"OVIDIUS" UNIVERSITY IN CONSTANTA

DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

DOCTORAL FIELD THEOLOGY

SUMMARY THESIS

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PhD student,

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CONSTANȚA

2023

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INTERRELIGION AND MULTICULTURALITY IN DOBROGEA

SUMMARY

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INTRODUCTION

According to the Orthodox teaching, the Holy Spirit calls, leads, initiates and sanctifies the nations in order to integrate - by no means dissolve - them in the Church of Christ. Precisely for this reason, the Holy Apostle Peter wants to clarify, in these terms, the circumstance that only in Christianity is the achievement of fullness by a nation (I Peter 2, 9-10).

The opening to the Gentiles, more precisely to those people who did not share the Jewish religion, was one of the miracles that the "many mercy" of God, prophesied and sung by David the prophet (Ps. 135, 1-26), performed , according to the word of the Savior, with the moment of the Descent of the Holy Spirit.

As a certainty of the fact that the Savior sacrificed Himself and rose again for "us people and for our salvation" and not for "us, the Jews" or "us, the Greeks" or "us, the Romans" as Philetism pronounces - of any color would he be - exclusively and unjustly in the face of God's high justice, the Holy Scripture explicitly mentions the fact that the Truth-Christ became accessible to all those who believe in Him, starting from the Day of Pentecost.

But the Descent of the Holy Spirit not only founded a new nation - the people of Christians, i.e. the Church - overcoming the petty divisions that exist historically between the ethnicities of the earth, but also restored the primordial identity offered by God to each nation, without favoring one at the expense of the other.

The globalized world is not only characterized by the globalization of goods and financial means, but also by the formation of a global society. Global society has abolished the classical boundaries of religions and cultures. On a closer look at the issue of interaction, it can be observed that in particular the European space presents itself today as an environment for the interaction of political, philosophical and religious ideologies.

This interaction can be registered both at the institutional and individual level, anticipating a new social reality, but also a daily challenge. If 200 years ago, Europe had a generally valid Christian profile, from a religious point of view, today one can observe a religious horizon in which a number of religious identities can be found, each with its own cultural heritage.

The globalized, multicultural and, in many aspects, secularized world creates new challenges. It increased the intercultural and interreligious exchange of ideas. It also caused relatively frequent episodes of hatred and even open conflict. Therefore, the coexistence of multiple identity communities not only requires peaceful collaboration, but also requires an intellectual, open explanation that helps people belonging to one religion accept and recognize people belonging to other religions.

The gradual decline of the political influence of Christianity in an increasingly interconnected world, together with the discovery and knowledge of other religions, as a direct effect of ecumenical, missionary connections and cross-cultural studies, created the possibility for a new way of thinking, which is characterized today through openness and tolerance. It is

interesting to watch the metamorphosis that non-Christian religions imported into the European space will undergo: the way of affirming their own identities of these non-Christian religions in a space foreign to the cultural environment in which they were formed, if they will remain broadly consistent with traditional values , given the fact that the dilution of Europe's Christian identity allows a fertile ground for religious proselytism.

Today, Europe is living the experience, otherwise very interesting, of the implementation in its socio-religious field of some foreign religious traditions, imported by the phenomenon of migration, engaged in the general plan of globalization. Interreligious dialogue represents one of the greatest challenges of our time.

Even if the territory between the Danube and the Black Sea has been a very controversial subject in the field of historiographical issues, however, history confirms its major involvement in European history. Dobrogea is the Romanian land recognized for the most varied association of populations and religions in Romania, which is why, on countless occasions, it has been the host of scholarly meetings dedicated to the study of the Dobrogean model of interculturality, here being attested one of the oldest and most lasting examples of integration and coexistence of ethnic and religious groups.

Unfortunately, the historical circumstances, the local and continental geography placed Dobrogea under the sign of destiny as a transit space, strategically in the arsenal of the hegemony policy of the European Powers, which put in other terms the evolution of its integration into the construction of the Romanian national state.

In Dobrogea, members of several ethnic and religious formations live together in good understanding, from among the traditional ones, being recorded, alongside the majority Romanian population, Greeks, Armenians, Jews, Turks, Tatars, Bulg Aryans, Lipovian Russians, Germans, Italians, Roma (distinguished in "Christians" and "Turks" i.e. Muslims) and others, each group contributing to the Dobrogean cultural mosaic through its own identity, culture, religious tradition and language, both in the spiritual direction of of the approach as well as in that of highlighting the specificity, through peaceful dialogue.

The model of interethnic cohabitation and open intercultural dialogue can be easily deciphered from the evidence of material and immaterial culture generated by the unrestricted manifestation of one's own identity, in direct correlation with the understanding and acceptance of other ethno-religious identities.

