Testimonies on the Ethno-Confessional Structure of Medieval Transylvania and Hungary
(9th–14th centuries)

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Preliminaries

The Kingdom of Hungary was throughout the course of its medieval existence (c. 1000–1526) a multinational and pluriconfessional state. Not even in the modern epoch have the matters stood differently, as the official data of the 1910 census indicate the fact that the "minorities" accounted for c. 52% of the total population of the country[1] constituting in fact the majority of the inhabitants of the Hungary of that day.

Around 1536–1537, Nicolaus Olahus wrote in his work *Hungaria*: "The entire Hungarian kingdom comprises within itself, during these times of ours, different nations—Hungarians, Germans, Bohemians, Slavs, Croats, Saxons, Szeklers, Romanians, Serbs, Cumans, Iaziges, Ruthenians, and finally, Turks—all of which make use among themselves of different languages, except for the instance in which certain denominations, because of the long-standing customs and the mutual relationships, prove to have a somewhat similar character and suitability."[2] As to the ethnic composition of Transylvania, his birthplace, the humanist writer (Olahus) is even more specific: "There are here four nations of different origin: Hungarians, Szeklers, Saxons and Romanians, of which the least warlike are considered to be the Saxons. The Hungarians and the Szeklers make use of the same language, although the Szeklers have certain words specific to their people [...]. The Saxons are, it is said, some colonies of Saxons from Germany [...]; what leads us to believe the truthfulness (of this assertion) is the resemblance that exists between the languages of these two peoples. The Romanians—it is traditionally claimed—are colonists of the Romans. Proof of this

is the fact that they have numerous (words) in common with the speech of the Romans—a people whose coins are to be found in vast numbers in these places; it goes without saying that these are important proofs that testify to the Roman occupation here as well as to the endurance, through the course of history, of the Romanian people."[3] Obviously, Olahus regards the nations in an ethno-linguistic sense and he characterizes them as such.

Another humanist writer contemporary to Olahus and named Anton Verantius (of Croatian origin) noted on Transylvania: "It is inhabited by a triple nation: Szeklers, Hungarians and Saxons; I should also mention the Romanians, who, although they easily equal in number the others, have no freedoms, no nobility, no right of their own, apart from a small number living in the Haţeg district where the capital of Decebalus is believed to have stood and who, during the days of Ioan (Iancu) de Hunedoara (John Hunyadi), a native of those places, gained nobility status for having always participated undauntedly in the fight against the Turks. The rest of them are all common people, serfs of the Hungarians, having no places of their own, spread all over the territory, in the whole country" and "leading a wretched life."[4] Verantius repeatedly points out of the Roman origin of the Romanians, but he treats the nations in a political sense indicating out that the Romanians were not recognized as a nation. Moreover, he also offers an approximate indication concerning the proportion of Romanians, on the one hand, as compared to the *receptae* (officially recognized) nations, on the other hand: the Romanians equal the others in number, to say the least which is to say that the Romanians account for over 50% of the population of Transylvania. Of course, such data have to be taken into account with due reserve, in the sense that they are not based upon a census, but rather upon the general estimates of the time.

The Number and the Specificity of Hungarians around A. D. 900

If this was the situation in the 16th century, what could have been the ethno-confessional structure of Hungary and Transylvania at the turn of the millennium, up to about A.D. 400? It is not an easy task to provide an answer to this question. Magyar historiography estimates that, upon their coming to Pannonia, the Hungarians amounted to c. 400,000–500,000 in number and they are said to have allegedly found there c. 150,000–200,000 natives[5]; in the first half of 16th century, out of the about four million inhabitants of Hungary, the minorities are said to have represented about 20–25%.[6]

The numerical aspects have been and will always remain controversial, more so with regard to the pre-statistical period. Still, according to some estimates, the numeric ratio between the sedentary (settled) (agrarian/pastoral) populations and the nomads that occupied equal areas would be of approx. 10 to 1.[7] The proportion, overwhelmingly in favour of those working the land, is accounted for by the fact that an agricultural field could provide food for more people than the same surface used by the nomads for shepherding. As in the case of all sedentary populations the working of the land was complemented by shepherding, and nomadism is not always pure (with a basic type of agriculture practised temporarily on small surfaces that would more often than not be swapped for new terrains), it is only appropriate that we slightly modify the aforementioned ratio, in the case of certain areas and situations. As far as the absolute numerical data is concerned, the references are very few indeed, some of them being almost not suitable for use. For instance, Procopius of Caesarea says that the war against the East Goths cost the Byzantine Empire 10 million human lives, which is utterly fictitious.[8] The numbers of the Petchenegs that are said to have crossed the Danube in the south, in 1048, were estimated by Skylitzes to have amounted to 800,000 men, and those of the Ouzes, in 1064, to 600,000.[9] These figures might get close to reality only if divided by 10. Generally speaking, though, following laborious calculations correlated to pertinent proofs, some historians ventured to make numerical estimates referring to the migratory populations. Thus, today it is considered that the number of Batavians was around 50,000, that of the Alamans, who fought at Strasbourg in A.D. 357 was 20,000, and that of the Goth warriors at Adrianopolis, in A. D. 378 was 10,000[10]. The West Goths, on entering Spain, were probably 70–80,000 in number, and the Vandals, when they crossed into Africa, may have been c. 80,000 souls, although this figure may be a *cliché*.[11] In the 6th century, the horde of the Avars did not exceed in number 20,000 men, and Genghis Khan's Mongolia, in the 13th century, had an army of 129,000 men.[12] Surely, judging by these figures that appear as such in different sources or are deduced through calculations, it is almost impossible to estimate the quantum of the whole population of these peoples. Concerning the Hungarians of the 9th–10th centuries, only one numeric figure that survived belongs to Dzaihani, whose works served as a source of inspiration for Ibn Rusta and Gardizi, who gave accounts as to how the Hungarian chief would call to arms 20,000 warriors.[13] Taking this into account, it has been considered that the effort of 4–5 families was necessary for the maintenance of one armed warrior, hence the number of families would amount to 100,000 and that of the total population to 500,000 conquering Hungarians (if we were to admit that there were about 5 individuals per family).[14] Suffice to say that the numbers seem to

