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SHRINKING MINORITY?  
SLOVAK LUTHERANS FIGHTING WITH SECULARISM

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**Abstract:** An important church body complementing the religious face of Slovakia is the Lutheran Church. It is the second largest church according to the 2001 census, a community with intensive intergenerational secularisation of its adherents. Ageing and a significant overall decline in believers during socialism are the most typical signs of this church. This paper briefly describes these typical signs with geographical nuances, a comparison with surrounding countries and with the largest church body in Slovakia – Roman Catholics. At the beginning of the new millennium, the Lutheran Church of Slovakia had reached its peak in the stabile period considering the slight renewal of church life after 1990. Due to known processes, new times will bring a progressive decrease in adherents. And Lutherans, as the first church in Slovakia, seem to approach and adopt western patterns of churches succumbing to secularisation.

**Key Words:** Lutherans, Slovakia, ageing, secularisation, post-socialism, religious structure, Central Europe, religious minority

## Introduction

Experience of vast changes in society and culture in Central and Eastern Europe brings many surprising conclusions for sociologists and cultural anthropologists.<sup>1</sup> We slowly discover sources and results of latent processes that have started to accelerate in the relatively lengthy era of socialism and its binding and in many fields restricting environment. We have been able to freely perform research in the area of religious studies for just a few years. The number of changes and neglected topics in this area represent serious challenge for the social research teams within this region, just as in Western European countries. Within the field of religious studies (sociologists, cultural anthropologists, cultural geographers etc), there could be perceived dichotomy in research in our region. The first research route finds new forms of religious identity including new religious bodies acting in the post-socialist space, and the second represents the opposite side of flourishing religious life – secularisation with all its consequences in disintegrating religious identity, neglecting religious heritage and its expression in various value surveys (ISSP), expression in space and landscape such as in Czech Republic<sup>2</sup> or Slovakia<sup>3</sup>. Therefore, the Central-European region is somewhere in between with many historical traditions and individual experience that vary from state to state.

Slovakia has one of the outstanding positions considering religious identity. Recently, the independent state has shared its history under or within larger political systems and countries. Whether within the Hungarian Empire or later as a part of Czechoslovakia, its national and cultural peculiarities have been preserved. The union with the Czech nation is particularly extraordinary considering the different religious scene and attitudes towards the position of the church, and religion in the identity of the individual, community and state. While the Czech Republic evolved to become a country with a mostly secular population<sup>4</sup> (sometimes the country could be named a “Laboratory of secularisation<sup>5</sup>), Slovakia, with its common perception and identity of a rural state, has more or less proved its religious roots and remained rather closer to Poland than to the Czech Republic in this field. Even though we had merged history and political system for more than 70 years.

There have been several research pieces regarding religiosity in Slovakia performed in recent years. One concluded that for Slovakia, there is typical so called religious traditionalism<sup>6</sup> which may bring up problems between traditional church bodies and general social modernisation of society. Before WWII, traditional churches (of which Roman Catholic and Lutheran were the largest) represented the major institution in societal modernisation and general educational level. The situation after WWII put churches into the position of patrons of traditional folk religiosity and elementary church teaching. Controlling church life and restricting public

demonstration of religious identity had a different social, cultural and geographical impact, especially if we consider various religious bodies encompassing more or less different religious traditions and religious life. Therefore, the premise of overall resistance of all religious identities at this time in the territory of Slovakia cannot be taken for granted. One important church body – Lutherans of Slovakia – seem to be one of the churches that has been fighting with secularism of their adherents more intensively than the major church body of Slovakia – Roman Catholics. According to several types of data from the 2001 census, there is a serious evidence that this church has inherited a considerable burden of their past, consisting mostly of crucial and partly destroying imprint of socialist times.

### **Lutherans as a major minority**

Although Slovakia is perceived mostly as a Catholic (both Roman and Uniate) country, the cultural appearance of Slovakia is significantly influenced by Lutheranism and the educational, ethnical and cultural context that this denomination carried and, even in a secular age, it more or less latently carries. Since the Patent of Toleration in 1781, Lutherans, together with other non-Catholic denominations, became an integral part of the Hungarian empire and played an important role in Slovak culture evolution and in the development of Slovaks as a political and ethnical nation. Being the minority in the area of Slovakia was a disadvantage when considering numbers, but from many points of view, they represented a source community for national leaders, poets and other notable personalities who achieved a stable position in textbooks and curricula<sup>7</sup>. Taking statistics into account, the proportion of Lutherans in the population of Slovakia was no more than 1/5 of the population<sup>8</sup>. Nevertheless, it had always been the second largest church body.

