large number of Orthodox families, especially from rural areas, among the parishioners of the new neo-Protestant churches.

The design of the Romanian Orthodox space in 2011 is faithfully rendered by the map at county level (Figure 4), in 38 of these Orthodox Romanians had proportions of over 50% with differentiations at the level of historical provinces and counties: over 80% in Oltenia (Vâlcea 99.3%; Gorj 92.7% etc.), Muntenia (Argeș 91.6%, Prahova 97.5% etc.), Moldova (Botoșani 89.6%; Vaslui 89.1%), Dobrogea (over 80%), over 50% in Banat (Timiș 71.2%, Caraș-Severin 70.4%), Crișana (Bihor 52.5%), Maramureș (67.6%) and Transylvania (Sibiu 79.5%; Hunedoara 78.9 %), below 50% being Satu Mare (44.0%) and the eastern counties of Transylvania: Covasna (19.4%), Harghita (11.5%) and Mureș (45.5%), all under 50%.

6. The non-Orthodox Romanian community

Over one million Romanians who were not of Orthodox religion (about 6%), declared and registered at each of the three censuses (Figure 7), can be grouped, cumulating the main religious choices (Ghețău, Damian, and Simion 2016, 246), in several categories:

a) *Parishioners of the traditional churches*: Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic, Reformed, Unitarian, Old Rite Christian, Evangelical, Mosaic, Muslim, etc. In this group, after a period of interdiction, the Greek Catholic church, one of the most important churches of the Romanians in Transylvania, Banat, Crișana and Maramureș, returns.

b) *Parishioners of the new neo-Protestant churches*, banned in Romania during the socialist period: Pentecostal, Baptist, Adventist, Jehovah's Witnesses, etc.

c) Religions other than those mentioned.

d) *Without religious preference*, this category includes atheists and those without religion.

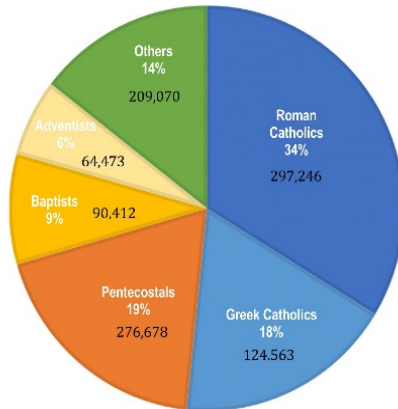


Figure 6: Romania. The confessional structure of non-Orthodox Romanians (number and proportion), in 2011 (data source: www.insee.ro, 2011)

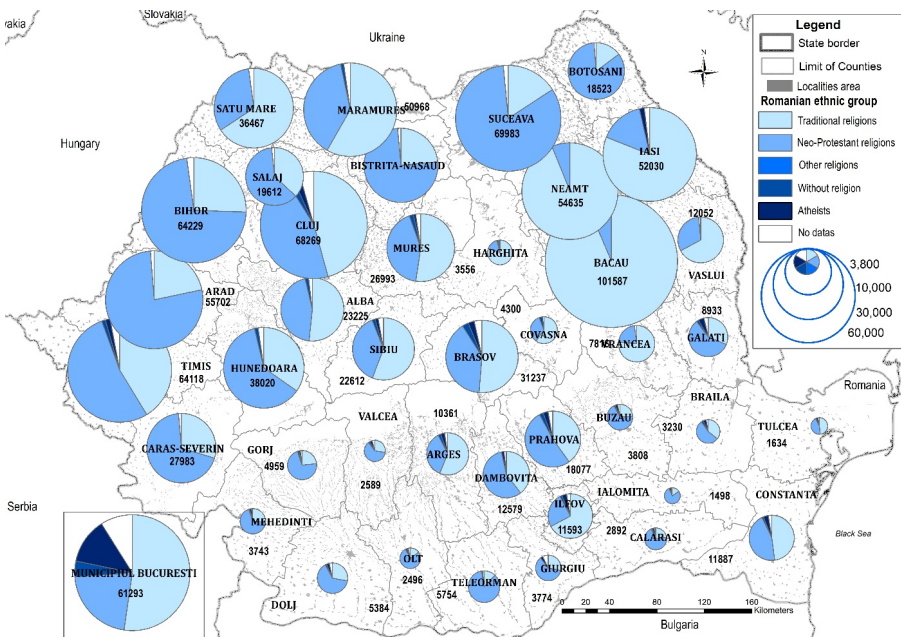


Figure 7: Romania. The confessional structure of non-Orthodox Romanians (number and proportion) by confessional groups at county level, in 2011 (data source: www.insee.ro, 2011)

Thus, on the Romanian territory, the total non-Orthodox population had a sinuous evolution (fig.33): with a decrease of -4.8% in the period 1992-2002 from 3.0 million (13.2% of the total) at 2.86 million (keeping the proportion at 13.2%); with a significant increase of 33.2% (0.95 million) in the period 2002-2011, reaching 3.81 million and a share of 18.96% of the total population of Romania in 2011 (Figure 6).