The coexistence between the Romanians and the other ethnic groups of Dobrogea contributed to the relatively easy transmission (and reception) of certain values, through cultural replication, from one particular culture to another. This fact can be observed based on the numerous similarities in the actual manifestation of the spiritual life in Dobrogea.

This interreligious and interethnic model offered by Dobrogea, both in the Romanian context but, above all, and more and more well-known, at the level of the whole of Europe, consists in concordant coexistence, based on respect for the otherness of the human person and the group of which he is a part .

The central idea of the doctoral thesis is represented, therefore, by the theological exposition of some of the foundations that were the basis of the harmonious relationship between the ethnic groups in the Dobrogea area, focusing on interreligious dialogue and multiculturalism. Man is a dialogic being. From a social, religious, cultural point of view, this is the only way to think. In the rational imaginary, the term dialogue suggests a formal connection in which two or more agents focus on building an agreement on a clearly defined topic.

In this sense, dialogue may not be the enemy of truth, but the relationship may become problematic, if the object of the exercise is the negotiated resolution of a knotty problem, a degree of compromise and accommodation enters the equation.

Thus, the term dialogue is associated with the activities of politicians and civil servants and inevitably emits a personal interest and undisclosed motives. It is no wonder that when the word dialogue is applied to the meeting of religions, it often attracts a degree of suspicion, as if to enter into dialogue with people of another tradition is to collaborate with a relativistic neglect of religious integrity.

CHAPTER I: ETHOS AND ETHNICITY IN ECUMENICAL THOUGHT

The opening to the Gentiles, more precisely to those people who did not share the Jewish religion, was one of the miracles that the "many mercy" of God, prophesied and sung by David the prophet (Ps. 135, 1-26), performed , according to the word of the Savior, with the moment of the Descent of the Holy Spirit.

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The care that God showed and shows towards all the nations of the earth starting from the creation of the world, giving each of them a guiding angel towards the fulfillment of his mission (Deut. 32, 6-8; Daniel 10, 13-21), it denotes an attitude contrary to the supposed universalistic and assimilating world order, which the emperors and popes have always wanted to achieve. More recently, "sovereign Pontiffs have constantly welcomed efforts for transnational and international associations in this century. The League of Nations and, later, the United Nations were unequivocally approved and encouraged by the popes".

The revelation preserved in the intimate being of the nation is conditioned by the preservation of the truth, because it has the Spirit of Truth as its keeper and discoverer, and

therefore it remains accessible and active as long as the true faith is professed. Where the truth has been falsified, we can say that the power of the Holy Spirit no longer remains, and, undoubtedly, neither does the Church, following the principle formulated by Saint Irenaeus.

Theology makes an impressive effort to discover solutions regarding the affirmation of the unity of the Orthodox Church in the context of the contemporary world. At first sight it might seem that there is no need for a solution to this fact since the unity of the Church is clearly based on the criteria of the sacramental hierarchy and its apostolic synodality. However, there are many thorny problems that cause this unity of the Orthodox Church to be partially obstructed.

The disputes raised around autocephaly, the primacy claim of newer or older ecclesiastical centers, the institutionalization of the so-called "titular hierarchy", without concrete dioceses and without believers, which wrap the old historical patriarchates and not least around the ethnocracy which still it also influences the theological perception regarding the administrative-jurisdictional organization of some church bodies, removes any doubt regarding their reality and incisiveness in the current situation.

But the unity and integrity of the Body of Christ (John 19, 36) does not exclude or suppress the defining features of each of His members (Rom. 12, 4-5).

The most important defining feature of each of the members of the Holy Church is the nation, which has its origin in the thinking of God (Eph. 3, 14-15) - and which was entrusted with the task of being a guide to Christ in Whom all were done (Colossians 1, 16-17).

CHAPTER II: INTERRELIGION, CHALLENGE BUT ALSO OPPORTUNITY OF IDENTITY IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBALIZATION

Globalization, a phenomenon as complex in the structure of the spheres it covers, as simple in its fluid unfolding, involves the religions of the world in new relational processes. Basically, between religion and globalization there is a relationship of interdependence, which we can trace from ancient times, religion being one of the generative pillars, along with commercial exchanges, of globalization. Religions or rather religious diversity has always existed. We need to understand two key points in the history of globalization, or two main crossroads on the road to a globalized world, in which religion played a prominent role. The first moment is related to the geographical and social developments of today's world religions. Nayan Chanda notes the importance of the drive to spread the faith.

In the case of all religions with a universal missionary vocation, and obviously for Christianity, globalization has played a fundamental role. Through reciprocity we can consider that religions with a universal missionary vocation have also contributed to what we know as globalization.

After His death and resurrection, the Savior Jesus Christ gave the apostles the command to universalize His teaching (Mat. 28, 19-20). However, before that aposto lii to be able to go out into

the world, they had to have a message to convey. The message was based on the restoration of dialogue between God and man through the Lord Jesus. The tendency to Godlikeness was inscribed in the human being as a divine seal.