be greatly exaggerated if we were to accept as a starting point those 20,000 warriors. Under no circumstances did a steppe warrior need 4–5 families to support him, because each and every able man was a warrior. The model that applies to the western and central-European feudal world cannot apply to the steppe conditions, where the accessories necessary in battle were much easier to obtain and less costly. Also, we believe that the average of 5 individuals per family has to be brought down to 4, given the high infant mortality rates—especially in the case of the nomadic populations. Even in the first half of the 14th century, the family index is considered to have been 4.3.[15] So, let us admit that the conquering Hungarians may have amounted to 100–150,000, at the end of the 9th century. What was then the number of the pre-Magyar populations present in Pannonia? Hungarian historians consider this number to have ranged between 150–200,000 Slavic and Avar remains, estimating the then population of Hungary to have been of c. 600,000 inhabitants.[16] A certain preponderance of the Hungarians could be considered for the Pannonian Plain proper (or the Alföld), which is where the Hungarian territory used to stand around the year 900—although the ethnic structure of this territory was far from homogeneous (as some contemporary studies would have us believe). Croatia, Slovakia, Transylvania, and other marginal regions are out of the question for the time being due to the fact that these territories became part of the Hungarian state much later. The Hungarian army of the 9th–10th centuries, while perfectly suited for plundering raids, was not in the least ready to occupy a territory already heavily populated by sedentary populations,[17] especially as the geography was hilly or mountainous. In fact, the Hungarians, at that time, were to no extent whatsoever a conquering or colonizing people, with the exception of the Alföld, where they were semi-nomadic; at that time they did not have any political organization whatsoever, nor any forceful idea that they might propose to their neighbours.[18] That is why the conquering of the neighbouring territories as well as the annexation thereof to medieval Hungary took place gradually and in time, especially after the year 1,000, i. e. after the settling down, Christianization and partial feudalization of the Hungarians.

Chronicles Concerning the Ethnic Structure of Pannonia and Transylvania in the pre-Magyar Period.
The Romanians

At the time when the Hungarian tribes, driven by the Petchenegs and the Bulgarians off the north-Pontic steppes, were crossing the Northern Carpathians, Pannonia and Transylvania were peopled by heterogeneous communities from the point of view of their ethnic structure.[19] The tradition recorded by Simon of Keza and by the Latin-Hungarian chronicles of the 14th century shows that in the wake of the death of Attila's sons and of the shattered "Empire" of the Huns, Pannonia was populated by Slavs (*Sclavi*), Greeks (*Graeci*), Teutons (*Teutonici*), Messians (*Mesiani*) and Romanians (*Ulahi*), under the domination of Svatopluk, the Knez (Prince) of Moravia, and conquered in battle by the Hungarians.[20] Not taking into account certain anachronisms inherent to all medieval *gestae,* these accounts are not surprising because not only the Moravian Slavs, but also the Greeks (Byzantines), the Germans (Teutons), the Bulgarians (the Messians) and the Romanians (Wallachians) were present in Pannonia or on its outskirts in the decades preceding the apparition of the Hungarians.[21] The anonymous notary of King Bela gives an account, based upon some earlier chronicles, of how Pannonia, at the time when the Hungarians got there, was inhabited by Slavs, Bulgarians, and Romanians, that is, the shepherds of the Romans (*quam terram habitarent Sclavi, Bulgari et Blachii ac pastores Romanorum*).[22] The sense of the phrase "the Romanians, that is, the shepherds of the Romans" is very precisely explained by Simon of Keza in his *Gesta.* He says that, when the Huns came, the Romans (in fact, the inhabitants of the towns—*civitates*) retreated, and only "the Romanians, who were their (the Romans') shepherds and cultivators, remained voluntarily in Pannonia" (*Blachis, qui ipsorum—Romanorum—fuere pastores et coloni, remanentibus sponte in Pannonia*).[23] This testifies to the Roman origin of the Romanians to their long-standing presence in Pannonia, as well as to the ethnic sense of the term *Vlah,* which indicated the ethnic groups of the Romanians descended from the Romans and also their major occupations in Pannonia, namely agriculture and shepherding. The chronicler shows clearly that "the Romans"—the officials, the urban elements—retreated from Pannonia (and other provinces) to Italy, but "the cultivators and the shepherds of the Romans," that is, *the Vlachs* (Romanians), voluntarily remained there.[24] As for Transylvania proper, raided and plundered by the Hungarians around the year 900, Anonimus says that is was inhabited by Romanians and by Slavs (*Blasii et Sclavii*), who were organized in an incipient state, (voivodship or duchy), ruled over by the Romanian duke (voivode) *Gelou*.[25] If in Pannonia the Romanians are enumer-

ated last, after the other peoples (populations) found there by the Hungarians, in Transylvania they appear before the Slavs, and the "sovereignty" (*dominium*) belongs to a Romanian, which is an indication of the numerical importance of the Romanians in that area. As far as this matter is concerned, the Latin-Magyar chronicles are broadly confirmed by the old chronicle of Kiev *Povest' vremmenych let* (the beginning of the 12th century, which shows that the Hungarian nomads, after crossing the Northern Carpathians ("The Hungarian Mountains"), at the end of the 9th century, clashed with the Romanians (the Volohs) and the Slavs, whom they defeated (driving out the Romanians and subjugating the Slavs).[26] Returning to the list of peoples and populations provided by Nicolaus Olahus, we ascertain that even the Szeklers, in accordance with the tradition recorded in the chronicles, are more ancient in Pannonia, even if their origin is yet uncertain. Simon of Keza sustains that they were remnants of the Huns, and that, after the arrival of the Hungarians, they allegedly gained a part of the country, "not in the Pannonian Plain, but in the marginal mountains," where "they shared the same fate as the Romanians; which is why, intermingled with the Romanians, they make use of the letters of the latter".[27] The place where the Szeklers lived mingled with Romanians is not the issue here, because the sources mention Romanians not only in the area of the Western Carpathians ("Munţii Apuseni"), where the eastern borders of Hungary once stood and where the Szeklers were temporarily recorded, but also in the South-Eastern Carpathians ("Carpaţii de Curbură"), where the borderline of Hungary veached around 1,200, and where the Szeklers eventually settled.