Against a background of continuous decline of the Romanian population, this increase is mainly due to: the transition of an important

part of the population from traditional to neo-Protestant churches; a migratory increase of the new ethnic communities (Italians, Chinese); through positive natural growth in neo-Protestant communities, especially Pentecostals. Unlike the general increasing trend of the non-Orthodox population, the Romanian community of this type had an opposite evolution. Against the background of the decrease of the total non-Orthodox population by -4.8%, it registered an increase of 5.6% (+61,279 parishioners) and of the share from 36.1% to 40.1% in the period 1992-2002. In the next decade, marked by a spectacular increase in the total non-Orthodox population by 33.2%, non-Orthodox Romanians recorded a decrease of -7.4% (-85,332) and a proportion of 27.85 %. The most representative counties (Figure 7) for this non-Orthodox group are those in Moldova: Bacău (101,587; 18.2% of the total Romanians), Suceava (69,983; 11.9%), Neamţ (54,635; 12.4%) and Iasi (52,030; 7.4%) etc. To these are added, with values of over 20,000 people, all the counties of Transylvania: Satu Mare (19.4%), Cluj (13.1%), Bihor (17.5%), Sălaj (13.2%), Timiş (11.6%), Arad (16.4%) and Maramureş (13.6%), and in the south the city of Bucharest (3.8%), all with over 50,000 people. Dominant are the groups of traditional and neo-Protestant religions (Figure 7), and as a share in the confessional structure of the Romanian non-Orthodox community there are significant regional differences: in Moldova, southern Transylvania, Maramureş-Satu Mare and Central Muntenia dominant is the group of traditional religions other than Orthodox; in the rest of Transylvania, in Bucovina, in Oltenia, in the south and east of Muntenia, the group of neo-Protestant Romanians dominates; and in Dobrogea the proportions of the two groups are close (Figure 7).

a) The group of traditional churches other than Orthodox (Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic, Reformed, etc.), during the two decades of analysis, in terms of the number of parishioners, were on a negative trend with -25.7% (- 0.645 million parishioners), reaching from 2.5 million parishioners in 1992 (83.14% of non-Orthodox) to 1.86 million parishioners and a share almost halved, only 48.71% in 2011 (Figure 8). The share of this category in the total population of Romania, with a slight decreasing trend, decreased from 3.2% to 3.07%.

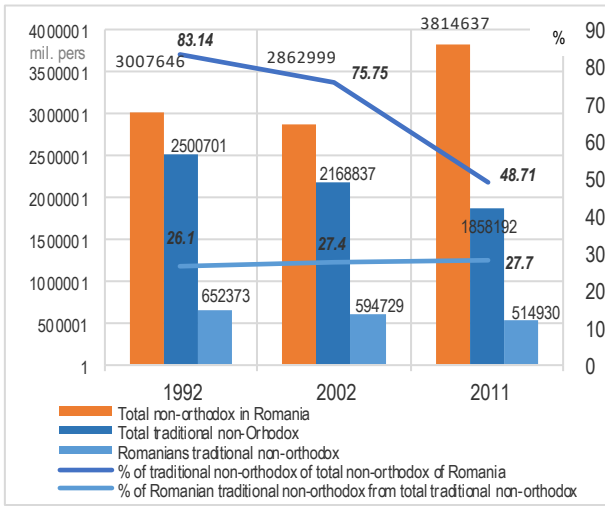


Figure 8: Romania. The evolution of the non-Orthodox population, traditionally non-Orthodox population and of the traditional non-Orthodox Romanians in 1992, 2002 and 2011 (data source: www.insee.ro, 2011)

The Romanian community belonging to other traditional churches is dispersed at the level of the Romanian space, their choice being usually the result of historical circumstances determined by being located in an area with strong influence of that church, but also by mixed marriages and baptisms etc. Throughout this period, the numerical reduction was continuous with -21.1% (-110,334), but less accentuated than that of the homonymous group in Romania (-25.7%). Gradually, from 625,373 parishioners in 1992 to 514,930 in 2011, the decrease being more pronounced (-13.0%) in the second part of the interval. Interestingly, against this regressive background, the share in the ethnic structure of this group increased slightly, from 26.1% to 27.7%. The situation is due to the fact that the rate of population decline was less pronounced than that of the Romanian Orthodox population (-18.6%).

The Romanian parishioners belonging to the traditional churches, according to Figure 9 are dominant in Central Moldova: Bacău (94,205), Neamț (49,986) and Iași (40,060), in Bucharest (30,850) and with values of over 15,000 parishioners in Cluj, Timiș, Maramureș counties, Satu Mare, Bihor and Brașov.

