

INTERDEPENDENCE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN RELIGION AND THE SOCIOECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT CASE STUDY FOR ROMANIA IN TERRITORIAL PROFILE

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Abstract

From its appearance, the globalisation has determined more and more societal changes. In this context, there were noted several aspects, essential for the sustainable development of society, respectively the ones regarding: education, religion and culture. Their importance was treated in terms of societal forces, forces that were distinguished in the religious communities in Romania.

The societal costs appeared as a result of the intensification of globalisation must not be neglected. They contribute to establishing the education's importance in the sustainable development but also to determining the way in which the individuals will act in society in order to fulfil the specific requirements of the new economy.

By analogy with the regional delimitations, in this study, it was conducted the grouping of the orthodox mitropolies in Romania, that helped in determining, analysing and interpreting the data regarding the religious units (parishes and monasteries). At the same time, there were analysed absolute indicators (population number, territorial surface) and there were calculated relative values of intensity (density).

In this study, there were highlighted, by grouping the data at the level of the orthodox mitropolies, new forms of approaching societal forces that can contribute to creating a better place, an ideal community.

Keywords: globalisation, religion, sustainable development, social responsibility, regions

JEL Classification: A13, P 25, R11, Z13

Introduction

Nowadays, the globalisation is no longer a problem but a phenomenon in itself, that is why in the dedicated specialty literature this term is commonly used. This aspect can be noticed both worldwide as well as at the level of a region, respectively the European Union,

contributing at the same time to the delimitation of some defining elements, important for the progress of a nation: education, culture and religion.

From this perspective, the scientific approaches contributed in time to substantiating some new horizons that are based on knowledge, human and intellectual capital, in other words there were indicated the horizons of a new economy. Thereby, the general theoretical framework provides the understanding and reflecting of the most relevant measures that are dedicated to the social responsibility as goal of the new economy, the importance of the societal forces and ideal community in the context of the sustainable development.

In this study, from the economical and religious perspective, there were taken into consideration a series of indicators (GDP, number of parishes and monasteries, populations and its density) which were analysed in terms of societal forces.

On the basis of the performed analysis, there were observed the most important aspects of the new economy: social, cultural, economic, religious and educational order which act concertedly in order to transform society in a better world, in a world of the concept of ideal community.

1. The social responsibility and the importance of the societal forces

Being responsible is a concept used mainly in the situations in which a person has certain duties towards other persons: "Every person has duties towards collectivity" (United Nations Organization, website) but also in the situations in which there must be performed important activities for which decisions are made, which will lead to positive or negative results.

Generally, with a view to fulfilling some purposes in society there are highlighted the following duties: fidelity to the country, defence of the country, financial contributions and exercising the rights and freedoms (Constitution of Romania Act 1991, c.III (54-56)).

Regarding the exercising of the fundamental rights and freedoms (the Constitution of Romania, 2003, p.767) there stand out the ones regarding: the freedom of expressing the thoughts, opinions, beliefs and creative concepts; the right to education and the right to culture.

The social responsibility of the legal entity presupposes a series of actions (donations, sponsorships, volunteering, expertise, benefits) that can be implemented in a long term strategy. And the fields of activity in which an entity can be involved in order to contribute to the social welfare are various: education, disadvantaged social categories, environment, road safety, health, community (CSR Romania, 2015).

In Romania, the state encourages such actions by offering a proper legislative framework (Sponsorship Law 448/2006, Article 78). From this point of view there are provisions stipulating some measures that will lead to the performance of some social activities and that can bring, at the same time, some benefits (financial, moral and of image). In this context, there can be specified the following measures:

- redirecting by the natural persons a quantum that represents 2% (Codul fiscal Act. 2003, c.10 (84)), of the contribution calculated for the wages or from other sources (rental and leasing of the goods, copyrights ecc.)

- hiring some persons with disabilities by the companies that have at least 50 employees, protection of some authorized units (Disabled Law 448/2006, Article 78) (economic operator, with own management, public or private, which employed persons with disabilities with individual labour contract at least 30% of the total number of persons);
- granting some support for the development of the religious activities, for research, development and innovation, for generating electricity from non-polluting sources, for the environmental protection, for the breach of some standards for the environmental protection;
- granting some pensions after the cumulative fulfilment of the conditions regarding the retirement age and the duration of employment and some health insurances.