Culturally, Lutheran adherents introduced several new, innovating concepts. One especially interesting field is demography. From the second half of the 19th Century, several communities in southern Slovakia were, together with the Calvinist and Hungarian communities, known for their so called “one child system”<sup>9</sup>. On one hand, intentionally controlled fertility increased the economic status of individuals or notable parts of communities; on the other hand, it caused narrowed reproduction and a shrinking community. Generally, however, in comparison with other denominations, Lutheran females did not rank amongst females with the highest fertility rate<sup>10</sup>. This had not caused an immediate decrease of Lutherans at the beginning of the 20th century, but apart from fertile Catholics, the population growth of Lutherans was notably smaller, resembling more “western” demographic behaviour. This seemed not to be the biggest threat that would influence the “statistical” position of Slovak Lutherans, but it certainly indicated some hint of its future

evolution taking into consideration the future evolution of Protestant communities in Europe and the attitudes of adherents of traditional and historical Protestant bodies towards secularism. The starting point of a set of changes emerged after 1948. Since the 1950 census provided us with data regarding religious affiliation, we can compare the impact of socialism on religious structures and religious circumstances that has fully appeared in the 2001 census<sup>11</sup>.

Lutheranism in Slovakia represents a religious body with some distinct attitudes towards the serious and sensitive issues that occur in society. From the historically established churches in Slovakia, Lutheranism represents a significant ideological stream that had established itself long time ago as an alternative to the dominant and influential church embodied in the Roman Catholic Church. Recent research conducted within ISSP<sup>12</sup> proves that Lutherans are a respected community and although they are minority, their position is perceived “very positively or rather positively” by 48%, while 42 % respondents see Lutherans neutrally. The general difference between these two major denominations is that among Catholics, there is higher proportion of intensively believing adherents than among Lutherans, just as Lutherans less intensively attend religious services and, what is extraordinarily interesting, Lutherans expressed less confidence towards Catholics (1/2 of respondents do not trust Catholics) than Catholics towards Lutherans (less than 1/3)<sup>13</sup>. The historical position of the church as a minority and historical consciousness and myths of the suffering church could serve as an explanation for this mutual discrepancy. The stereotype of slowly secularising Lutheranism is proven by the rising proportion of Lutherans who never attend church (in 1991-1999, the proportion rose from 5.7 % to 13.1 %).<sup>14</sup>

### “Seclutheranism”

The 1950 census is one of the most notable censuses in our history. It shows the religious landscape in its evolving cultural vectors and stability before the dynamic era of socialism. The geographical projection of religious identity shows, for the last time, the more or less natural evolution of religious communities with slight or no external influences and almost no secular traces. At that time, there was almost no statistical correlation between the occurrence of non-believers and Lutherans, but the 60 years of rapid evolution and partial destruction of the religious landscape revealed close inclination of these two religious groups. Particularly in the demographic and cultural geographical landscape, these two bodies currently show a close connection. Simple comparison of census data between 1950 and 2001 is sufficient evidence of the struggle that emerged and will influence future evolvement of Lutherans in Slovakia.

The episode of socialism was a period of intensive population growth in Central Europe. The Slovak population as a whole grew by 56 % between 1950 – 2001 (see Chart 1.)<sup>15</sup>. The number of Roman Catholics has risen, too, even generally more than the whole population (by about 60 %). Regarding Lutherans, population growth has shown an evident decrease. We could state that this decrease resembles something akin to the Counter Reformation era, but here the threat were the secular tendencies in the Slovak society: the number of Lutherans decreased by 15 %<sup>16</sup>. The overall proportion of Lutherans from the population of Slovakia dropped from almost 13 % in 1950 to almost 7 % in 2001<sup>17</sup>. A decrease in the number of adherents of other relevant denominations was also evident (such as the Reformed Church), but the number of believers particularly increased when considering both the Catholic and Orthodox Churches.