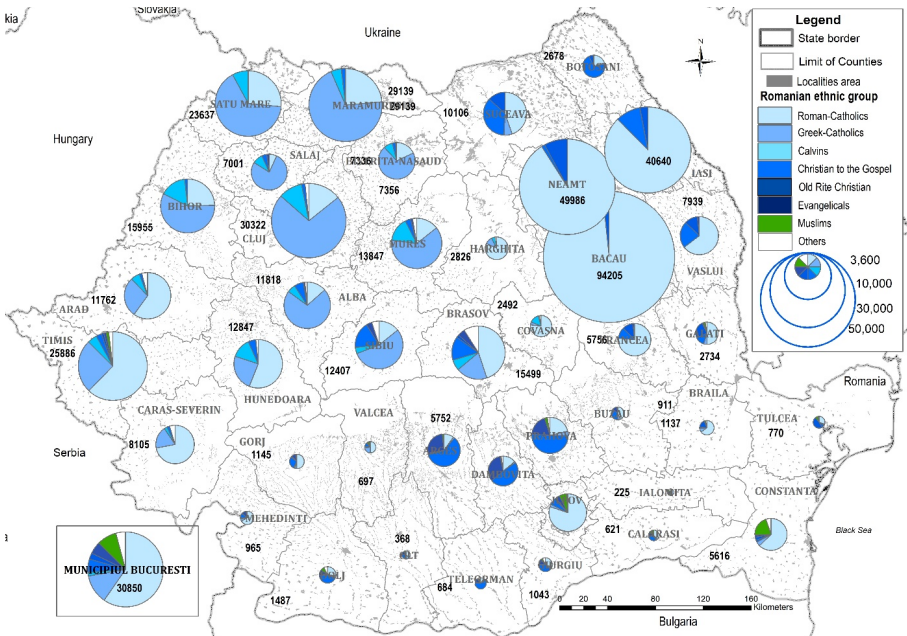


Figure 9: Romania. The confessional structure of non-Orthodox Romanians (number and proportion) by confessional groups belonging to traditional churches at county level, in 2011 (data source: www.insee.ro, 2011)

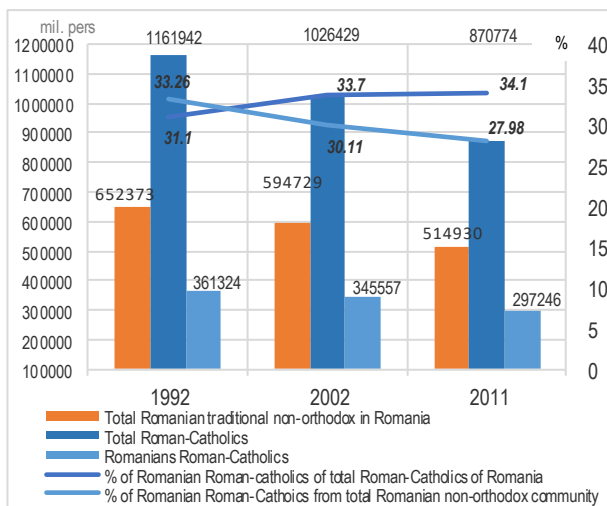


Figure 10: Romania. The evolution of non-Orthodox population, Roman-Catholic, and Romanian Roman-Catholic in 1992, 2002 and 2011 (data source: www.insee.ro, 2011)

The Roman Catholic Church (Figures 9 and 10) was in 1992 the second religious choice of the Romanian ethnics, the 361,324 parishioners, representing 1.77% of the Romanian ethnic community and 31.1% of the

Roman Catholic community of on Romania's territory. Their spatial distribution is regional (Figure 9), The most important communities being in the counties: Bacău, Neamţ, Iaşi in Moldova, Bucharest and Timiş. In the analysed period 1992-2011, against the background of a numerical reduction of the Roman Catholic community by 25.1% (-291,168 parishioners) and of the Romanian Roman Catholic community by -17.3% (-64,078 parishioners), with a constant share in the Romanian ethnic group of 1.7%, the number of Romanians increased as a share in the Roman Catholic church, from 31.1% to 34.1%, being, at the level of 2011, on the Romanian territory, the second ethnic community of Roman Catholic religion after the Hungarian one (40.8%).

Also from the group of traditional churches, but the fourth confessional choice of the Romanian ethnics, is the *Greek-Catholic Church* (Figures 9 and 11), one of those banned during the communist period. In the two years of democratic system, the number of Romanian Greek Catholic parishioners, most of them declared Orthodox during the socialist period, reached 191,453, representing 0.94% of the Romanian ethnic group and 85.73% of the Greek Catholic community of on the Romanian territory (Figure 11). The spatial distribution reflects a dominant settlement in the counties of Transylvania (Figure 9): Cluj (21,586), Maramureş (20,172), Satu Mare (15,292), Bihor (9,071), Mureş (8,631), Alba (8,381), etc. After two decades, on a continuous regressive background, generated primarily by the negative demographic balance, the Romanian Greek Catholic community decreased by -34.9% (-66,890 people) reaching 124,563 parishioners, with lower shares in both the ethnic structure of Romanians (0.74%) as well as in that of the Greek Catholic community (82.72%), representing 0.62% of the Romanian population.