The chronicles are relevant as far as some other ethno-demographic aspects are concerned. Simon of Keza, who wrote at the end of the 13th century, also records the settling in the Hungarian Kingdom of some families of consequence together with their subjects *de terra Latina vel de Alamannia,* as well as of some *Bohemians, Poles, Greeks, Petchenegs, Armenians,* and other foreign peoples, arrived here in order to serve the sovereign and the Hungarian nobles, in the time of Duke Geza (972–997) and of the succeeding kings.[28] In the succeeding chronicles—*Chronicon Pictum Vindobonense* and *Chronicon Monacense*—the number of the populations which came to Hungary appears greatly augmented: "Moreover, they penetrated into Hungary not only in the time of King (in fact, Duke) Geza and of the holy King Stephen, but also in the time of other kings: Bohemians (*Bohemi*), Poles (*Poloni*), Greeks (*Greci*), Spaniards (*Ispani*), Ismaelites or Saracens (*Hismaelite aut Saraceni*), Petchenegs (*Besii*), Armenians (*Armeni*), Saxons (*Saxoni*), Thuringians (*Turingi*), *Misnenses* (?) and Rhenanians (*Rhenenses*), Cumans (*Cumani*), Latins (*Latini*).[29] In the chronicle kept at Munich it is stated that the settling in Hungary of those specific populations took place

during the reigns of Geza and Saint Stephen (that is, between 972 and 1038), whereas the *Chronicon pictum*..., asserts that the exodus took place in the times of other kings as well, certainly after 1038.[30]

Thus returning to Olahus' list, we ascertain that, in the Latin-Magyar chronicles of the 12th–14th centuries, the Romanians, the Slavs and the Szeklers are not enumerated amongst the populations that came to the Hungarian state, since their presence was recorded in a period prior to the Hungarian invasion.[31] Concerning the Szeklers, we ought to add only the fact that in the 12th–13th centuries, at the time of the advance of the frontier of the Magyar state, they moved east and south-eastward from Crişana towards the Târnave region and eventually towards the places which they roughly occupy today. With regard to the Romanians, at the turn of the millennium, their less significant presence in Pannonia is obvious, as is their major presence in Transylvania, that is, in the nucleus of the Roman province of Dacia. Driven out to a large extent upon the arrival of the Hungarians in Pannonia, as the aforementioned old chronicle of Kiev recorded, the Pannonian Romanians must have added to the number of their fellow Romanians living to the east (în Crişana, Banat, Maramureş, Transylvania) and south (in the Balkans). Moreover, a work from 1308—*Descriptio Europae Orientalis*—remarks that the Romanians, "who in olden times were the shepherds of the Romans" in Hungary, driven away by the Magyars, fled, partly, south of the Danube, to a region situated between Macedonia, Achaia and Thessaloniki.[32] As far as the massive presence of the Romanians in the eastern part of the former Hungarian kingdom is concerned, there is no doubt about it even after the year 900, since the narrative sources mentioned before are confirmed by the documentary sources as well as by other proofs, some of them indirect.

The Written Evidence Regarding the Romanians and Their Importance Up to the 14th Century

As far as the statistical, generalizing value of the documents for the elucidation of the ethno-confessional and demographic structures is concerned, much precaution is needed. The written document, in those medieval times, was the instrument through which the privileged categories talked amongst themselves: landowners, lay and church institutions, foreign communities etc. brought in and settled in advantageous conditions in the country. The peasantry, that is, the crushing majority of the population, did not talk through documents (or only accidentally), for the simple reason that it (the great majority of the population) was an historical object, and not a subject; in other words, it was

not a political factor.[33] On the other hand, the acts of granting confirmation for certain properties, right up to the end of the 14th century and the beginning of the 15th century, were limited in Transylvania to a rather restricted area, not extending past the inferior beech-line, up to the altitude of 600 meters. These acts refer to the plain regions, to the mouths of the wider valleys, to the hill regions, and to a part of the hilly areas; that is, they comprise in their sphere of interest between one third and almost two thirds of the total area of Transylvania. Thus, the documents of those times are not capable of providing information referring to the life that was being led on the larger area of the territory of Transylvania, made up of the uplands, the forests, and the area of the alpine meadows.[34]

How did it all come to this? Firstly, Transylvania was conquered from a military point of view, but gradually, roughly between the 9th anf the 12th centuries, following a movement from the west and north–west to the south and south–east. This military conquest was followed by an institutional one, by an action of establishing and organizing the new institutions, an action that was also gradual. The hilly or mountainous areas, covered by forests, remained for a long time outside the written act. That is why the documentary reference to some villages, owing its occurrence more often than not to some external factor, almost never corresponds to the founding of these villages. Usually, the document introduces a new juridical order over a pre-existent reality.

Thus, in the analysis of the medieval documents that refer to Transylvania up to the 14th century, one must proceed with a twofold caution, one of social-political nature (the rendering with predilection of the matters regarding the privileged groups) and the other one of geographical-juridical nature (the rendering of those realities that were situated in accessible areas and were interesting for official institutions). It is clear that the progressive growth in the number of Romanian settlements recorded in documents was due to other factors: the entering of some new regions within the sphere of interest of the institutions that released the documents; the penetration into this sphere of some new social and ethno-confessional categories; the gradual occupation of some Romanian possessions by foreigners; the adaptation of the Romanian elite to the exigencies of western feudalism; the natural growth of the population and the establishiment of new settlements through swarming; the hampering of the Orthodox faith etc.

It is important to observe that the circumstances in which the Transylvanian Romanians are mentioned in the early narrative sources are almost identical to the ones recorded in the old documentary sources. The Romanians more often than not appear described as the attacked, the oppressed, in the 9th–13th centuries; they are always deprived of something: first of all, they are deprived of their lands, but also of rights of a different nature; their faith is persecuted, they are required to pay duties, military dues, etc. Let us now consider a few examples

following the year 1,000. According to some papal documents of the 14th century, the Medieşu Aurit castle and the adjacent territory (the north-western part of Transylvania) had been conquered from the schismatic Romanians (*de manibus Wallacorum scismaticorum*) by a Hungarian king, in times of old, before a certain general synod.[35] Two plausible hypotheses have been issued regarding this "takeover" of the castle by the Hungarian conqueror: a) the taking of the castle in the time of King Emeric (1196–1204), before the synod of 1215; b) the taking of the castle in the interval 1074–1095 by King Geza I or Ladislas the Saint, in other words, before the synod of 1179[36]. Probably, that conquest took place between 1204—when the anti-Orthodox action started—and 1215—the year of the Lateran synod. Irrespective of when the event took place, of consequence is the recording in the 14th century of a tradition on the presence of the Romanians in this northern region, as well as of the fact that the Romanians had been previously masters of the Medieş castle and of the surrounding territory (districtus Megyes) before their seizure by the Hungarian kings.[37] In other words, a group of five documents issued by Pope Gregory in 1377 confirm the news transmitted by the old narrative Latin-Magyar sources as well as by the Russian sources concerning the presence of the Romanians in Pannonia and Transylvania, before the Magyar conquest. In two other documents, of 1204 and 1205 respectively, Pope Innocent III talks about some Orthodox monasteries in a state of disuse in the diocese of the Catholic bishop of Oradea, as well as about a bishopric of the Greek rite to be found in the "country" of the sons of Knez Bela (*quidam episcopatus in terra filiorum Bele knese*) under the jurisdiction of the patriarchy of Constantinople and which was to be brought under the jurisdiction of the Roman Church.[38] This bishopric was probably located in the area of the Crişana or that of Sătmar, inhabited by Romanians, since only the Romanians could, around the year 1200, have been Orthodox and have *knezes* for rulers.