A look at the books of Holy Scripture shows that man's relationship with God has, indeed, a deeply dialogic structure. God addresses man in a certain life situation, calls him out of it and sets him very specific tasks. Man talks and argues with God. He calls him in time of need and returns to Him with specific requests. This dialogical and communal reality emerges from the historical experience of the chosen people and then from the Incarnation of the Son of God.

The entire redemptive event of Christ can thus be interpreted as a comprehensive dialogue between God and man. Through His Incarnation, the kenotic emptying of His divinity, the Word placed Himself on a level with man as His interlocutor, He takes him seriously and respects his freedom. He gives up His divine powers to make Himself humanly accessible to man. This dialogic presence of Jesus is thus an expression of His being and His mission, in which the Father ultimately reveals Himself in His own inner being.

Thus dialogue becomes the hallmark of a biblically grounded personal understanding of God: God is in His essence dialogic.

It is necessary to distinguish between globalization and universalism. By globalization is meant a process of coalescence of different previously isolated areas into a single system of interconnections and interdependencies, in which everything, i.e. all nations, empires, tribes and states join in one way or another, through political, economic or cultural. Universalism, on the other hand, refers to the development of theories, ideas, or beliefs with claims of universal validity. By universalism, therefore, is meant an intellectual and spiritual phenomenon; through globalization, a political, economic and civilizational process, which involves a material culture rather than a spiritual one.

Articulating a message for the whole world was an indispensable critical moment in the development of globalization. The founders of traditional religions were the main sources of such global messages, although other sources include philosophers, notably Socrates. They were the world's first universal ideologies, the first accounts of self, social relations, and the good meant for all human beings.

A universal religion is meant for all and should be proclaimed to all. Missionaries of traditional religions, which have developed structurally under the impulse of mission, cross political and ethnic boundaries to call people everywhere to embrace the faith and form transpolitical and transethnic religious bonds. The world's religions establish networks that connect people based on shared visions of the religious life that man should live.

But the world's religions do something even more important to the history of globalization than inspire global mission and establish transcultural networks: all in their own way teach the fundamental unity of all humanity. Each person must understand himself or herself primarily as a human being, rather than as a member of a tribe, ethnic group, or kingdom; there is one straight path, one truth and, for some religions, one God to be embraced by all; outsiders should be treated

the same as insiders because the same moral code applies to everyone. Thus, the religions of the world have been the main source of humanity's awareness of itself as a whole.

Without an awareness of the oneness of humanity, we would have connections, economic interdependencies and multi-ethnic imperial states, but there is no genuine globality. Globalization was first a reality in the religious imaginary before becoming an economic and political project. In conclusion, the world's religions are the original globalizers, culture-shaping forces with distinct accounts of what they consider to be universal human values, thus undoubtedly essential roots of contemporary globalization. This is the first key bridge in the history of globalization. The second is the creation of world economic markets, which are not the subject of our research.

Hierarchies and divisions are reduced and less and less relevant (the flat world), and global interconnectedness is structured in ways that give some people a head start and leave others scrambling just to get to the starting line. Unprecedented economic growth is overshadowed by a widening disparity of wealth, with opulent and powerful elites living alongside an underclass of millions and millions of poor, overworked, disenfranchised and hopeless people.

and peace are faced with the strengthening of global criminal networks and the outbreak of violent conflicts at the local level. Particular ways of life are being lost as a result of cultural homogenization, as is a rebirth of local cultural forms in new structural dimensions. The robust reappropriation of tradition is accompanied by an inability to pass it on in a fast-paced and increasingly individualistic world. Environmental degradation and environmental improvement occur simultaneously. Individuals are absorbed in their own personal pleasures and pains, as well as involved in the suffering of people half a world away. Social media facilitates communication because it facilitates the loss of privacy; businesses and states alike engage in massive collection of information about individuals. Life-saving and life-enhancing technological innovations occur along possible trajectories to technological self-destruction.

The peaceful coexistence of religions and the opportunity for people to choose between them are normally prerequisites for this additional meaning, but it is significantly different from them because it implies that separate communities cannot necessarily be valued in themselves. In this sense, religious pluralism signifies a free flow of ideas, symbols and practices across the boundaries of traditions and communities. The results may include syncretism and hybridity. This is a state of affairs that characterizes mobile social systems or postmodern conditions. These three evaluative meanings of religious pluralism are compatible with each other in principle, but not necessarily easily combined in practice. In fact, there is potential for strong tensions between the first and second meanings.

According to a long tradition of theorizing pluralism in political philosophy, the order and stability of pluralistic societies depend on the stable identification of citizens with communities, categories, or voluntary associations.

The multidimensional understanding of globalization includes the economy-centered understanding, but sees capitalism as only one, admittedly critical and powerful, aspect of the process. For this view, the most fundamental characteristic of globalization is a simultaneity of uniformity or homogenization and diversification or "heterogenization."