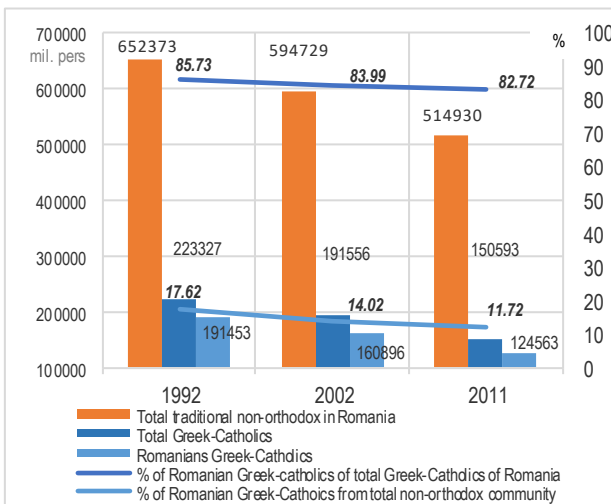
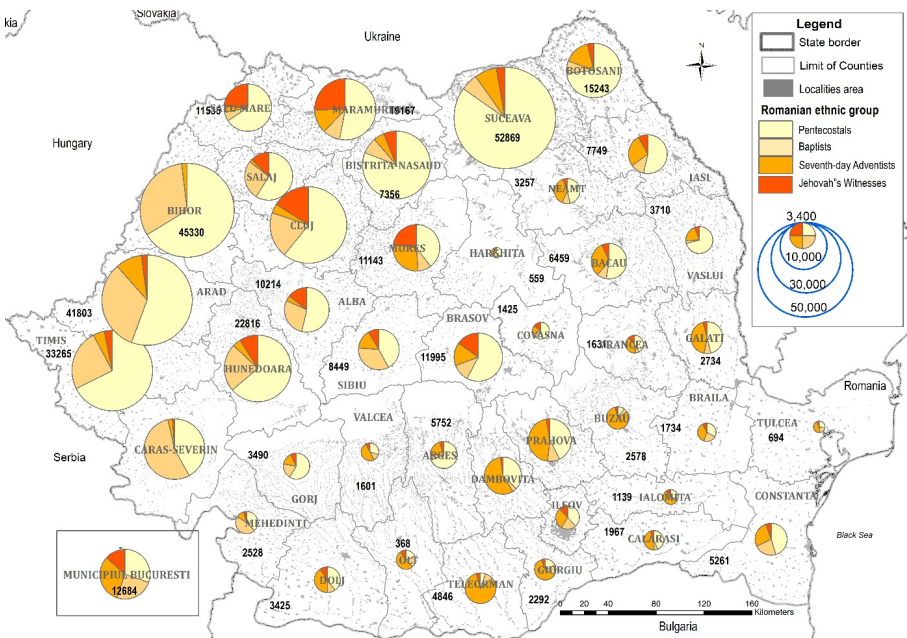


Figure 11: Romania. The evolution of the non-Orthodox, Greek-Catholic and Romanian-Greek-Catholic population in 1992, 2002 and 2011 (data source: www.insee.ro, 2011)

With a positive trend, but with low values, are: Muslims (+5,329 parishioners; 0.02%), Old Rite Christians (+9,956; 0.08%), Lutherans (+1970; 0.01%), Evangelical (+8,801; 0.06%), Reforms (+3,662; 0.12%), and with a numerical deficit were: Unitarians (-413; 0.01%), mosaics (-785), etc.

b) The neo-Protestant Romanian community, highlighted especially after the fall of socialism, includes 4 churches whose ethnic structure is predominantly Romanian (Figures 12 and 13): Pentecostal (91.6%), Baptist (86.2%), Adventist (85.2 %) and Jehovah's Witnesses (71.21%). A common feature of them is the numerical increase in the period 1992-2011 based mainly on a high birth rate and young families, especially in the case of Pentecostals. Although they have the same demographic characteristics, Baptists and Adventists after a substantial demographic increase in the period 1992-2002, in the second decade, the numerical deficit is due to the permanent external migration of the young population, especially to the USA and Australia.

The spatial distribution of this ethno-confessional group (Figure 12) highlights the concentration of a significant part of the neo-Protestant Romanians in Bucovina: Suceava, in Crişana: Arad and Bihor; in Banat: Timiş and in Transylvania: Cluj, Bistriţa-Năşăud and Hunedoara etc.