The bishopric subordinated to the centre of the Eastern World indicates a long-standing local tradition, recorded by Anonimus and referring to Duke (voivode) Menumorout of Crişana who, around the year 900 A.D., invoked as his "master" the emperor of Constantinople. A document of 1223 makes mention of the fact that, about 20 years earlier, the Cistercian monastery of Cârţa in Făgăraş was endowed with lands taken by force from the Romanians (*terram... extemptam de Blaccis*).[39] Around 1210, at the request of Andrew II, king of Hungary, a count of Sibiu recruits an army formed of Saxons, Romanians, Szeklers and Petchenegs which he leads towards the south of the Danube so as to give military assistance to Czar Boril.[40] The territory on which this army was recruited stretched between Orăştie and Baraolt, that is, it was the area over which the count of Sibiu had authority. From this territory, the Magyars seem to be absent at that time, which signals the fact that they had not, by that time,

penetrated into southern Transylvania in considerable numbers; on the other hand, the Romanians are placed in the enumeration straight after the Saxons and immediately before the Szeklers and the Petchenegs, as proof of their military and numerical importance. Let us not forget that the Saxons, through the privilege granted them in 1224, received under their ownership also the *forest of the Romanians and of the Petchenegs,* which they had the right to use alongside the old proprietors.[41] In the same manner, the Teutonic knights, colonized temporarily in south-eastern Transylvania, were granted in 1222 the right of passing through the "country of the Romanians" and through that "of the Szeklers," without having to pay anything.[42]

In all of the sources of the 9th–14th centuries, the Romanians appear as owners of some goods, as natives of those places, from Crişana and Satu Mare all the way to Bârsa and from Banat up to Maramureş. There exists no source whatsoever that mentions crossings on masse of Romanians from the south and east into Transylvania. On the contrary, with regard even to the 13th–14th centuries, the evidence clearly shows crossings from the inner part of the bend of the Carpathians towards Wallachia and Moldavia. This suggested by the act of 1234 referring to the Romanians in the bishopric of Cumania, Romanians who attracted towards them the inhabitants of Transylvania; in the same manner, in the diploma of the Hospitallers of 1247 it is required that the peasants (*rustici*) who crossed from Transylvania and Hungary into Oltenia (Little Wallachia) be made to return.[43] Historical tradition and documents bring forth arguments in support, of the crossings of some Romanian voivodes and knez from Făgăraş and Maramureş, inconvenienced by the new order introduced by the Magyar masters, into Wallachia and Moldavia. No longer able to maintain the sovereignty of their respective political formations in southern Transylvania and Maramureş, they crossed (in 1290–1365) south and east of the Carpathians and speeded up the founding of state in those places.

The Colonization and Inclusion of some Populations in Arpadian Hungary (12th–13th Centuries)

In Arpadian Hungary, ethnic variety had become a natural aspect of everyday life. In spite of some gross violations of rights and in spite of the monopolization of lands to the detriment of the local population, ethnic discriminations were few and insignificant. Still, a certain conscience of differences made its presence felt even then. Thus, in the chronicles of the 13th century,

there appeared the cliché which reflects a current mentality in that epoch, namely that the nobility were the descendants of the true conquering Hungarians, and that the peasantry proceeded from the conquered peoples, encountered by the Hungarians upon their invasion.[44] Certainly, the fact holds true in general, in the sense that the Hungarians, few in number in relation to the size of the conquered territory or of the territory ruled over by them between the 9th and 13th centuries, appeared in the eyes of the others as the ruling class and then behaved as such, and the conquered were mostly peasants.

According to some research, in the time of Andrew II (1204–1235), out of 26 aristocratic Magyar clans (barons and counts) about two thirds were of Hungarian origin, the rest being descended from German (6), French (1), Italian (1) and Spanish (1) emigrants.[45] In other words, in the 13th century, the greater majority of the high elité of Hungary proceeded from the "true Hungarians," and the rest, in spite of their distant foreign origin (Jak, Hontpazmany, Heder etc. had come in the time of Duke Geza—after 977—and during the reigns of kings Stephen I, Coloman I, Geza II, Emeric, between 1000 and 1204), had suffered an intense process of assimilation.[46] It stands to reason that the situation of the common people, free or dependent, living in towns or in the rural world, was different. Because the greater mass of the population is in question and statistics are non-existent, precise estimates cannot be made, as in the case of the 26 aristocratic clans, but there is evidence that for this major demographic segment, roughly in the 13th–14th centuries 13–14, the proportion must have been the reverse of that of the aristocrats. This means that approximately one third of the common population of Hungary were Magyars, and the rest must have been non-Magyars. In fact, the state of affairs at the end of the 9th century must have been the same, when the Hungarians invaded Pannonia and when they were estimated to have been c. 20,000 warriors which means a maximum of 150,000 souls. The rest of the inhabitants of Pannonia and the neighbouring territories, raided and plundered by the Hungarians, were, according to the sources, Slavs, Moravians, Bulgarians, Serbs, Romanians, Szeklers, Greeks, Teutons. Up to 1200, through conquests or by peaceful means, the Hungarian state come to include also new Slavs (i.e. the Croats) and other Romanians (of Transylvania). Large masses of foreigners were included in Hungary through migration, both from the east and the west. The typical early western colonists, called *Latini*, were French peasants from northern France and *Wallons,* and the groups come from the east were made up of Petchenegs and Ouzes. The documentary evidence shows around 100 Petcheneg villages in Hungary in the 9th–12th centuries.[47] These two directions of early immigration are pointed out by the fact that King Geza II, at whose invitation the first groups of Saxons (generically

called so) arrived in Transylvania, sent delegations (messengers) to the Saxon region in the Volga area, "so that they gather Muslims and Turks" (that is to say, Petchenegs) in order to bring them to Hungary (1151).[48] Before the Mongol invasion (1241), the country had received new military and merchant colonists, especially Iranian, Khorezmian, and Alan Caucasian groups, which were Muslims. The main centre for them was Pest.[49] Among them, a group of Bashkirs about whom Guillaume de Rubruck, 1253–1255, knew that they lived alongside the Romanians (*Illac*); Rashid-ad-Din said that after the Tatars defeated the "dark Romanians" they crossed the Carpathians and conquered the Bashkirs, the Magyars and the Saxons.[50]