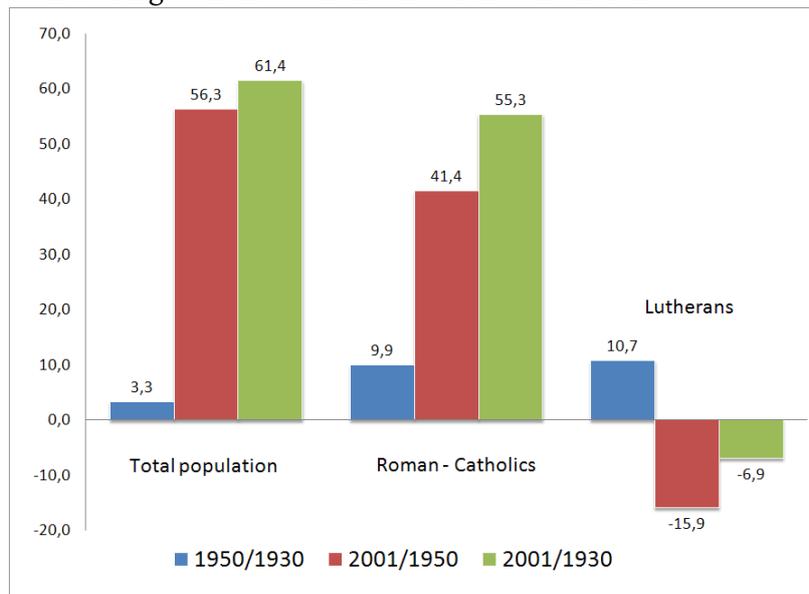


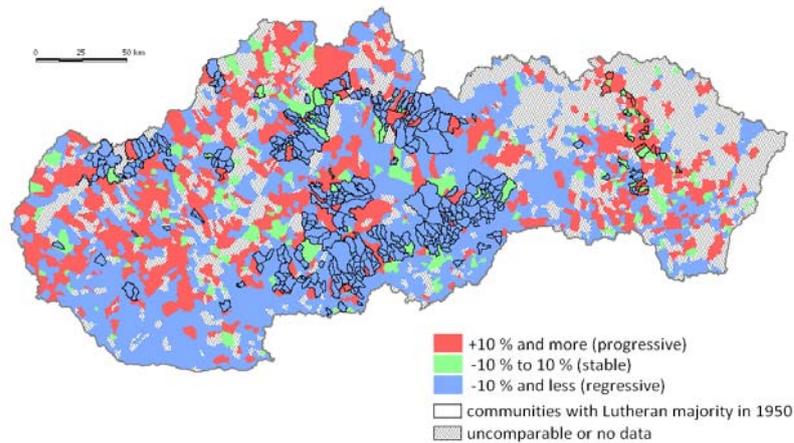
Chart 1. Population dynamics of Roman Catholics and Lutherans in Slovakia in 1930-2001 (in %)

The most dynamic growth was evident in the proportion of non-church affiliated, where the share has grown from 0.3 % (sic!) in 1950 to almost 13 % in 2001. One could speculate that the “source denomination” was Lutherans, but this statement cannot be taken for granted whatsoever, although the geographical view of the distribution of non-church affiliated is somehow close to those regions with a formerly Lutheran majority. Rural secularism is a peculiarity of the Slovak religious landscape. One of the most notable secular and rural regions is in central southern Slovakia. The Gemer region, formerly with a Lutheran or generally Protestant majority, turned to region where even small

communities with less than 500 inhabitants have higher proportion of non-church affiliated than the largest cities in Slovakia<sup>18</sup>.

The overall decrease in Lutherans in Slovakia is not regionally balanced. Considering geographical distribution, massive migration flows and accelerated urbanisation processes during socialism has slightly redistributed the number of Lutherans. The highest relative increase is evident in regions where Counter Reformation processes historically never took place and due to migration and exogamous marriages the absolute number of Lutherans grew. Due to mentioned migration processes, the number of Lutherans also grew in the two largest Slovak cities (Bratislava – 6 % growth and Košice – 80 % growth). Amongst the non-urban regions of Slovakia, some growth is evident in Lutheran enclaves in eastern Slovakia. Generally eastern regions were always more fertile and remained less secularised than western parts of the country. It seems that these two premises (fertility and secularisation resistance) have somehow also influenced local Lutheran communities. After all, the absolute number of Lutherans grew more or less intensively in almost half of the districts of Slovakia. This fact might indicate that the decrease should not greatly attract our attention, but it must be stated that in the remaining districts, the number of Lutherans dropped more intensively and remarkably.