Homogenization in this understanding is itself multidimensional, and this multidimensionality enables and even encourages what might be labeled heterogeneous ways of being homogenous. Roland Robertson put it succinctly in his formulation of globalization as the simultaneity of the universalization of the particular and the particularization of the universal. He and other globalization theorists have subsumed this idea under that other less popular neologism of glocalization: the global is at the same time local as the local is global. From this perspective, rationalization is modernization as glocalization is globalization.

Glocalization represents a conceptual mixture of globalization and localization - it is the simultaneous emergence of trends of both universalization and particularization in contemporary social, political, and economic systems. The notion of glocalization ,,represents a challenge to simplistic conceptions of globalization processes as linear. Glocalization indicates that the increasing importance of continental and global levels occurs with the increasing prominence of local and regional levels.

Consequently, if secularization was the fate of religion under the assumptions of modernization because religion was understood to be in a contradictory relationship with what was understood as rationalization, then the fate of religion under this understanding of globalization can be expected to evolve from the way in what is meant by religion with reference to glocalization.

A new interpretation of the religious fact has been introduced in contemporary global society: pluralization, which can also be expressed as diversity. Like rationalization, pluralization tells us little without further specification, and the sufficiency or deficiency of the approach will be revealed only in such further specification. Accordingly, pluralization in this theoretical attempt speaks to the three dimensions of form, power, and locality.

Interfaith dialogue has always favored action and a shared moral vision of the universe rather than the sharing of religious theological or legalistic visions of Ultimate Reality. In recent years, an ethical dimension of interreligious dialogue has been intensively emphasized. The Global Ethic Project is the most notable example of dialogue on ethics and moral action.

The project gained considerable notoriety when 143 leaders from across the world's religions signed up for the 1993 centennial meeting of the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago. The Global Ethic Project condemned the state of i responsibility towards nature, society, the world: the looting of the planet's resources, the poverty spread all over the world, and especially the aggression and hatred in the name of religion.

Those who signed up affirmed that there is an irrevocable, unconditional norm for all walks of life, for families and communities, for races, nations and religions. There are already ancient guidelines for human behavior found in the teachings of the world's religions that are the condition for an enduring world order.

Behind this statement was the theologian Hans Kung, who, by the way, wrote a book in 1990 called Global Responsibility: In Search of a New World Ethic, in which he argued for the fact that religions can contribute to world peace only if they reaffirm and they live their core values. He expressed his conviction that there can be no peace between nations without peace between

religions, peace between religions without dialogue between religions, dialogue between religions without investigating the foundations of religions.

These ideas are taken up and recalibrated in contemporary logic from the directives of the World Parliament of Religions of 1893: the commitment to a culture of non-violence and respect for life; commitment to a culture of solidarity and a just economic order; commitment to a culture of tolerance and a life of truthfulness; commitment to a culture of equal rights and partnership between men and women.

Sociologists, political scientists and theorists of religion analyze interreligious dialogue primarily as a socio-cultural phenomenon. Most of their analysis does not start from concepts of what interreligious dialogue is supposed to be, but from the observation that dialogue has become a semantic marker in a variety of socio-cultural contexts: "The case studies share an understanding of the multifaceted nature of interfaith movement and its internal diversity and complexity". This relatively new approach adds a different dimension to dialogue analysis.

Religion under globalization will therefore appear most evident in its plurality of forms, here institutional and non-institutional forms. We should consider the hypothesis that religion will not gravitate, or at least gravitate less and less in the way it is structured towards a dominant institutional form or predominantly towards deinstitutionalization. And both forms could be diverse.

Religion under globalization should also be expected to become increasingly plural or diverse in terms of its presence or power in society. It will be resurgent in certain contexts and circumstances, and declining or even evanescent, privatized or marginal in others. And finally, both dimensions of diversity will be expressed globally: diversity will vary according to how religion is particularized in different locales, including translocal social networks and virtual localities.

The UN is one of the most inclusive intergovernmental organizations in existence today. Its general assembly brings together formal representatives of 193 member states (and two observer states) which are uniquely organized into five regional groups.

Since the beginning of the 21st century, the UN has increasingly developed into a global institution that serves as one of the central arenas for the formulation of international discourses - on human rights, health issues, peace and disarmament. Religious NGOs play a significant role in this process.

Several religious organizations have successfully applied for officially accredited NGO status with the UN Economic and Social Council and other specialized UN agencies. This formal status gives them some degree of access to UN processes.

Thus, even if the community of NGOs from a religious point of view at the UN is very diverse, some organizations whose agenda is interreligious dialogue are integrated to a large degree in the activities of the UN. Within this broader framework, the concept of interreligious dialogue has gained increasing importance.