The state – nation can be viewed from various angles of manifestation (social realities, economic realities and symbolic realities) (Niculescu, 2006, p.50). The societal forces are given by the thoughts, desires, necessities or religious determinations that people have in common. In other words, there are reunited those persons who have similar origins, religion, language, values and institutions and there are eliminated those who have different ideas (Huntigton, 2007, p.112).

According to the Explanatory Dictionary of the Romanian language, the term ‘societal’ refers to society or to something that belongs to a large group in society.

Taking into consideration the religion, we can estimate that in Romania the Orthodox Christians represent a societal force. They have a significant weight compared to the total population, and the form of administrative organization of the religious worship units has a high degree of specificity compared to the other cults.

Having in mind the results of the census conducted in 2011, we can state that the population of Romania is mostly Orthodox, representing a percentage of 81,042% of the total population.

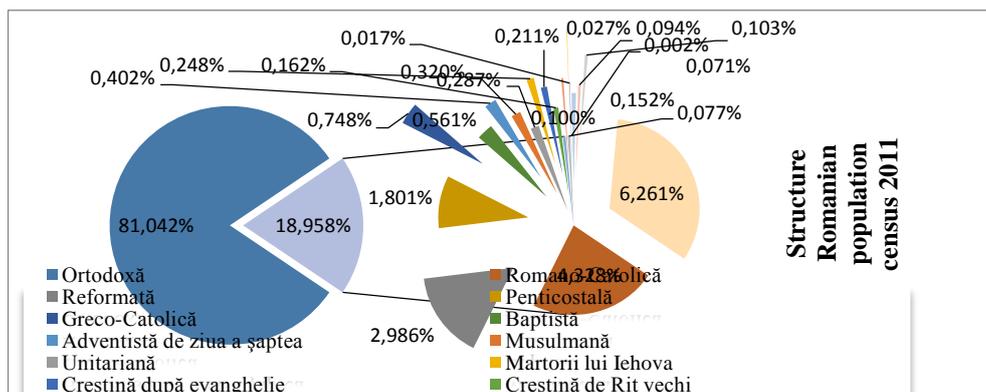


Figure no 1: Structure Romanian population census 2011

Source: National Institute of Statistics, data adapted by the author;

In this study, it shows interest the approach of the administrative structures of the orthodox cult units, from the perspective of the mitropolies. With a view to achieving a clear presentation of these structures, it is very important to understand the territorial constitution of Romania, from the regional point of view.

2. The Regions and the Orthodox Mitropolies within the borders

The regions are geographical delimitations and are not conceived as political or cultural entities (Huntigton, 2007, p.117).

Given the fact that the European Commission, in 2013, elaborated a common classification regarding the territorial units for statistics (NUTS) (Parliament European Council, 2003), it must be noted that in the territorial compentence of the regions there are established three NUTS levels: NUTS 1 (Macroregion 1, Macroregion 2, Macroregion 3, Macroregion 4), NUTS 2 (North-West, Centre, North-East, South-East, South-Muntenia, Bucharest-Ilfov, South-West Oltenia and West), NUTS 3 (the 42 counties and the municipality Bucharest).

The concept of regionalization appeared from the desire of multiplicating the decisional centres, reducing gradually the present bureaucratic systems from the central level, through decentralization (Popa, 2004, p.87). The image of Romania decentralized with the eight regions, al NUTS 2 level, presents a particular interest both from the historical point of view as well as from the societal forces point of view within which religion must be mentioned. The correspondence between the regions of the NUTS 2 level and the orthodox mitropolies can be established as it follows (Parliament of the European Council, 2003, p.47):