The Pentecostal Church is part of the category of neo-Protestant cults that recently entered Romania’s confessional area, banned during the socialist period and with great adherence among the Romanian and Roma ethnic groups. It quickly became in 1992 the third religious choice of the Romanian community (1.0% at the level of Romanians) and 18.6% of the confessional structure of non-Orthodox Romanians. Also, the 202,220 Romanian parishioners represent the majority of the ethnic structure of the Pentecostal church with 91.6% (Figure 13). Gradually, in the period 1992-2002, the Pentecostal Romanians registered an important increase by 36.8% (+74,261 persons) reaching 276,481 parishioners (1.42% of Romanians) and a ratio of 24.0% in the structure of non-Orthodox Romanians. Even if they decreased as a proportion in the ethnic structure of the Pentecostal community, the Romanians kept their majority status by 85.2%, increasing to 1.4% of the total Romanian ethnicity. The second period, 2002-2011, is marked by a stability in the group of Pentecostal Romanians by slight increases (+0.07%) in numbers (+197 parishioners), of the proportion at 1.38% of the Romanian population, at 1.65% in the structure of Romanians and at 26.04% in that of non-Orthodox Romanians, but a decrease in the ethnic structure of the Pentecostal church to 76.36%. The decrease in the growth rate is mainly due to the emigration of a significant part of the young population, especially to the USA, Australia, etc. Territorially, the most important Romanian Pentecostal communities were in counties (Figure 12) from Bucovina (Suceava; 44,790 parishioners), Banat (Timiș, 22,514), Crișana (Arad, 23,256; Bihor, 29,756) and western Transylvania.

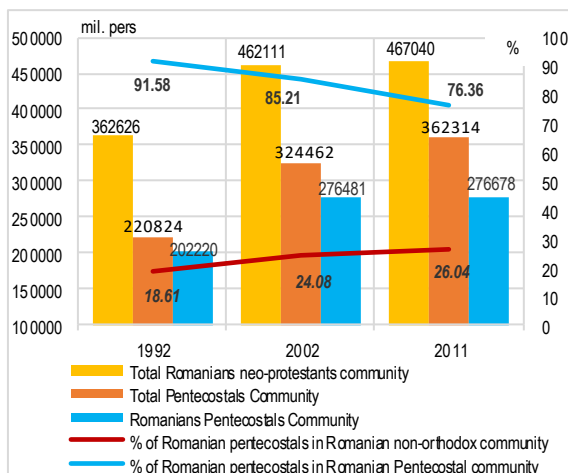


Figure 13: Romania. The evolution of the Romanian Neo-Protestant, Pentecostal, and Pentecostal Romanians in 1992, 2002 and 2011 (data source: www.insee.ro, 2011)

The Baptist Church is part of the group of very active Protestant churches, being the fifth religious option of Romanians, increasing in their

confessional structure from 0.46% (94,538) in 1992 to 0.55% (107,405) in 2002 and with a slight decrease, generated by external migration, to 0.54% (90,412) in 2011 (Figure 14). Within the Baptist community, the share of Romanians gradually decreased from 86.2% in 1992 to 80.12% in 2011, representing 0.45% of the Romanian population. External migration was also reflected within this community, especially after 2002, when a numerical regress was registered -15.8% (-16,993 parishioners) after an increase of 13.4% (13,047 people) between 1992 and 2002. The most important Baptist communities (Figure 12) are in the counties of Bihor (14,226), Arad (13,727), Caraș Severin (10,231), Timiș (8,168) etc.

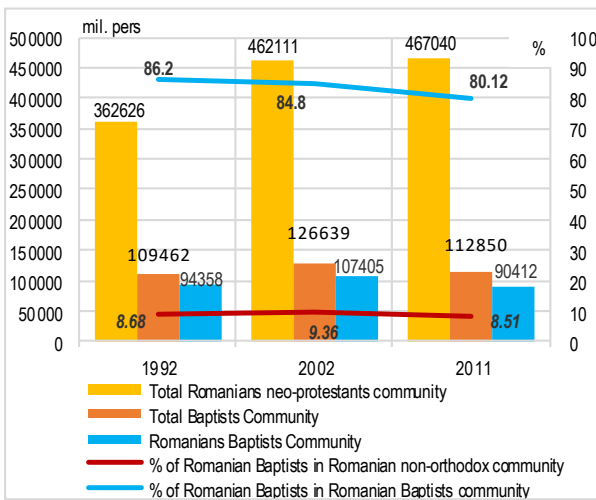


Figure 14: Romania. The evolution of the Romanian neo-Protestant, Baptist and Romanian Baptist population in 1992, 2002 and 2011 (data source: <http://www.insee.ro> 2011)

With a trend similar to the neo-Protestant communities (Figure 15) is the *Seventh-day Adventist Church*, representing in 2011 about 0.38% (66,473 Romanian parishioners) of the Romanian community, 6.07% of the Romanian non-Orthodox community and 0,32% of the Romanian population. In the ethnic structure of this church, Romanians, on a regressive background from 85.2% in 1992 to 79.6% in 2011, remained the dominant ethnic group. The most numerous are in the counties of Muntenia (Figure 12): Prahova (4,237), Teleorman (4,000), Dâmbovița (3,995) etc., in the west in Arad (3,995), Bucharest (3,954), Suceava (2,888) etc.