CHAPTER III: THE ECUMENICAL MEANING OF MULTICULTURALITY

For most of the 20th century, anthropologists defined culture as a shared set of beliefs, customs, and ideas that held people together in recognizable, self-identified groups. Some multidisciplinary researchers have challenged this notion of cultural coherence, especially as it became apparent that members of closely related groups had radically different views of their own social world.

Culture is no longer perceived as a system of knowledge inherited from ancestors. As a result, many sociologists now treat culture as a set of ideas, attributes, and expectations that change as people react to changing circumstances. At the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, the collapse of the barriers imposed by the communist bloc and the rapid intensification of e-commerce has accelerated the speed of social change around the world.

The term local culture is frequently used to characterize the experience of everyday life in the specific, identifiable locale. It reflects people's feelings of appropriateness, comfort, and fairness—attributes that define personal preferences and changing tastes. Given the power of local cultures, it is difficult to argue that there is a global culture.

What led and still leads to the dilution of identity and a lack of awareness of belonging to Christian values is the secularization, the desacralization of life. Globalization is a multilateral process and maintains a paradox of the dynamic relationship of opposite poles: unity (homogeneity) – diversity (plurality). As stated by Jean Nederveen Pieterse, there is a variation of scholarly opinions on the meaning of globalization, some of which lie in a general consensus and others highlight a number of controversies in order to have a comprehensive definition that covers all planes conceptual.

The consensus gathers four statements: (a) globalization is shaped by technological change; (b) globalization involves the reconfiguration of states; (c) globalization proceeds in tandem with regionalization; (d) globalization is uneven. The controversies involve six questions: (1) is globalization essentially economic or multidimensional? (2) what is "globalization"?; (3) is globalization a recent or long-term historical process? (4) does globalization exist or is it a rhetorical reality? (5) is globalization neoliberal capitalism? (6) is globalization manageable?

From the perspective of each field, various definitions of globalization can be issued. Thus, from an economic point of view, globalization can be received on two levels: (a) similarity of economic conditions and policies across national borders; (b) accelerated movement across national and regional barriers of economic "goods", i.e. people, products, capital, especially intangible forms of capital (technology, control of assets).

In historical-anthropological terms, globalization is a long-term historical process of increasing worldwide interconnection. Globalization means space-time compression, which

implies more intense interaction in a wider space and in a shorter time than before; in other words, the experience of a world that feels its borders and limits differently.

In sociological analysis, globalization refers both to the compression of the world and to the intensification of awareness of the world as a whole; a social process in which geographical constraints on social and cultural patterns recede and in which people are increasingly aware of this reality; a mechanism or rhythm that brings people into articulate proximity and intensifies the dimension of cultural, religious, linguistic, racial and ethnic diversities.

From a political point of view, globalization transcends the boundaries of economics, mass media, social patterns and general interest. As a political challenge, the globalization process crosses the ideological spectrum and engages social and political movements at all levels. This implies a paradigm shift from the era of the nation state and international politics to global politics.

Globalization is an objective, empirical process of increasing economic and political connectivity, a subjective process that unfolds in consciousness as a collective awareness of growing global interconnectedness, and a platform for specific globalizing projects that seek to shape global conditions.

Theoretical analyzes have shown that globalization is not an all-powerful, unidirectional force that levels everything in its path. For example, the breakdown of time and space is best illustrated by the influential "global village" thesis proposed by Marshall McLuhan in 1962. Instant communication, McLuhan predicted, would destroy geographically based power imbalances and create a global village.

McLuhan's notion of the global village involved the worldwide spread of television, bringing distant events into the homes of viewers everywhere. Based on this concept, McLuhan argued that all accelerated communications produce an "implosion" of personal experience—that is, distant events are brought to the immediate attention of people around the world.

This is obvious enough if we reflect on the globalizing dimension of a football match in the circuit of a world or European championship. Hundreds of thousands, millions of viewers from different countries and cultures are drawn into a widely televised participation. We can deduce that the experience generated by globalization is not leveling, but participation in cultural alterity, facilitated by new communication and mobility techniques. In this sense, it can be extended to comparable activities by other religions. Such a phenomenological definition of the mission concept can be reduced to five elements: (1) a planned, methodical and organized procedure; (2) an intention to conquer the other with one's faith; (3) an attempt to persuade others to join one's religious community; (4) a conviction of the truth of one's faith; and (5) a belief that acceptance is also in the objective interest of the person to be converted.

The meaning of the word mission reveals four aspects: preaching and strengthening the faith; spreading the Kingdom of God, that is, the Church in the world; the conversion of unbelievers; the foundation of a new local community. The mention of these aspects highlights the fact that the mission has a permanent and dynamic character, considering the circumstances through which Christian life, theology and pastoral-missionary activity pass.

The Christian mission also means "the proclamation of the Gospel in the world by the Holy Apostles and their successors, the bishops and priests of the Church, in their work inseparable from the righteous - believing people, from Pentecost until our time.