In contrast to the 9th–12th centuries, when the settling of the newcomers was taking place in scattered village communities, at the end of the 12th century and in the 13th century a new principle of colonization took root, namely the placing of the "visitors" (*hospites*), in relatively compact blocs, on precise territories. This is what happened to the Saxons, colonized in southern Transylvania and granted the global privilege of 1224. The same applies to the Cumans who, unlike the Petchenegs (the latter formed scattered military colonies), were settled on thinly populated extensive areas firstly between the Danube and the Tisza River and later on even in some areas east of the Tisza. Rogerius estimates the number of Cumans settled in Hungary before the Tartar invasion to have been 40,000 men,[51] which seems sensible. The favours given by King Bela IV to the Cumans were regarded with jealousy by the Hungarian nobility, who lost in that way some properties and income sources. That is why, making public their refusal to support the king during the great confrontation with the Tartars (1241), Bela's opponents declared: "let our king fight, who brought the Cumans into the kingdom" or "let the king fight with the help of those who received our lands." The first victim of this attitude was the Cumanian "king" Kuthen, killed by the furious crowd.[52] Therefore, even during the 13th century, relations between Hungarians and non-Hungarians on the territory of the Kingdom were far from idyllic. In spite of that, the Cumans and the Saxons alike were granted global privileges through the diploma of 1279, which raised the whole group to the status of a *universitas*, a *communitas*.[53] The third ethnic group, similar in size to that of the Saxons of Transylvania and the Cumans of Hungary proper (each being of about 40,000 men), consolidated after the Mongol invasion, were the Saxons of Spiš (Zips), today in Slovakia. They too were granted general communal privileges in 1271.[54] Another distinct group were the urban Germans, whose migration towards the towns that were in the process of being established and towards the mining areas continued constantly, starting with the 13th century. Thus, the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of the c. 150 towns, existent in Hungary around the middle of the 14th century, was made up of Germans, organized in

closed and autonomous communities; such was the case of the towns of Buda, Esztergom, Székesféfervár, Vác, Visegrad, Sopron, Bratislava, Cluj etc., to mention only the most notable examples.[55]

In those days in Hungary there also existed another quite numerous community, that of the Jews. In 1251, King Bela IV had granted them certain rights in the country and established firmly the relations between them and the Christians.[56] This fact was a combination of circumstances due to the low level of the Catholic proselytism as a result of the Tartar invasion and domination in the area.

After the end of the Arpadian dynasty (1301), under the Angevins no important colonizations are to be noticed, generally speaking, in medieval Hungary.[57] Nonetheless, on top of the old Slavs of the north (especially of Slovakia) there arrived smaller groups of Moravians and Poles; over the Slavs of the southern parts (more or less assimilated), especially; in Bačka and Srjem (Sirmium), there arrive new Serbs,[58] and among the Romanians and the *hospites* of Maramureş, Ung, Bereg, Ugocsa, the Ruthenian infiltration began to take place.

The General Image of the Ethnic Structure of Hungary in the 9th–14th Centuries

Thus, in the 9th–14th centuries, on the territory occupied by the Magyars, and then (after 1000) in the Hungarian kingdom, there existed a true ethnic mosaic. Not mentioning the Magyars, the peoples and populations to be found during this interval in pre-Christian and then Christian Hungary came to be subjugated by the Hungarian dukes and kings in at least four different ways: 1) they were found by the Magyars upon their arrival in Pannonia and subjugated immediately or driven in part towards the outskirts of Pannonia or even towards non-Pannonicn lands: different types of Slavs, including Bulgarians in the process of being Slavicised or already Slavicised, Romanians (descendants of the Romans), German remnants (maybe Gepidae), groups of Avars, Khazars (arrived have, perhaps, at the same time as the Hungarians); if the Szeklers have a Hun-Avar origin, then they too have to be placed within this category; 2) they were conquered through the Magyar campaigns of the 10th–14th centuries: the Slovaks, the Romanians of Transylvania, Crişana, Banat, Maramureş, the Serbs of the southern parts, new Bulgarians, etc.; 3) they came through migration and colonization having mainly military and economic purposes: distinct western ethnic groups ("Latins," Germans, nationals of Flanders, Saxons, etc.), as well as eastern ones Iranians, Khorezmians, Caucasian Alans or

Iaziges—that is, Sarmatians—Bashkirs, Petchenegs, Ouzes, Cumans, Jews, etc.; 4) they arrived in Hungary by means of matrimonial alliances, dynastic unions, through the signing of some conventions, combining diplomacy with military force: the Croats, the Slavs (Serbo-Croats) of Bosnia, the Italians of Dalmatia and others. For instance, the *pacta conventa* (treaties) of 1102 stipulated the bringing of Croatia and Dalmatia in the possession of the Hungarian kings, with the continuation of their autonomy.[59] In 1120 Bosnia follows the example set by Croatia (to which it had previously belonged) and it joins Hungary of its own accord (the Hungarian kings also adorn themselves with the title *rex Ramae*—after the name of a Bosnian river), the Hungarian ruling class not being continuous here, nor free from internal and external threats.[60]

The Confessional Situation of Hungary until the Beginning of the 14th Century

In terms of religion, up to c. 1000, the Hungarians themselves were pagans, as were some of the pre-existent populations of the Pannonian Plain. The Romanians and the Slavs were Christian, as were the colonists arrived here from the West. The oriental colonists were to a certain extent Islamic, and the Jews, obviously, were Mosaic. After the 11th century, the difference between the eastern and the western Christian churches became more accentuated, so that some of the subjects of the Hungarian kings become Catholic, whereas others turned Orthodox. Thus, even the confessional image of the country is just as intricate as the ethnic one. It is beyond any doubt that, starting with the 11th century, after the great pagan revolt of 1046, (during which there bishops and numerous priests were killed and many churches destroyed),[61] in spite of further attempts made at apostasying, Christianity becomes overwhelmingly predominant in Hungary. Along with Christianity, it is only fit that we also mention the Muslim and Mosaic cults that had their specific importance in the given context, as well as other beliefs, called "pagan," that extended well into the late Middle Ages (14th century). Nor must we overlook the question of the heresies which emerged from the early sources and preoccupies to a great extent the Catholic political-religious officials. On the other hand, after the firm orientation of Hungary towards Rome and after the dismissal of some alliances (even matrimonial ones) with Byzantium, Catholicism *de facto* becomes the "official" faith of the kingdom. That is why, starting with the 13th century, the confrontation between the Catholics and the Orthodox or between the "Christians" and the "schismatics," as the two groups are referred to in the sources of Latin-Magyar or Western origin, is fundamental in the Hungarian kingdom.