The position of Lutherans as a dominant confession also changed at community level, though rural areas were, with already mentioned exceptions, more resistant to the processes of secularism and spreading of atheist world views. In 1950, Lutherans were a relative majority (a proportion of 50 % and over) in 13 % of all Slovak communities<sup>19</sup> (see Map 1). The distribution of these communities resembles enclaves rather than contiguous areas. Such distribution was also preserved in 2001 but the number of communities with a Lutheran majority dropped to 7.5 % of all Slovak communes<sup>20</sup>. The historically evolved distribution of Lutherans was preserved but in many areas the dominant denomination became either Roman Catholics or non-church affiliated in some cases in south central Slovakia.



Map 1. Increase of the number of Lutherans in communes in Slovakia in 1950-2001

### Found and lost at once

There is a special historical issue about the decrease in Lutherans that should be mentioned. One of the largest decreases is evident in regions where migrating Slovaks from Hungary were settled. In 1947-48, due to post WWII processes, Czechoslovakia and Hungary exchanged their ethnic minorities. Slovaks from Hungary moved to the houses and communities of Hungarians expelled from the southern Slovakia<sup>21</sup>. Due to historical circumstances, most of these Slovaks were of Lutheran denomination. They settled in regions where Lutherans historically did not reside, so they had to build their church communities anew, taking into consideration their memories of established Lutheran churches and congregations they had left in Hungary.

This community of repatriated Lutherans probably represents the most intensively secularised Lutheran community in Slovakia. We consider secularisation in this case from the point of view of intergenerational reproduction and transition of religious identity. Most of the immigrating Slovaks from Hungary were people of productive age with children, or young couples. Although they were raised in the Lutheran faith, their children seem to be raised in the secular and possibly atheist view of swelling socialism. Districts in south-western Slovakia have the highest decrease of Lutherans in Slovakia varying from -50 % to -60 %. Through the population exchange, these Slovaks and their descendants preserved their ethnic identity in more favourable conditions for ethnic

education and environment, but from the viewpoint of preserving and maintaining their religious identity it seems that they did not stand the test the era has delivered. Probably an amalgamation of several facts – socialism and lack of pre-existing Lutheran communities that might cause the phenomenon of “flock without shepherd” – brought about a remarkable and rapid change of religious identity.

### Growing older...

Ageing is a crucial fact that our societies are facing. Generally, the current Slovak population is a relatively young population, but the intensity of ageing in future will make Central European Countries one of the fastest ageing countries in Europe<sup>22</sup>. The already mentioned facts about Lutherans may suggest that this community is one step ahead in this process. Nowadays, just as the 2001 census data uncovered, this church has become the denomination with the oldest average age of its believers<sup>23</sup>. Recent research in this paper also revealed that Lutherans are not just the church with oldest average age of its believers, especially women, but between 1910 – 2001, adherents of this church aged most noticeably<sup>24</sup>. Whilst the average age of the whole Slovak population in 2001 was 36.1 years, Lutherans were in average 42.1 years old. Lutheran women, with an average age of 44 years, were much older when compared to Roman Catholic women who were an average age of 38 years. This fact postulates the future and not very positive evolution of the church which includes a progressive decrease in the number of its believers, and shrinkage and depopulation of its communities.

Intensity of ageing and the growing proportion of elderly logically brings up the question about the share of young pre-productive age groups. Their lower number is a result of long term evolution and reflects the external impulses into the Lutheran community during the complicated time of socialism. One might think that the low proportion of children and extremely high proportion of the aged is a conclusion of the specific population policy that Lutherans carry as a prejudice. It could mean that Lutheran families have generally less children than more fertile Catholic families. This might be true, but only partially. The average number of children per Lutheran family<sup>25</sup> in 2001 was 2.0 children per family. The national average was 2.1 children. So generally, family size and attitudes towards family planning are not the issue of the day, though the generally broader acceptance of contraception could influence this number, but in an era of general education and relatively secular society of Slovakia, we think that the a priori refusal of contraception among Catholics should be rather disputed.

The root of the trouble is in demography though. However, it is not seen as a pure natural increase. Nowadays, according to the 2001 census, Lutheran parents give birth to the average number of children. A salient

issue that might explain the discrepancies between the sizes of generation is that children in these families no longer carry the torch of Lutheranism. Several causes might be a good tribute to dispute: whether it was a strategy of non-problematic access to social resources in the past that would have been restricted to those declaring a religious identity, or it was the result of massive flows of immigration and breaking ties with the breeding community sustaining religious identity within the family and communal control, or it was just the free and liberal decision of parents to give up their religious identity and more or less evidently become indifferent if not hostile towards questions connected to religion, church, or faith.