The mission of the Church is the act of Christianization, evangelization of the world, an apostolic work through which the kingdom of God's love expands in the time and space of human history. Through the mission of the Church, the Gospel is made known more and more extensively in space and the number of those who know and live in Christ through the grace of the Holy Spirit is constantly increasing."

Describing the kinds of meanings that people use to make boundaries more or less permeable and relevant, presupposes a foundation on relational principles, principles that define how subjects understand and differentiate themselves from others: truth, test, tact and tolerance . By using these four relational principles, religious boundaries are given meaning and made more or less permeable and relevant.

Globalization elasticizes religious boundaries, and even in certain contexts erodes them. Under this impulse, man is taken out of his social, existential, religious context, being brought into the experience of relating to the other.

CHAPTER IV: DOBROGEA AS "FATHERLAND OF THE NATIONS"

Dobrogea is a cross-border region (23,320 km2) that spans the territory of three states: Romania (67.7%) and Bulgaria (32.3%) of the total area of the region. Administratively speaking, this territory includes two Romanian counties, two Bulgarian provinces and five other villages, as well as a small Ukrainian sector, namely Insula Šerpilor (Serpent Island) and four other islands south of the valley of the Chilia arm.

The border lines of Dobrogea are: the lower Danube to the north and west, the lower Danube, the lower Black Sea, the Black Sea to the east, and some conventionally drawn Bulgarian provinces and municipalities to the south.

The Romanian sector of Dobrogea is the largest and most homogeneous from an administrative point of view (15,570 km2, 897,165 inhabitants). It includes two counties: Constanța (7,071 km2, 684,082 inhabitants) in its southern half and Tulcea (8,499 km2, 201,462 inhabitants) in the northern one. The population density values between the two counties are clearly different: 89.2 loc. (above the national average of 84.4 places/km2) in the first and only 23.7 places. in the second, caused by the low level of density in the Danube Delta (4.88 loc./km2 on average).

The favorable geographical position, between the Danube and the Black Sea, explains the fact that Dobrogea has become a socio-economic, but especially ethnic and cultural region over time.

The "Pontic theater" has been a real contradictory subject in recent centuries not only in historiographical issues, but also in political, military-strategic or economic confrontations. We

note that, despite the expansionist policy and the numerous military conflicts that the Ottoman Empire fought with the neighboring powers, the Ottoman rule in Dobrogea (1418 - 1878) also had peaceful moments that influenced the economic development of the region and the relative social well-being of cohabiting populations. Gradually, with the growth of its importance for geo-strategic interests and especially for the economy of the High Port, Dobrogea turned into an important point of trade, playing an essential role in the settlement or transit of increasing numbers of Jewish merchants, among whom I mentioned the famous Josef Nasi (banker of Sultan Selim II) and Haim Cohen. Jews also served the Ottoman authorities in Dobrogea as officials at the Danube customs and as translators of documents.

The ethnic structure of a territory is the result of a long historical, social and economic evolution. Ethnic minorities, indeed, give the cultural diversity of a territory, the work of a long history associated with a complex of cultural and civilizational phenomena that are the basis of the cohabitation of different ethnicities. Several definitions of ethnic minorities have been developed over time. According to S. Tirilly, a numerical minority group is distinguished from the majority population by national, cultural and linguistic features.

Jackson Preece defined the minority as a group numerically inferior to the rest of the population of a state, a group that has a non-dominant position, is well defined from a historical point of view, being settled on the territory of that state; the members of the group are citizens of the respective state, but have ethnic, religious, linguistic or cultural features distinct from those of the general population, showing, even implicitly, a sense of solidarity in preserving their own culture, traditions, religion or language.

The definition of ethnic minorities given by the United Nations Organization is as follows: "a group of citizens of a state who constitute a numerical minority, share ethnic, religious or linguistic characteristics different from those of the majority population; it manifests a sense of solidarity, implicitly motivated by a collective rush to survive in order to obtain de facto and de jure equality with the majority population".

The communist period had a huge negative impact on the economy of Dobrogea, as the collectivization of agriculture gained momentum; on the other hand, it is worth mentioning the measures taken to achieve the major economic and infrastructure goals, such as the expansion and modernization of the port of Constanta, the construction of the Danube-Black Sea and Poarta Albă-Midia Năvodari waterways, as well as the start of construction work on the first power plant nuclear power plant in Romania (at Cernavodă). The opening of these large construction sites encouraged the labor force from other areas of the country to come to Dobrogea, which significantly contributed to the increase of the share of Romanians in the ethnic structure of the region.

After 1990, the population of Dobrogea followed the general evolution trend of Romania's population, namely a constant decrease from 1,020,106 inhabitants in 1992 to 971,643 in 2002 and 897,165 in 2011. Romanians have always held the absolute majority (over 90% of the total population), with a slight decrease proportionately between 2002 and 2011, largely due to the growing Roma minority. In addition, despite the cosmopolitan nature of Dobrogea's population at

the beginning of the 20th century, the share of ethnic minority communities in the region was below the national average (9.9% versus 11.1% of the total population).