- To the *Mitropoly of Cluj, Crişana and Maramureş* (SSC – websiteu) corresponds the North – West region except for the county Bihor. It consists of the counties: Bistriţa-Năsăud, Cluj, Maramureş, Satu Mare and Sălaj;
- To the *Mitropoly of Ardeal* (SSC, websiteu), corresponds the region Centre, including the counties Bihor and Hunedoara. It consists of the counties: Alba, Braşov, Covasna, Harghita, Mureş and Sibiu;
- To the *Mitropoly of Moldavia and Bucovina* (SSC, websiteu) corresponds the region North-West. It consists of the counties: Bacău, Botoşani, Iaşi, Neamţ, Suceava and Vaslui;
- To the *Mitropoly of Muntenia and Dobrogea* (SSC, websiteu) corresponds the regions South – West, South – Muntenia and Bucharest - Ilfov. It consists of the counties: Brăila, Buzău, Constanţa, Galaţi, Tulcea, Vrancea, Argeş, Călăraşi, Dâmboviţa, Giurgiu, Ialomiţa, Prahova, Teleorman, Bucharest and Ilfov;
- To the *Mitropoly of Oltenia* (SSC, websiteu) corresponds the region South-West Oltenia. It consists of the counties: Dolj, Gorj, Mehedinţi, Olt and Vâlcea;
- To the *Mitropoly of Banat* (SSC, websiteu) corresponds the region West except for the county Hunedoara. It consists of the counties: Arad, Caraş-Severin and Timiş.

In this study, it shows interest the approach of the administrative structures of the orthodox cult units, from the perspective of the mitropolies. At the same time, the understanding of the territorial constitution of Romania, from the regional point of view is very important for representing, through the average indicators and relative intensity measures, some economical and societal values.

3. Economical and societal values specific for the sustainable development

The sustainable economical and societal values presuppose the use of people with high qualification and a non-polluting high technology. These values can be observed using some regrouped concepts for every orthodox mitropolity. Therefore, a first interesting indicator is the one reflected by the number of inhabitants, determined according to the census from 2011.

Table no. 1 The density of the total and orthodox population within the mitropolies

| Orthodox mitropolies | Inhabitants | Orthodox | Surface -km- | Density | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| | | | | inhab itants /km | orthodox /km |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4(1/3) | 5(2/3) |
| Moldavia and Bucovina | 3.302.217 | 2.789.990 | 36.850 | 89,61 | 75,71 |
| Muntenia and Dobrogea | 7.954.532 | 7.108.822 | 72.036 | 110,4 2 | 98,68 |
| Oltenia | 2.075.642 | 1.944.134 | 29.212 | 71,05 | 66,55 |
| Banat | 1.409.748 | 1.031.988 | 24.971 | 56,46 | 41,33 |
| Cluj, Crişana and Maramureş | 2.024.734 | 1.356.197 | 26.615 | 76,07 | 50,96 |
| Ardeal | 3.354.768 | 2.075.873 | 48.707 | 68,88 | 42,62 |

Source: National Institute of Statistics, 2014. *2013 Directory*, [CD] Edition, p.17
National Institute of Statistics, 2011. *The Census of the Population and Dwellings 2011*.
Available at: <<http://www.recensamantromania.ro/rezultate-2/>> [Accessed 01 August 2014]

In the previous chart, by dividing the number of inhabitants, respectively of the orthodox population to the surface, there were calculated the density of the orthodox population and the density of the total number of inhabitants within every orthodox mitropolity. From this perspective, there can be noticed that the highest density of the orthodox population is registered in the Mitropolity of Muntenia and Dobrogea, and the lowest density can be found in the Mitropolity of Banat.

According to the data grouped for every mitropolity, in 2009 (Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate, 2009, pp. 48-56), regarding the number of parishes and monasteries, but also to the data regarding the number of the orthodox population, the average number of orthodox people belonging to a parish can be determined for every orthodox mitropolity.

Table no. 2 Average number of orthodox people belonging to a parish

| Orthodox mitropolies | Orthodox people | No. of parishes | Average number of orthodox belonging to a parish |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 (1/2) |
| Moldavia and Bucovina | 2.789.990 | 2.273 | 1.227 |
| Muntenia and Dobrogea | 7.108.822 | 3.619 | 1.964 |
| Oltenia | 1.944.134 | 1.480 | 1.314 |
| Banat | 1.031.988 | 924 | 1.117 |
| Cluj, Crişana and Maramureş | 1.356.197 | 1.212 | 1.119 |
| Ardeal | 2.075.873 | 1.902 | 1.091 |
| Total | 16.307.004 | 11.410 | 7.832 |

Source: National Institute of Statistics, 2014. *2013 Directory*. CD Edition 2014. p.17
National Institute of Statistics, 2014. *Census of the Population and Dwellings 2011*.
Available at: <<http://www.recensamantromania.ro/rezultate-2/>> [Accessed 01 August 2014]

Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate, *Romanian Patriarchate Mission-Organization-Activities*,
Publishing House Basilica, Bucharest 2009, pp. 48-56

Episcopia Devei – websiteu. Available at: < <http://www.episcopiadevei.ro> > [Accessed 19 May 2013]

Episcopia Giurgiului – websiteu. Available at: <<http://episcopiagiurgiului.ro>> [Accessed 19 May 2013]

Altogether, according to the release of the Chancellery of the Holy Synod: “The Romanian Church at December 31st, 2013 / January 1st, 2014”, on the Romanian territory there are (Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate, 2015) 14.693 churches out of which 11.407 parishes (2.247 in the cities and 9.160 in the villages). Therefore, regarding the number of the parishes it can be stated that during 2009 – 2014, their number is relatively constant. By dividing the number of parishes to the number of orthodox people it was determined the average number of orthodox people that belongs to a parish (chart no. 2). The highest result was obtained for the Mitropoly of Muntenia and Dobrogea while for the Mitropoly of Ardeal it was deduced, from this point of view, the lowest result.

Another important indicator, which reflects the productivity, is the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). It includes the value of all the goods and services resulted from the production process (Băcescu and Băcescu – Cărbunaru, 1998, p.56).

Table no. 3 GDP / inhabitant for the orthodox mitropolies

| Orthodox mitropolies | GDP 2011 | Inhabitants | GDP / inhabitant |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 0 | 1 | 3 | 4(1/3) |
| Moldavia and Bucovina | 57.082.700.000 | 3.302.217 | 17.286,17 |
| Muntenia and Dobrogea | 277.502.800.000 | 7.954.532 | 34.886,13 |
| Oltenia | 44.415.100.000 | 2.075.642 | 21.398,25 |
| Banat | 45.761.300.000 | 1.409.748 | 32.460,62 |
| Cluj, Crişana and Maramureş | 48.260.100.000 | 2.024.734 | 23.835,28 |
| Ardeal | 83.818.300.000 | 3.354.768 | 24.984,83 |

Source: National Institute of Statistics, 2014. *2013 Directory*. CD Edition.

National Institute of Statistics, 2014. *The Census of the Population and Dwellings 2011*.

Available at: <<http://www.recensamantromania.ro/rezultate-2/>> [Accessed 01 August 2014]

The data from the column which reflect the relative measure of intensity, presented in the column GDP/inhabitant (chart nr. 3), was calculated in order to emphasize the productivity of the inhabitants from every orthodox mitropolie. Therefore, it is noticed that the inhabitants from the Mitropolie of Muntenia and Dobrogea, Mitropolie of Banat and Ardeal (in the west side of the country) are more productive than the ones from the Mitropolie of Moldavia and Dobrogea (in the east of the country). The low level of productivity registered in two counties (Vaslui and Botosani) influence in a pretty strong manner the results obtained in the totality of the mitropolie. However, the religious spirit from the Mitropolie of Moldavia and Bucovina is pretty strong, being positioned on the second place for the number of orthodox inhabitants (chart no. 1) and for the number of orthodox parishes (chart no. 2), after the Mitropolie of Muntenia and Dobrogea.

These indicators were calculated as a necessity of the new economy based on sustainable concepts. That is why, the sustainable development presupposes that the progress and welfare of every individual is obtained so that the existential necessities of the future generations are not affected (World Business Council for Sustainable Development, wabsat) and so that he has more possibilities to choose from “which will allow not only for choosing a greater longevity, but also a higher degree of knowledge and, respectively, a decent standard of life.” (Suciu, 2000, p. 102). These requirements are fulfilled, inclusively by the orthodox communities, by the general rational use of the resources, especially the biodegradable ones, by using people with high qualifications and a non-polluting high technology.

Conclusions

From the perspective of the sustainable development, society in general, the religious communities in particular, contribute to reaching some numerous targets according to the requirements presented which presuppose the socio-economic development which is based on ensuring the balance between the economic, social, ecologic instances and the components of the natural capital, without compromising the possibilities and necessities of the future generations (Mihai and Tălmăciu, 2004/2005, p.448).

In this period of the globalization, full of uncertainties and paradoxes, the individual desires to make out of the society he lives in a better place, and ideal one, and it can be achieved by the actions undertaken at the macroeconomic level (governmental programs and projects) concerted with the ones from the microeconomic level (philanthropic activities).

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