

# Considerations regarding the Ecumenical Theological Education in Romania

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*This article is dealing with the important theme of ecumenical education and has three main parts. The first part is a short introduction to the Romanian Orthodox Church, past and present realities; the second part offers a perspective on the ecumenical education and formation in Romania; finally, the last part gives information about the Sibiu context, with special reference to the late Fr. Professor Ion Bria, whose theological and ecumenical work is widely recognized by the Romanian Orthodox Church.*

**Keywords:** *Romanian Orthodox Church, ecumenical education, mission Dei, ecumenical theology (Fr. Professor Ion Bria), proselytism, sensus fidelium*

The Romanian Orthodox Church is of apostolic origin, born out of the mission of Saint Andrew the Apostle, who preached the Word of the Gospel also in the old Roman province of Scythia Minor, the territory between the Danube and the Western shore of the Black Sea, called today Dobrogea (south east of Romania)<sup>1</sup>. The Romanian Orthodox Church is unique among the Orthodox Churches because it alone exists within a Latin culture. Romanian is language of Latin origin, directly descended from the language of the Roman soldiers and settlers who occupied Dacia and intermarried with its inhabitants following its conquest by Emperor Trajan in 106 AD. Whereas the Dacian linguistic heritage survives in some place names and a few common terms, the spoken Romanian language has a Latin structure and vocabulary.

According to the last census (2002), Romania has a population of 21,794,793 inhabitants, out of which 86,7 % declared themselves Christian Orthodox. The Romanian Orthodox Church is organized as Patriarchate and comprises:

- a. in the country: 6 Metropolitan sees, made up of Archdioceses and Dioceses, with a total of 13,527 parishes, served by 14,513 priests and deacons, in 15,218 places of worship;
- b. for the Orthodox Romanians from abroad, there are 3 Metropolitan sees (made up of 3 Archdioceses and 6 Dioceses) in Europe, an Arch-

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.patriarhia.ro/en/scurta\\_prezentare\\_en.html](http://www.patriarhia.ro/en/scurta_prezentare_en.html), accessed February 2013.