The latest census data (October 20, 2011) show that the main ethnic minorities in Dobrogea are still the historical ones, namely the Turks (2.5%) and the Tatars (2.19%), remnants of the 457 years of Ottoman rule, and the Lipovian Russians, a border minority or the descendants of refugee communities who arrived in Dobrogea following particular historical and political circumstances. The Roma community seems to be constantly growing (officially over 1% of the total population), along with the almost symbolic proportion of the other cross-border minority - the Bulgarians (only 55 people).

If we look at the data from the 1992, 2002 and 2011 censuses regarding the ethnic structure of the population, as well as at subsequent statistical estimates, there is a sharp numerical decline both among the majority population and in most ethnic minority communities, both at the regional level, as well as national. The 1992 census data show the two counties of Dobrogea (Constanța and Tulcea) with a total of 1,020,106 people of which 926,495 ethnic Romanians (90.83% in total) and 9.17% ethnic minorities/the total population of Dobrogea.

The 2011 census data show the same trend of constant decrease in the general population since 2002. Thus, from 897,165 pers. in 1992, there were 122,941 people less than in 1992 and 79,478 people less than in 2002. The absolute majority is still Romanian (751,250 people, 91.10% of the total population), but the percentages are lower than in 1992 and 2002 when they represented 90.83% and 90.95%, respectively, of the total population of Dobrogea, a decrease mainly caused by a statistical situation, since many people (72,488 people) did not declare their ethnicity. As in the previous census, the ethnic rank of minorities remained the same, with Turks coming first (22,494 people, 2.5% of the total population), followed by Tatars (19,719 people, 2.19% of the total population) and the Russian-Lipovians (13,904 people, 1.54% of the total population). Roma (11,976 people (by 5,066 people more than in 1992; Greeks - 1,444 people; Ukrainians - 1,168 people; Macedonians - 557 people; Hungarians - 512 people; Armenians - 317 people; Germans - 163 people) .; Italians - 114 people; Bulgarians - 55 people; Chinese - 51 people; Jews - 43 people; Poles - 26 people; Serbians - 20 people; Slovaks - 9 people; Chinese - 8 people; Croats - 5; Czechs - 3. Other ethnicities: 778; undeclared ethnicity: 72,488. The 2002 and 2011 censuses listed new ethnicities - the Chinese and Tsangians; Macedonians also appear in the 2011 census data .

Since the two counties in the Romanian sector of Dobrogea have a very diverse ethnic structure, the region could be seen as a model of ethnic cohabitation. A number of 18 ethnic communities are statistically reported, 11 of which are better represented numerically (Turks, Tatars, Lipovi-Russians, Roma, Greeks, Ukrainians, Macedonians, Hungarians, Armenians, Germans and Italians). All of them have managed to preserve their characteristic features over time, i.e. language, traditions and customs. A large number of ethnic groups living in Romania between the Danube and the Black Sea reflects the centuries-old history of these places that have known the dominance of several foreign powers.

CHAPTER V: DOBROGEA, A PERMANENT FOCUS OF ETHNO-CULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Dobrogean multicultural specificity is shaped by two fundamental coordinates: on the one hand, the civilizational unity and the uninterrupted continuity of language and faith between the Dobrogea region and the other lands of Romania and, on the other, the sublime dialogue between the similarities and particularities of each Dobrogean ethnicity and religion in the framework of the "Dobrogen world".

This interreligious and interethnic model offered by Dobrogea, both in the Romanian context but, above all, and more and more well-known, at the level of the whole of Europe, consists in concordant coexistence, based on respect for the otherness of the human person and the group of which he is a part , either by sanguinity or by voluntary choice.

The massive dispersion of populations from the Balkans, before (but also on) the background of the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, created a polychrome ethno-cultural presence, extremely interesting, in the Dobrogean space. We meet here, alongside the Romanians, numerous members of the communities of Turks, Tatars, Russians, Serbs, Ukrainians, Greeks, Bulgarians, as well as others settled, at different moments in history, in the "Dobrogean world". The message of the Church in the multi-cultural context of Dobrogea, invoking the supreme foundation of reality, raises an unconditional statement that at first sight seems to introduce a seemingly insurmountable gap in the relationship between the parties to the dialogue, a gap that could call into question the very possibility of having an authentic, open dialogue. The problem is not caused by the fact that a claim to validity is raised. This has led the Orthodox Church in these lands to permanently identify "points of insertion" for its dialogue with the locals, of all ethnicities and faiths, so that they perceive its approaches positively.

In trying to achieve this climate of tolerance and protection, in our contemporary world, the role of governments, as well as that of state institutions, is extremely important.