As far as the Petchenegs, the Ouezes, and the Cumans are concerned, some chroniclers assert that they had no religion, whereas still others consider them to have been pagans. In fact, there are clear indications of the fact that among them we find certain forms of the shamanist cults, characterized by a rich pantheon of spirits (ghosts). At the beginning of the second millennium, a part of the Thuranians were converted to Islamism (Al-Bakri says that the majority of the Petchenegs were Muslim) whereas another part kept alive the old religious, and yet another part, as a result of the endeavours of Byzantium, Russia, Hungary, as well as of their living among Romanians, Slavs, Hungarians etc., became Christian.[62] The Christianization of most of them was neither profound nor immediate, nor was it lasting. Evidence shows that the archbishop of Strigonium replied to the Cumans' requests of 1227 to be Christianized and be given (with the approval of the Pope and of the Hungarian political power) a proper bishopric, that comprised the south-eastern corner of Transylvania and an area outside of the bend of the Carpathians, as far as the Siret River.[63] The enthusiasm of the first successes diminished quickly due to the nomad way of life and to the Cumanian customs, incompatible with Christian Europe, because of the insufficient training of the body Dominicans to act as missionaries amongst the populations of the steppe, and also because of the competition of the Islam which was itself born amongst some non-sedentary populations. At any rate, a Papal bull of 14 November 1234 show that the majority of the population of the bishopric called "of Cumania" were Romanians (*Walathi*), who had their own Orthodox bishops and under whose influence Hungarians, Germans and other inhabitants of the Hungarian kingdom turned to Orthodoxy.[64] Under these circumstances, the bishopric of "Cumania" seems to have been created especially for the conversion to Catholicism of the "schismatic" Romanians, although the results were, as we have seen, contrary to the end pursued. As far as the Cumans are concerned, they too did not prove too perceptive or constant in accepting the Catholic faith. In 1264, Pope Urban IV was requesting of the archbishops of Strigonium and of Kalocsa that they urge the Cumans of Hungary to observe the Catholic religion or drive them off the land if they refused to comply.[65] In 1279, Ladislas IV, king of Hungary (himself of Cumanian origin), ordered the Cumans to settle on the domains they had been granted by King Bela IV, between the Danube and the Tisza River (or even in the area east of the Tisza), to abandon their tents and felt houses, to live in villages abiding by the Christian customs, with stable buildings and houses, to shave off their beards, to crop their hair, and to change their dress.[66] So, at the end of the 13th century, the Cumans of Hungary lived by pagan ways. Also, the command of 1279 was superfluous since, repeatedly (for instance in 1279), the king himself was chided by the Pope and the Hungarian prelates for having abandoned Christianity, "joining the Tartars, the Saracens,

the Nogae, and other pagans."[67] The strong pagan reaction recorded in Hungary at the end of the 13th century cannot be dismissed as having been but a simple incident, since the apostate sovereign had had a certain support from the masses in his actions. The exists evidence, as shall be seen, that not even towards the end of the 14th century was the question of the Cumans of Hungary clarified from a Christian point of view.

It is certain that the Iranian, Khorezmian, Caucasian Alan (Iazige) and Bashkir groups, were Muslim, being consequently called in Old Magyar, bőszőrmény.[68] Pressures to Christianize them were carried out since early times, as early as the reigns of Kings Ladislas I (1077–1095) and Coloman (1095–1116), but the result was insignificant because in 1220 these populations were still Muslim. One of their members (Khorezmian or Bashkir),[69] being in Aleppo in 1220, where he was improving his knowledge of the Islamic doctrine, points out that his country was within the realm of a Catholic people, called Hunkar (Hungary), that he and his people were Muslims in the service of the Hungarian king, and that they spoke Hungarian.[70]

The most numerous non-Catholic Christians in the Hungarian kingdom were, no doubt, the Orthodox Romanians and Slavs (Serbs, Bulgarians, Ruthenians) who lived on extensive territories in the southern and eastern part of the kingdom. The Eastern faith was not persecuted from the beginning in Hungary. In Hungary proper alone, in Banat, Crişana and Sătmar, in Croatia or Voivodina, the Romanian author Aloisie Tăutu counted for the 11th–14th centuries over 30 Orthodox monasteries,[71] in addition to scores of others recorded in Transylvania in that period. It is evident that during the first two centuries of its existence, the Hungarian kingdom had admitted, accepted, and even promoted the pluralism of languages and faiths. A major change took place after the year 1204 (the 4th Crusade), "the year of one of the greatest fractures in the political and spiritual history of Europe."[72] The presence of the "Latins" in Constantinople radicalized the policy of the Papacy towards oriental Christianity. The issue of the unification of the two Churches is from now on understood, more and more, as unconditional subordination—not only from a hierarchic and dogmatic point of view, but also with regard to the unification of the ritual—of the Eastern Church to the Western one.[73] This new policy, which will reach its climax in the 14th century, was to have considerable consequences in the Hungarian kingdom too. Thus, the bishopric of Cumania had the role of attracting towards Catholicism the "schismatic" Romanians, who in 1234 obeted their "false" (that is, Orthodox) bishops, as has been seen. A synod of Buda of 1279 decreed that the "schismatic" priests should no longer be able to hold "godly office," or build churches or other holy premises, and that the "Christian" people (the Catholics) should no longer be allowed to participate in such divine service and

that they should no longer enter such chapels.[74] In the same year, Pope Nicholas IV obliged King Ladislas the Cuman (just as king Bela IV had sworn in 1235) to seize the heretics and to drive them out of Hungary.[75] In these instances, by "heretics" they chiefly meant "Orthodox." After the 4th crusade, "schismatics" are considered "heretics" and their goods are confiscated or plundered.[76]

To counteract the influence coming not only from Catholicism but also from Orthodoxy and therefore to grant the country the desired independence, Kulin, the *banus* (leader) of Bosnia (1168–1204) adopts the *Bogomile* doctrine (heresy) and tries to raise it to the status of state religion. Following the vehement intervention of Pope Innocent III upon King Emeric of Hungary, Kulin is obliged to desist and to permit, at a synodal level, the condemnation of Bogomilism. But the faith had taken deep root. This faith was to influence the identity and individuality of the inhabitants even under Ban Ninoslav (1232–1250), when this faith was to encompass almost the entire people. Two Magyar "crusades" were necessary for Bela IV to bring Bosnia and Hum (Herzegovina) back under Hungarian authority, but Bogomilism could not be extirpated.[77] Even under the Arpadian kings, especially after the 4th crusade, the measures of fortifying Catholicism in Hungary and in the conquered and annexed countries went hand in hand with the oppression of other faiths, especially the Orthodox one.