### **Lutherans in surrounding countries**

Population dynamics of Lutherans of Slovakia is not notably different compared to the dynamics of Lutherans or related Protestant groups in Central-European post-socialist countries. At least Lutherans in Hungary, and Evangelical Brethren in the Czech Republic have lost their “demographic fight” with socialism and secular processes, and the membership decreased. A historically comparative example is Hungary. The absolute number of Lutherans is similar to Slovakia but the decrease between 1949 and 2001, at a level of -36 %<sup>26</sup>, is more conspicuous. On the other hand, there has been a different cultural situation in Hungary regarding the level of secularisation. Apart from Lutherans and other Protestant groups, a decrease in adherents is also notable in the Roman Catholic Church. The Czech Republic, with whom Slovaks co-existed in one state for 70 years, has a similar situation. A decrease in the number of adherents during socialism is one of the most extensive in the whole Central European region. A decrease in adherents of a church encompassing Lutheran heritage – Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren is -71 % followed by Roman Catholics who are no exception (decrease of -60 %). This makes the Slovak situation slightly different where the strike of secularisation has somehow bypassed Roman Catholics, whereas in these two countries there is no exception at all. One logical explanation for that resides in the church organisation of Catholics and Protestants. Gautier (1997) states that Protestant Churches were established as state or national churches and therefore had less “external support for appeals” than Catholics<sup>27</sup>. Church leaders in these countries, including Slovakia, had to establish their own way of how to exist and survive under the circumstances of socialism where they were more easily and effectively forced to “obey” than Catholics. Even though the Catholic Church was more resistant to secularism, the fact of “mutual coexistence” between the state and church was evident. This is not just the case of Slovakia; Hungarian Catholic Church was also “absorbed by state and lost its political influence and limited its activities”<sup>28</sup>. The Slovak Lutheran church

and its theology “must have turned away from heavenly themes” and the way of co-existing under these restrictive circumstances was named “theology facing life”<sup>29</sup>. The situation of Lutherans in Slovakia seems specific within the area of Slovakia, because from the surrounding countries, Slovakia has the highest proportional share of Lutherans in the population. Therefore, the changes within this community have a more salient influence on the population development of the whole population in Slovakia.

### Revival after 1990?

Social and political changes that commenced after 1990 found Lutherans in a specific position. First years of freedom were common for all major Christian churches considering the number of incoming members and general regeneration of church life. This is seen through the figures for baptism in major churches in Slovakia. Straight after 1990, the number of baptisms almost doubled and this number fluctuated around 6,000 for several years (see Chart 2)<sup>30</sup>. After 2000, there was an evident constant decrease in number of baptisms reaching the number that has the third largest church in Slovakia – the Greek Catholic Church – that is not suffering by ageing of its adherents. Only the number of funerals remains intact, although there is evidence of a slight decrease, but due to ageing of the whole population of Slovakia and increasing life expectancy. If we put the number of baptisms and funerals into balance, from year 2000 constant depopulation of the Lutheran Church can be seen. This negative balance has also started to take place in the Roman Catholic Church (see Chart 3), although it has not influenced the generally growing tendencies in this church for the past 20 years. Continuing negative tendencies in the balance of baptisms/funerals will probably cause an inter-census decrease in adherents with progressive ageing of Lutherans.

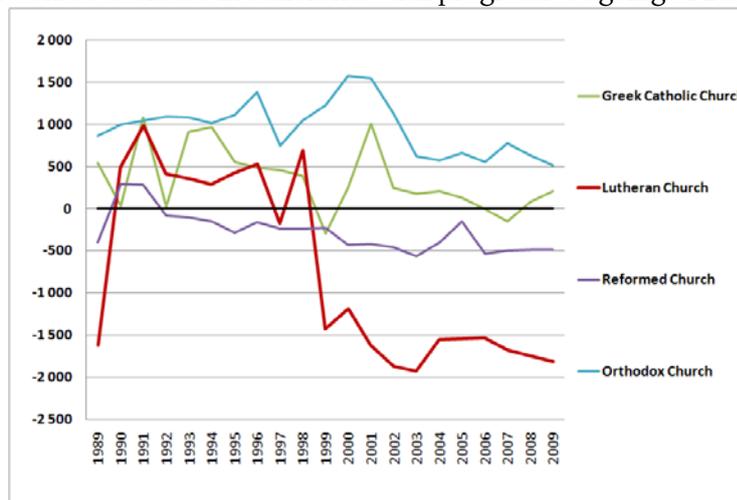


Chart 2. Baptism and funeral balance in major churches (except Roman Catholic Church) in Slovakia in 1989-2009