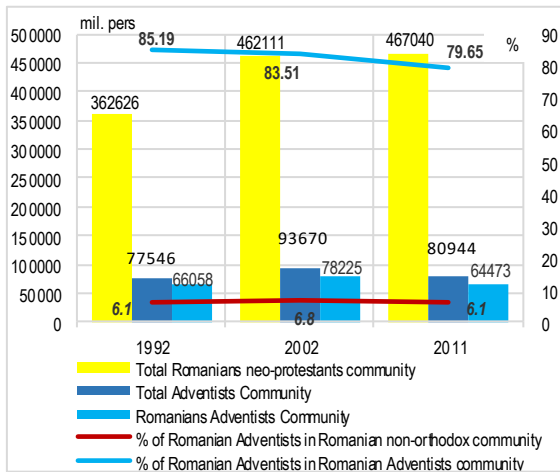


Figure 15: Romania. The evolution of the Romanian neo-Protestant, Adventist population and of the Adventist Romanians in 1992, 2002 and 2011 (data source: <http://www.insee.ro> 2011)

Another religious community, registered only in 2011 is that of *Jehovah's Witnesses*, which was present clandestinely before 1989, representing, by 35,447 Romanian parishioners, 0.18% of the Romanian population, 0.21% of the confessional option of Romanians and 71.21% of the ethnic structure of this church. In the group of non-Orthodox Romanians, it represented 3.34% and 6.9% of neo-Protestant Romanians. The counties with the most adherents (Figure 12) are Maramureş (4,863), Cluj (4,775), Satu Mare (2,802), Mureş (2,544) etc.

c) Romanians of other religions than those mentioned in the first two categories held a share of 0.25% (56,329 people) in 1992, decreasing to 0.15% (30,557) in 2011 of the total Romanian ethnic group. It can also be considered that a significant decrease in this group in 2011 is due to the separate registration of *Jehovah's Witnesses*. Considering this regressive background, the share of Romanians in the ethnic structure of this group was kept between 71% and 75%, and in the confessional structure of non-Orthodox people it ranged from 3.7% in 1992 to 5.9% in 2002 and 2.1 % in 2011, representing 0.06% of the Romanian population.

d) Romanians without religious options is a category that includes *atheists* and those *without religion*. The Romanian community *without religion* (17,002 people) at the level of 1992 represented 1.56% of the total number of non-Orthodox Romanians, and in 2011 they represented 0.11% of the Romanian population. After a significant decrease in share to 0.69% (-53.5%; -7,904 people) in 2002, there was a further increase to 1.21% (+

63.5%; +12,992 people). Throughout the analysed period, the share of Romanians in the ethnic structure varied from 69.93% in 1992, to 61.6% in 2002 and 68.31% in 2011.

Atheists, in all this analysed interval, representing 0.1% of the Romanian population, registered a dominant Romanian ethnic component, increasing by + 107%, from 86.34% (8,920) in 1992 to 88.93% (18,446), representing 1.74% of the Romanian non-Orthodox community, in 2011. The most numerous Romanian atheists were in Bucharest (7,503) and Cluj (1,534).

7. Conclusions

On a regressive background in terms of demographics of the Romanian population between 1992-2011 of -11.8% (-2.688 million inhabitants), the Romanian ethnic community recorded one of the most pronounced decreases in ethnicity, by -17.8% (-3,616 million people). This demographic decline determined by negative values of the natural and migratory increase, on a background of accentuated demographic aging of people, especially in the rural area, also affects the confessional component of the Romanian ethnic groups. Characterized by a population of dominant Orthodox religion, this numerical decline is also reflected in the ethnic structure of the Orthodox Church. Since it has experienced a regressive evolution in numerical terms with -17.6% (-3,495 million parishioners) but also as a share in the population of Romania, from 86.8% to 81.0%, the Romanian Orthodox community experiences the same decreasing tendency. The values are more accentuated in terms of number, recording a decrease of -18.6% (-3,591 million), but also as a share in the ethnic structure of the Orthodox Church from 97.6% to 96.46% and in the ethno-confessional structure of the Romanian population from 84.71% to 78.2%.

The second major ethno-confessional group made up of the *unorthodox population* is on a positive trend with a numerical increase of 26.83% (+806,991 people) and a share of 13.2% to 19.0% of the Romanian population. The ethnic Romanian community in this category has experienced an evolution unlike the one specific to the unorthodox group. If in the first decade the increase was by +5.64% (+61,279 people), in the second part the decrease was substantial by -7.43% (-85,332 people), so that over the whole period the decrease was attenuated at -2.21% (-24,053 people). In the ethnic structure of this group, the evolutionary trend of Romanians is also reflected in its share at the group level: from 36.1% in 1992, to 40.1% in 2002 and 27.8% in 2011. Also, in the ethno-confessional structure of the Romanian population, this non-orthodox Romanian group increased as a share from 4.76% to 5.28%. At the level of the 3 subgroups in this category there are also differentiations regarding the evolution in the

analysed period, marked by: positive trend for the Romanian neo-Protestant group (increase by +28.7%; +104,404 people; share of 76.4% in the group and 2.0% in Romania's population), those of another religion and those without religion; negative trend for the Romanian group belonging to the traditional churches other than the Orthodox one (-21.0%; -137,443 persons, share of 27.7% and 3.0% of the Romanian population).