Catholic Pressure in Hungary in the 14th Century.
The Policy Led by Louis I and the Results its

The principle, enunciated as a chancellery formula, according to which "the glory of the kings and princes derives first of all from the multitude of their peoples," is not a sufficient guarantee for respecting the freedoms of these peoples.[78] Naturally, under the first Arpadians, up to 1204, these freedoms were, generally speaking, respected. But for the Angevin kings of the 14th century, especially for Louis I (1324–1382), such an idea cannot be upheld. It is known that this king led a fervent policy of homogenization of all the greatly varied structures of the kingdom. Not even the ethno-confessional realities were excepted from this process. The king, supported by the Papacy and by the Western (Catholic) monastic orders, was an intransigent champion of Catholicism, which he strove to promote within Hungary and in the vicinity thereof. Antonio Bonfini, in his historical work on Hungary, drawn up in the 15th century, brings praise to the great sovereign: "Just how faithful and grateful to God he was can be understood from what will be shown in what follows. Firstly, to crush the strong-headedness of the Jews of tireless daring and then

to attract them, he promised them that they shall pass as Hungarians, that he would exempt them for good from public dues; only neither through his urgings (summons), nor through those of the holy fathers, did he manage to guide their steps on the way of the rightful faith and, through a public writ, he drove them out of Hungary, and allowed them to haul their goods and fortunes across the border without losses; they, thusly driven out, poured into Austria and Bohemia. Although the order of the monks of the Holy Prince Paul came to Hungary and his body, transported from Venice, was moved to the church of Lawrence, which rises atop the third cliff of the hill nearest to Buda, in fact Charles, the father [of king Louis], was the first to sustain the orders of the monks, who had taken under their control the holy premises of Lawrence, that of the Holy Cross, that of the Holy Ghost and of Saint Ladislas; and Louis granted him at Nozthre a high-ranking monastery and a further one he built in Leveldo for the Carthusian monks, which he ceremoniously presented to them as a gift. Also, he raised for the Virgin Mother two chapels built on kingly financing, which he furnished with extraordinary adornments, one in Aquisgrano, and the other in Cellis. Even through his example he urged many of the leaders, aristocrats, and nobles towards these duties of godly faith; who, in order not to prove unworthy of the kingly generosity, submitted through and by themselves places of worship and adornments. For these reasons, in everyone's opinion, the faith in Hungary was so greatly broadened and so much increased, that more than one third of the kingdom was penetrated by the holy custom.

The corrupt Cumans, of Tartar cruelty and with [rotten] customs, he tried to guide with great endeavour towards the true faith and, not being in the least deceived in his hope, the reverend ones, as much as was within his power, he strengthened with the gratest care. He turned towards the rightful faith the patharens (heretics) of Bosnia who, entangled in sundry mistakes, had sunk into the lost faith... Moreover, even in Slavonia, for instance in that region which they now call Lipna, from the moment he learned that there were [there] numerous crooked opinions which the priests, advocates of the sacred teachings of the late St. Jerome, propagated, he brought them back to the true wisdom (to the righteous judgement), but, in reality, it is said that they fell hock on their previous erring"[79].

The text is, first and foremost, a proof of the Catholic proselytism of King Louis I, of his tireless endeavour to the strengthen and spread of the faith. Before we comment upon the content of this text, it is only fit that we touch upon further proofs concerning the religious policy of this sovereign. Religion and the fundamental institution thereof—the Catholic Church—were considered essential means of the homogenization of the so sundry and artificially unified structures of Hungary, but also means of monopolizing new territories under

the pretext of spreading the faith. The documentary reverberations are relevant in this sense and they confirm the observations made by Bonfini.

Even since 1345, in the first years of the reign of Louis I, Pope Clement VI informs the king that a multitude of Romanians from Transylvania, Wallachia, and Sirmium (Srjem), ridding themselves of the "seeds of the schism," passed to Catholicism and that, pursuing the spread of this conversion, the high pontiff had issued a series of letters to the Hungarian king, to Elisabeth, the queen-mother, to the bishop of Oradea, to some Romanians—nobles and common people (among whom Alexander, son of Basarab, Nicolas of Remetea, Ladislas, voivod of Bioinis; Stanislas of Sypprach; Aprozye, voivod of Zopus; Nicolas, voivod of Auginas) –, as well as to the "brothers of the order" of the Franciscans, settled in those far-off parts of the eastern region of the kingdom; the Pope also knew that the letters to the "Romanian nobles" had been blockaded by Louis I, and he urged the latter to let them, through the Franciscan messengers, follow their course, that is, to reach their addressees.[80] In the document, of great consequences is the fact that the Romanians are called *Olachi Romani*, that is, they are called by their double name, on the one hand the one given to them by the foreigners (*Olachi*), and on the other hand, by the one that they themselves used (*Romani*). Both prove their ancient Roman origin. This act also shows the three allied forces that militated for the spreading of Catholicism in central and south–eastern Europe; the Papacy, the Hungarian royalty and the orders of the monks, a fact also recorded by Antonio Bonfini. The blockading of the letters addressed to the Romanian nobles clearly points to the intention of the king to mediate between the Pope and the Romanians, his intention of not permitting a direct connection between these two factors, with the purpose of advantaging Hungary.