Chart 3. Baptism and funeral balance in Roman Catholic Church in Slovakia in 1989-2009

## Conclusion

The first census in new millennium proved that there are several serious changes that took place in the society of Slovakia. Considering the religious aspect of this Central European society, there is no doubt that it is trying to digest and handle those processes that started after 1948. The secularisation process makes the society of Slovakia somehow closer to those western European countries that are more secular, although the stimuli come from different sources and the society has undergone them under totally different circumstances. One of the most important differences within the region is the spread of secularisation ideas across the church bodies, taking into account simple figures of changes in the number of adherents over time. At the time of the year 2001, this process seemed to be present within traditional Protestant churches in Slovakia, where Lutherans represent the largest and historically most influential Protestant church body. The crucial question of why it only took place within Lutherans and not the all major churches, as it did in Hungary and the Czech Republic, is not easy to answer. Recently, we can only see that during socialism and all the processes socialism had influences in the religious life of Slovakia, Lutherans seemed to be defeated and 2001 and its census data was the peak of the statistical growth they reached.

There are several pieces of evidence indicating that the community of Lutherans will start to shrink and the minority among religious communities becomes smaller. One of the strongest evidence of the future

development could be foreseen in statistical data from the 2001 census. Lutherans are a community with a very high proportion of aged adherents and with a lower proportion of young people than the Slovak average. This community also has aged fastest of all the churches in Slovakia during the 20th Century. There is no doubt, and the age distribution of Lutherans proves, that religious identity and its intergenerational identity transmission became strongly influenced by socialism and in many cases it was not transmitted at all. Lower fertility of Lutheran families or females is not the core reason, but external and broadly complicated processes resulted in the generation of today's Lutheran parents not being raised with a Lutheran identity. There are some hints of a slight church revival considering the sudden growth in baptisms after 1990, but this has not been a sufficient factor that would allow us to state that church has been resurrected after 40 years of restriction and would slow the process of its ageing. It just appears it was a wave of freedom and the cohort of people that were baptised under new political circumstances probably did not find its place and comfort within this church and remained rather formal adherents.

Up to 2001 and probably continuing until 2011, Slovak religious scene will represent two major streams (Roman Catholics & Lutherans) that are not just theologically and historically different, but show distinct attitude and resistance of its believers to the secularisation. This dichotomy in cultural evolution of a nation is rather unique within Central Europe, but within the progress of time, there will be more church bodies affected by the inevitable process of secularisation and slow deprivation of religion as an important part of the cultural identity of an individual, or whole communities. Lutherans in Slovakia are slightly ahead in this process and already embody the possible future evolution of major church bodies in the following century. Though together with R. Carp we could state that "the religious dimension of human existence has not lost its social meaning or its cultural strength...the secularization of European societies should therefore be regarded as a historical phenomenon with limited application; new types of sanctification can emerge at any given moment"<sup>31</sup>

#### Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Acknowledgments: this paper is an outcome of an APVV research program Nr. APVV-0579-07 "One place, many worlds: geographic variability in life strategies in Slovak society".

<sup>2</sup> Tomas Havlicek and its team from Charles University in Prague performed several researches of the changing religious landscape and sacral objects in several regions of the Czech Republic. See Tomáš Havlíček, Martina Hupková.

“Geografický výzkum religiozní krajiny Česka”. *Miscellanea Geographica* 13 (2007): 161-166.

<sup>3</sup> We have analysed unusual rural secular space in Gemer (in Hungarian Gömör) in Southern Central Slovakia and changes of religious landscape and its sacral, mostly Lutheran objects. See Juraj Majo. “Cobwebs in pews – religion, identity, and space in western Gemer region in Central Slovakia”. In: *Folia Geographica* 40, 15 (2010): 55-68 (2010)

<sup>4</sup> Share of non-church affiliated in Czech society grew in 1950-1991 by 692 %. See Vladimír Srb, *1000 let obyvatelstva Českých zemí*, (Praha: Praha: Karolinum, Univerzita Karlova, 2004), 163. In 2001, there were almost 60 % non-church affiliated inhabitants in Czech Republic. See *Sčítání lidu, domů a bytů k 1.3.2001. Obyvatelstvo, byty, domy a domácnosti. Česká republika*, (Praha: Český statistický úřad, 2003), 50.

