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## **Transgressing the Boundaries between Confession, Ethnicity, and Identity: Evangelical Roma People of Uila (Transylvania – Romania)**

(Abstract)

A region with a diversified structure of population regarding ethnicity and faith, Transylvania has all the specific characteristics of a multiethnic space: peaceful coexistence, a higher degree of tolerance, bilingual or trilingual communication, intercultural exchange. The ethnic structure of the region was strongly influenced by historical or political factors, and the membership in a faith/church was closely related to the evolution of the ethnic structure.

Open relationships of exchange, interaction and mutual recognition of the lifestyles and values are bound to appear in an intercultural environment, between various cultures and nations, between different ethnic and religious groups who share the same territory.

The Evangelical Roma people of Uila (Transylvania) are an interesting phenomenon which has been the subject of studies, press stories and press articles and which continues to attract due to its uniqueness. In the present paper we intend to identify the elements which made possible the (first partial and then total) inclusion of the Roma people in the faith system of the Saxons and observe to

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what extent other areas of collective and individual areas of existence besides the faith transformation are modified (economy, axiology, linguistics, culture).

The religion of Roma people of Uila contributes to the abolition of collective stereotypes related to the Roma. They are a special case due to the confessional, cultural and economic situation. Not necessarily different from the Roma in other places, while being exposed to the specific confessional conditions they have had the chance to assume their own initiative, to inspire trust and respect.

**Keywords:** Roma people, evangelical, confession, identity, stereotypes.