The confessional structure of the Romanian ethnic community and its share in the Romanian population, at the level of 2011, is highlighted at the level of figure 5 as follows: Orthodox: 93.67% and 78.2% and non-Orthodox 6.33% and 5.28%, among which: a.) 3.07% and 2.56% and b.) 2.4% and 2.0%.

Another interesting aspect is the one related to the "dominance" of Romanians in the ethnic structure of six denominations (Figure 13), representing over 80% both between traditional churches and at the level of new ones, especially neo-Protestants, 86.3% of atheists declared (10,331), 69% of those without religion (24,314) and 70.6% of those of other religion than those reviewed (56,329).

References:

- Andreescu, Gabriel. 2005. *Schimbări în harta etnică a României*. Cluj-Napoca: Editura CRDE.
- Baias, Ștefan, Baias, Iuliana, Blaga, Lucian, Buhaș, Sorin, Chiriac, Aurel, Ciocan, Janeta, Dăncuș, Mihai, Deac, Anca, Dragoș, Paul, Dumitrescu, Gheorghe, Gaceu, Ovidiu, Godea, Ioan, Gozner, Maria, Grama, Vasile, Herman, Grigore, Hodor, Nicolaie, Hurley, Peter, Ilieș, Dorina, Ilieș, Gabriela, Ilieș, Marin, Josan, Ioana, Leșe, Grigore, Măduța, Florin, Mojolic, Diana, Morar, Cezar, Olaru, Martin, Stașac, Marcu, Stupariu, Marius, Sturza, Amalia, Ștefănescu, Barbu, Tătar, Corina, Vârnav, Remus, Vlaicu, Mihai, and Jan Wendt. 2014. *Crișana-Maramureș. Atlas geografic al patrimoniului turistic / Geographical atlas of tourism heritage*. Oradea: Editura Universității din Oradea.
- Bodocan, Voicu. 2001. *Etnie, confesiune și comportament electoral în Transilvania. Studiu geografic (Sfârșitul sec al XIX -lea și sec al XX-lea)*. Timișoara: Universitatea de Vest.
- Bolovan, Ioan, and Sorina, P. Bolovan. (2010). "From tradition to modernization. Church and the Transylvanian Romanian Family in the Modern Era." *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies* 7, no. 20: 107-133.
- Brie, Mircea. 2008. *Familie și societate în nord-vestul Transilvaniei (a doua jumătate a secolului XIX - începutul secolului XX)*. Oradea: Editura Universității din Oradea.
- Câdea, Melinda, and Florina Bran. 2001. *Spațiul geografic românesc. Organizare. Amenajare. Dezvoltare*. București: Editura Economică.

- Cocean, Pompei, and Nicoleta David. 2014. *Peisaje culturale*. Cluj-Napoca: Editura Risoprint.
- Costachie, Silviu. 2003. *Evreii din România. Aspecte geografice*. București: Editura TopForm.
- Crețan, Remus. 1999. *Etnie, Confesiune și Comportament electoral în Banat. Studiu geografic Sfârșitul sec al XIX -lea și sec al XX-lea*. Timișoara: Universitatea de Vest.
- Crețan, Remus, Turnock, David, and Jaco Woudstra. 2008. "Identity and multiculturalism in the Romanian Banat." *Mediterranee* 110: 17-26.
- Davidson, James C., and David P. Caddell. 1994. "Religion and the meaning of work." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 33, no. 2: 135-147.
- Erdeli, George, and Liliana Dumitrache. 2001. *Geografia populației*. București: Editura Corint.
- Frunză, Sandu. 2004. *Pași spre integrare. Religie și drepturile omului în România*, Cluj Napoca: Editura Limes.
- Ghețău, Vasile, Damian, Nicoleta, and Maria Simion. 2016. "Populația - dinamică și structuri demografice." In *Romania. Natură și Societate*, edited by Bălțeanu, Dan, Dumitrașcu, Monica, Geacu, Sorin, Mitrică, Bianca, Sima, Mihaela, 221-49. București: Editura Academiei Române.
- Ghețău, Vasile. 2007. *Declinul demografic și viitorul populației României*. Buzău: Editura Alpha MDN.
- Godea, Ioan. 2012. *Arhitectura românească în epoca modernă 1700-1900*. Oradea: Editura Primus.
- Grama, Vasile, and Marius Stupariu. 2014. "Structura confesională/Confesional structure." In *Crisana-Maramures*. *Atlas geografic al patrimoniului turistic / Geographical atlas of tourism heritage*, edited by Alexandru Ilieș, 63-65. Oradea: Editura Universității din Oradea.
- Hatos, Adrian, and Florica Ștefănescu. 2019. "Religiosity and career options of youth from the Romanian-Hungarian cross-border religion." *Journal for the Study of Religion and Ideologies* 18, no. 53 (Summer): 75-91.
- Healey, Joseph F. 2006. *Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Class: The Sociology of Group Conflict and Change / Edition 3*. London: Palgrave.
- Ianoș, Ioan. 2000. *Sisteme teritoriale. O abordare geografică*. București: Editura Tehnică.
- Ilieș, Alexandru, Wendt, Jan A., Ilieș, Dorina C., Herman, Grigore V., Ilieș, Marin, and Anca L. Deac. 2016. "The patrimony of wooden churches, built between 1531 and 2015, in the Land of Maramureș, Romania." *Journal of Maps* 12, Issue sup 1: 597-602. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17445647.2016.1243075>.
- Ilieș, Alexandru. 1998. *Etnie, confesiune și comportament electoral în Crișana și Maramureș. Studiu geografic (Sfârșitul sec XIX și sec XX)*. Cluj-Napoca: Editura Dacia.