[http://www.czso.cz/sldb2011/redakce.nsf/i/obyvatelstvo\\_byty\\_domy\\_a\\_domacnosti\\_cr/\\$File/e-4103-02.pdf](http://www.czso.cz/sldb2011/redakce.nsf/i/obyvatelstvo_byty_domy_a_domacnosti_cr/$File/e-4103-02.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Laboratory of secularization is the title of a book, where author titled Czech Republic this way due to evident losing of religious identity as well as the weakened possibility of religion influencing the politics and society. See Petr Fiala, *Laboratoř sekularizace. Náboženství a politika v ne-náboženské společnosti: český případ*, (Brno: Centrum pro studium demokracie a kultury, 2007), 153.

<sup>6</sup> According to research and comparison within central European countries and with Western European countries as well. See Ján Bunčák, “Religiozita na Slovensku: stredoeurópsky rámec”, *Sociology- Slovak Sociological Review* 33, 1 (2001): 59.

<sup>7</sup> Notable Lutherans in Slovak history were for example: Ľudovít Štúr (1815-1856) – political leader and codifier of standard Slovak language, Milan Rastislav Štefánik (1880-1919) – one of the founder of Czechoslovak Republic, or Alexander Dubček (1921-1992) – political leader from so called „Prague spring“ era in 1968. See Pavel Uhorskai, *Evanjelici v dejinách slovenskej kultúry 1-2*, (Liptovský Mikuláš: Tranoscius, 1997), 65-66, 254, and 256.

<sup>8</sup> Own calculations according to data from 1880-2001 censuses. Based on: *A magyar korona országain az 1881. év elején végrehajtott népszámlálás főbb eredményei megyék és községek szerint részletezve 2. vol.*, (Budapest: Pesti Könyvnyomda - Részvény – Társaság, 1882), József Jekelfalussy, *A magyar korona országainak helységnevtára*, (Budapest: Pesti Könyvnyomda - Részvény – Társaság, 1892), *A magyar korona országainak 1900. évi népszámlálása. 1. vol.*, (Budapest: Pesti Könyvnyomda - Részvény – Társaság, 1902), *A magyar szent korona országainak 1910. évi népszámlálása. 42. vol.*, (Budapest: Athenaeum, 1912), *Štatistický lexikon obcí v republike Československej. III. Slovensko*, (Praha: Štátny úrad štatistický, 1927), *Az 1920. évi népszámlálás. A népesség főbb demográfiai adatai, községek és népesebb puszták. 69. vol.*, (Budapest: Magyar Kir. Központi Statisztikai Hivatal, 1923), *Štatistický lexikon obcí v krajine Slovenskej*, (Praha: Štátny úrad štatistický, 1936), *Az 1930. évi népszámlálás, Demográfiai adatok községek és külterületi lakóhelyek szerint. 83. vol.*, (Budapest: Magyar sztatistikai közlemények, 1932), *Sčítanie obyvateľov, domov a bytov 2001. Bývajúce obyvateľstvo podľa pohlavia a náboženského vyznania*, (Bratislava: Štatistický úrad SR, 2002)

<sup>9</sup>This specific phenomenon was described in the context of Slovakia (see Marta Botíková et al., *Tradiície slovenskej rodiny*, (Bratislava: Veda - SAV, 1997), and within

the context of the whole former Hungarian empire it was analysed by Hungarian sociologist R. Andorka (see Rudolf Andorka, "A gyermekszám alakulásának társadalmi tényezői paraszti közösségekben", in *Szerkezetek, folyamatok, összefüggések. Demográfiai szöveggyűjtemény*, ed. Tamás Faragó (Budapest, Új Mandátum Könyvkiadó, 2002), 11-32.

<sup>9</sup>According to researches of E. Stodola (Emil Stodola, *Štatistika Slovenska*. (Turčiansky Svätý Martin: own printing, 1912), 67.) the average fertility rate of Lutheran females in the former Hungarian empire was 144 children/1000 women (15-49), while Roman Catholic women rate was 162, Greek Catholic 171, and Jewish women 131.

<sup>11</sup> We used data from 2001, since in the 1991 Census, there was a large group of people who did not declare their affiliation (in 1991 17.4 % and in 2001 2.9 % only). See: Demographic data from population and housing censuses in Slovakia. Census 1991 and 2001. <http://sodb.infostat.sk/scitanie/eng/uvod/scitania.htm>. (accessed February 15, 2011)

<sup>12</sup>Roman Džambazovič, ed., *Náboženstvo. ISSP na Slovensku 2006-2008*, (Bratislava: Sociologický ústav SAV, 2009), 23.