Dobrogea, as a space of interethnic coexistence, enters the center of attention through an open model of intercultural coexistence, whose representation is decoded both at the level of material culture and at the level of immaterial culture, of the traditional civilization of this area. The coexistence model generated, in turn, the free expression, based on the acceptance and understanding of the other, of multiculturalism. Lucian Boia, referring to the ethno-demographic and confessional realities of Dobrogea, said "Dobrogea was [...] an unusual ethnic and cultural mosaic. Nowhere, in such a small space, in Europe could one meet such a mixture of languages, religions and ways of life [...] In greater or lesser numbers all the nationalities of Europe and the Middle East were represented ". Dobrogea is distinguished precisely by an ancient culture of interreligious dialogue that determined the creation of a civilization of "divine plurality" which can be known from the common spiritual contribution of the ethnic groups within it but also from the specific brilliance of each ethnicity as such. All the nationalities participating in the culture and spirituality specific to Dobrogea show a high moral conscience by respecting the elements of worship, the traditions and the faith of others. "The Turks, the Tatars, the Armenians, the

Albanians, the Jews, the Lipovians, the French, the English, the Germans, the Bulgarians, the Spanish and the Italians left their mark... through architectural jewels of a certain value, some with a religious role, others being private buildings, which can still be seen today....all this being the result of a history and the complexity of the phenomena of culture and civilization that brought them together in this space".

All ethnic-religious groups in Dobrogea generally know the religious holidays of the other cohabiting minorities, often enthusiastically participating in the celebrations of their communities and families, even learning the language or substantial elements of the language of many of them. Dialogue between religions can be fruitful with the sine qua non condition of developing and promoting common ethical values and general principles of humanity. Almost all religions have repositories of similar anthropological principles and they conceive of human life as intrinsically valuable.

An ethnic mosaic - this is how Dobrogea was described at the beginning of the 20th century. Along with the Romanian people, other ethnic groups live in Romania, each with its own specific tradition, culture and religion. In this section, we intend to highlight the uniqueness of the multicultural phenomenon, demonstrating the possibility of harmonious intercultural coexistence as a model that can provide an algorithm for interpreting intercultural communication and cooperation.

The psychological, sociological and historical interpretation provides an overview of the phenomenon addressed. At the European level, solutions are being sought to improve the multicultural environment. It is necessary for the solutions to be found within the European multicultural space and adapted to each individual scenario.

There are many concerns related to the issue of multi-ethnicity and the relations between different ethnic groups in specialized analyzes or communication networks created in the modern period. Most authors report the problem from the perspective of multiculturalism in the European space and consider that current policies and approaches are necessary to specifically address the lack of cohesion due to the existing ethnic mosaic. Possible solutions are advanced, such as intercultural education, measures that will be addressed in this paper.

ConCluSIonS

Globalization can jeopardize the integrity and authenticity of a successful coexistence model by reducing cultural diversity as a result of reporting to a common template and implicitly by constructing a new identity. "Besides the lack of a common language, another important issue

that requires communication barriers at the European level is the low trust between the experienced members and the new members joining the EU. How could this capital gain trust? Maybe through the contact between the citizens of different European countries". For this question, the answer is clear from understand experience of cooperation from a multicultural perspective, it can be considered as a potential solution for achieving the multicultural ideal.

Free access to resources, democratic governance, tolerance, freedom of expression and exploitation of the potential of each ethnic group are key factors present in the space of Dobrogea that can be adopted in any space to build favorable multicultural cooperation.

Conflicts can only be removed by preventing situations of tension, and encouraging ethnic group identity is a key factor in this.

Intercultural dialogue is the link between language and social interaction and intercultural communication. Unlike other forms of interaction, intercultural dialogue assumes that the participants come from different cultural (ethnic, linguistic, religious) contexts, which implies that they will have divergent assumptions and rules of interaction. Intercultural dialogue has been used as a technical term with several quite different meanings.

First, intercultural dialogue can refer to any interaction where the participants have different cultural backgrounds. Encompassing virtually all intercultural communication, this usage can be dismissed as too broad and therefore not particularly useful. second, intercultural dialogue can refer to specific types of intercultural interactions, those in which dialogue serves as a specific goal. This narrower use will be taken as the focus here. Unlike other intercultural interactions, which may include nonverbal and unconscious elements, intercultural dialogue in this usage typically requires both language and intent, being a deliberate verbal exchange of views.

Intercultural dialogue is designed to achieve understanding of others as an immediate goal, with the more advanced steps of achieving agreement and cooperation as possible later goals. Given the existing cultural diversity, not only within political alliances (such as the European Union) but even within individual countries, intercultural dialogue is now commonly of considerable value as a practical tool used to prevent or it reduces conflict between cultural groups, instead promoting respect and tolerance. Thus, it is treated as a potential technique for building or maintaining peace.

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