- Ilieș, Alexandru. 2018. "Etnie și confesiune." In *Istoria Bihorului. Civilizație, Societate, Economie, Mentalități*. Edited by Moisa, Gabriel, Șipoș, Sorin, Chiriac, Aurel, Românașu, Radu, 955-1028 Oradea: Editura Muzeului Țării Crișurilor.
- Institutul Național de Statistică. Recensămintele populației și locuințelor din 1992, 2002 și 2001. Comisia Națională pentru Statistică. București. Accessed April 5, 2020. www.insee.ro/cmc/ro/content/recensăminte.
- Ipatiov, Filip. 2001. *Rușii-Lipoveni din România*. Cluj Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană.
- Lazăr, Marius. 2012. "Valori, toleranță, religie și spiritualitate la tinerii români." *Revista Română de Sociologie* 23, no. 5-6: 463-82.
- Munteanu, Ioan. 2006. *Banatul istoric 1867-1918. Așezările. Populația Vol I*. Timișoara: Editura Excelsior Art.
- Muntele, Ionel. 1999. *Populația Moldovei în ultimele două secole*. Iași: Editura Corson.
- Negruți, Sorin. 2014. "The evolution of the religious structure in Romania since 1859 to the present day." *Revista Română de Statistică*, Issue sup 6: 39-47.
- Neguț, Silviu. 2008. *Geopolitica. Universul puterii*. București: Editura Meteor Press.
- Neguț, Silviu. 2011. *Geografia umană*. București: Editura Academiei Române.
- Nicoară, Vasile. 2006. *Dobrogea. Spațiu geografic multicultural*. Constanța: Editura Muntenia.
- Ostergren, Roberts C., and John G. Rice. 2004. *The Europeans. A Geography of People, Culture, and Environment*. New York, London: The Guilford Press.
- Pop, Ioan A., and Ioan Bolovan. 2013. *Istoria Transilvaniei*. Cluj-Napoca: Editura Eikon, Academia Română, Editura Centrul de Studii Transilvane.
- Pop, Ioan A., and Marius Porumb. 2007. *Patrimoniul cultural al României*. București: Editura Academiei Române.
- Popescu, Raluca. 2011. "Atitudini religioase la români: religia și biserica sunt în continuare foarte importante; cu toate acestea, românii au un model religios valoric mai critic și mai tolerant." In *Studii Electorale Românești*, Fundația Soros, România: 1-4. (https://www.researchgate.net/publication/301295677_Atitudini_religioase_la_romani)
- Preutu, Cristina, and George Enache. 2018. *Identități etno-confesionale și reprezentări ale celuilalt în spațiul est-european: între stereotip și voința de a cunoaște*. Iași: Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza.
- Rotar, Gabriela, and Nicolaie Hodor. 1993. "Considérations sur les modifications intervenues dans la structure confessionnelle de la population de la Roumanie au cours de la dernière moitié du siècle." *Analele Universității din Oradea, Seria Geografie* 3: 118-122.
- Sandu, Dumitru. 2003. *Sociabilitatea în spațiul dezvoltării. Încredere, toleranță și rețele sociale*. Iași: Editura Polirom.

Secretariatul de Stat pentru Culte. 2018. *Statul și cultele religioase*. București. Accessed April 3, 2020. <http://culte.gov.ro/>.

Stașac, Marcu. 2014. "Structura etnică/Ethnical structure." In *Crisana-Maramures. Atlas geografic al patrimoniului turistic/ Geographical atlas of tourism heritage*, edited by Alexandru Ilieș, 61-62. Oradea: Editura Universității din Oradea.

Șișeștean, Gheorghe. 2002. *Etnie, confesiune și căsătorie în nord-vestul Transilvaniei*. Zalău: Editura Caiete Silvane.

Ungureanu, Alexandru, Groza, Octavian, Ionel, Muntele. 2002. *Moldova. Populația, forța de muncă și așezările umane în tranziție*. Iași: Editura Corson.

Vert, Constantin. 2001. *Geografia populației. Teorie și metodologie*. Timișoara: Editura Mirton.

Voicu, Ovidiu, Popescu, Raluca, Palada, Mirel, and Claudiu Tufiș. 2012. "Religie și comportament religios în România." *Noua Revistă a Drepturilor Omului* 8: 91-120.