<sup>13</sup> Martin Kreidl, "Hodnotové orientácie a náboženské prejavy slovenskej verejnosti v 90. rokoch", *Sociology - Slovak Sociological Review*, 33, 1(2001): 13.

<sup>14</sup> Kreidl, 13.

<sup>15</sup> Own calculations according to data from the 2001 and 1950 censuses. See *Sčítanie obyvateľ'ov, domov a bytov 2001. Bývajúce obyvateľ'stvo podl'a pohlavia a náboženského vyznania*, (Bratislava: Štatistický úrad SR, 2002) and *Sčítání lidu 1950. Přítomné obyvateľ'stvo podle poměru k povolání a úseku objektivního povolání, podle náboženského vyznání a přistěhovaní do obce*, (Bratislava: Štatistický úrad SR (unpublished manuscript)).

<sup>16</sup> Own calculations according to data from the 2001 and 1950 censuses. (See *Sčítanie obyvateľ'ov.. 2001 and Sčítání lidu 1950*).

<sup>17</sup> Own calculations according to data from the 2001 and 1950 censuses. (See *Sčítanie obyvateľ'ov.. 2001 and Sčítání lidu 1950*).

<sup>18</sup> According to 2001 census data, there are hamlets with an extremely high share of non-church affiliated in the Gemer region in south Central Slovakia. For example, Turčok hamlet has 244 inhabitants and 54.5 % of non-church affiliated people. These are communities inhabited mostly by miners with strong social and socialist inclinations. See more at: Majo, – religion, identity, and space in western Gemer region in Central Slovakia", 59.

<sup>19</sup> Own calculations according to data from the 1950 census. See *Sčítání lidu 1950*.

<sup>20</sup> Own calculations according to data from the 2001 census. See *Sčítanie obyvateľ'ov.. 2001*.

<sup>21</sup> Historical context of population exchange between Czechoslovakia and Hungary in 1947-48 is thoroughly described by Katalin Vadkerty, *Maďarská otázka v Československu 1945-1948*. (Bratislava: Kaligram, 2002).

<sup>22</sup> Marcela Káčerová, Branislav Bleha, "Teoretické východiská populačného starnutia a retrospektívny pohľad na starnutie Európy", *Slovenská štatistika a demografia* 17, 3 (2007): 57.

<sup>23</sup> Juraj Majo, Marcela Káčerová, "Transformation of Age Structure of Selected Denominations in Slovakia between 1910 and 2001", *Geographia Cassoviensis* 4, 2 (2010): 93.

<sup>24</sup> Majo, Káčerová, 93.

<sup>25</sup> Lutheran family is comprehended as a complete family with at least one child, where both mother and father are Lutherans. Affiliation of child/children was not stated. Based on: *Počet úplných CD domácností podľa obcí, náboženstva partnerov a počtu všetkých detí v CD v roku 2001*, (Bratislava: Štatistický úrad SR, 2009).

<sup>26</sup> According to aggregated data from historical censuses 1949–2001 in Hungary. See *Population by religion and sex 1930, 1949, 2001*, [http://www.nepszamlalas.hu/eng/volumes/06/00/tabeng/1/load01\\_8\\_0.html](http://www.nepszamlalas.hu/eng/volumes/06/00/tabeng/1/load01_8_0.html) (accessed February 15, 2011).

<sup>27</sup> Mary L. Gautier, “Church Attendance and Religious Belief in Postcommunist Societies”, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 36, 2 (2007): 290.

<sup>28</sup> Daniela Angi, “Three Instances of Church and Anti-Communist: Opposition: Hungary, Poland, and Romania”, *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies* 10, 28 (2011): 47.

<sup>29</sup> Paul R. Hinlicky, “Slovak Lutheran Theology. Reflections on its Problems and Prospects”, *Religion in Eastern Europe* 23, 1 (2003): 27.

<sup>30</sup> Own calculation according to data: *Vybrané ukazovatele o cirkvách 1989–2009 – databáza Slovstat*. (Bratislava: Štatistický úrad, 2011)

<sup>30</sup> Radu Carp, “Religion in the Public Sphere: Is There a Common European Model?”, *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, vol. 10 Issue 28 (2009): 96.

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