Two documents issued on 11 July 1351 at Avignon indicate that King Louis I had asked, and Pope Clement VI approved, the right of the sovereign to establish churches for the multitude of "schismatics, philistines (heretics), Cuman, Tartars, pagans, and non-believers," from within and around the Hungarian kingdom, men who, exempted from the clerical tithe, were to receive the Catholic christening.[81] One year after, the same Pope praises the worthy king for the resolute manner in which he had fought "against the schismatics and other non-believers."[82] There is even a command of Pope Clement VI dating from 1352 to the bishops of Zagreb, of Oradea and of Cenad with a view to collecting the ecclesiastical tithe, granted as a gift to King Louis with the purpose of upholding the fight against the Tartars, the schismatics, and the non-believers of Hungary and the adjoining areas.[83] It transpires that the king had complained that he had not received the tithe from these dioceses, although here appears a contradiction between the intention of rapidly collecting as many tithes as

possible and the exemption from payment of the newly converted; but Banat, Crişana (where two of the mentioned dioceses were functioning), as well as other extensive regions were inhabited by a numerous Orthodox population (in the present case, overwhelmingly Romanian), and that is why the income that resulted from the Catholic tithes was low and even the very tithes were difficult to collect. It would have been more natural that in these areas, where the hope of a new conversion existed, the issue concerning the tithes be not exaggerated. The attempts to "Christianize" continued even under the pontificate of Innocent VI, from whom king Louis obtained the permission (on 31 October 1353) that brother Nicholas of the order of the St. Augustine hermits, of the diocese of Oradea, help the bishop of Nitra (today in Slovakia) in the action of converting the pagans, the heretics, and the schismatics of the Hungarian kingdom.[84] Concerning the "heresy" of Bosnia, two acts of 30 May and 28 October 1364 mention an "uncountable multitude of heretics and patharens" and they also mention the attempt of controlling them through military campaigns led by the king by the archbishop of Strigonium (who was also "great Chancellor"), by the palatine together with the other prelates, barons and leaders of the kingdom. As in the time of Charles Robert, the father of Louis (who in 1330 had suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of the Romanians of Wallachia), now, in the battles of Bosnia, the seal of the kingdom was lost.[85] These military actions, with the purpose of subjugating certain peoples, were even now called "crusades," except that the enemies of the king and of the Pope were Christian too. In 1356, Pope Innocent VI strengthened an earlier bull addressed to the prior of the order of Dominicans of Hungary, through which the latter was charged to preach the "crusade" against all the inhabitants of Transylvania, Bosnia and Slavonia who were heretics (*contra omnes Transilvanos, Bosnenses et Sclavonie qui heretici fuerint*).[86] It is obvious that under the name of heretics we understand here the Orthodox too. According to the Pope's point of view, Transylvania, Bosnia and Slavonia were "heretical" provinces, as mark of their overwhelming non-Hungarian majority.

The initiatives of peaceful or military struggle, in the name of the Catholic church, belonged to king Louis, to the popes, and to the leaders of the monastic orders. Thus, an act of 11 August 1356 shows that Louis I had asked the Pope to allow him to fight against the heretics and the "schismatics" of Serbia and of other neighbouring territories; the Pope granted him this permission on condition that the king fight to drive out the non-believers and the schismatics from within the Hungarian kingdom, and also for the spreading of the Catholic faith.[87] On 18 August 1356, the Pope is even more specific, urging the king to drive out the heretics of Bosnia and of other regions of the kingdom.[88] Again we see here a strategic difference between understanding of conceiving of the

struggle for the spreading and the strengthening of the faith by the Pope and by the king. The question arises whether the sums given to the king from the Church tithes of Hungary (along with other means offered by the Papacy) had to be used primarily to conquer new territories (be these Orthodox or pagan) for the kingdom or were to be used to strengthen the faith within Hungary. It goes without saying that Louis I tended to follow especially the first modality, which increased his country and his incomes (irrespective of the confession of the newly conquered), whereas the Papacy pursued the increase in the number of Catholics and saw with uneasiness that, although Hungary had constantly grown in size in the name of the Roman faith, Catholicism was still weak as compared to the other confessions (or heresies), Christian or pagan. This explains the insistence of the Pope that the king should fight first against the "schismatics and the non-believers" within Hungary (Bosnia, Transylvania, Slavonia etc.). Clearly, the external battles were not to be overlooked, since the conquest of new territories for a Catholic kingdom ensured the proper terrain for the action of the Church and the monastic orders. That is why, on 11 August 1357, the Pope considered those external efforts of King Louis (the driving out of the Tartars, the fights against the Ruthenians, the Lithuanians, against the heretics and the schismatics of Serbia and even against the Italian enemies of the Church, more precisely against the Christian enemies of the Pope, who had been residing for some time in Avignon), yielding to him once more the income of the church tithes of Hungary for three years.[89]

In the second part of the reign of Louis, more precisely after 1360, the political and confessional intransigence of Catholicism towards the Eastern world becomes even more manifest. We can reconstitute in Hungary the territories dependent upon the latter in this period of massive effort of achieving the "unity of faith," of course Catholic.[90] The climax of the attempt of imposing Catholicism in the regions of the north Balkan peninsula (and north of the Danube) was reached after the conquest of Vidin by the Hungarian armies in 1365; the Franciscan order now has the most important role in severing the bulk of the population of the southern and eastern parts of the kingdom from their faith and subjecting to Catholicism.[91]

The Bosnian vicarage was a territorial subdivision of the Franciscan order and it comprised vast areas with a non-Catholic Christian population, areas conquered or standing within the Hungarian sphere of influence: Bosnia, (a traditionally "heretic" province) Ozora, Mačva, parts of the Bulgarian czardom of Vidin, Banat, Haţeg, Wallachia.[92] Of late, with penetrating finesse and erudition, scholars have studied the role of the Franciscan order and especially of the vicar of Bosnia, Bartholomew of Alverna, who was closely connected to the Papacy and the Hungarian kingdom, in the action of converting the inhabitants of Bos-

nia, the Serbs, the Romanians, and the Bulgarians.[93] The letters of Bartholomew of Alverna bring to attention what from a Catholic point of view are considered to be the "errors" committed by the Serbs, the Romanians, and the Bulgarians: the refusal of *filioque*, the ritual of christening, the eucharist, the use of the fermented dough bread, and, especially, disputing the primacy of the Pope and the universal character of the Roman church. A solution that was necessary, in the opinion of the vicar, was the effort to subordinate or to eliminate the Orthodox clergy from the territories comprised in the vicarage of Bosnia, especially seeing as how, just like in the 13th century (1234), even now numerous Catholics who lived in this environment adopted the faith and the rite of the locals and followed their faith. Through this elimination, Catholic clerics would be brought instead, the conversion of the natives would be carried out and the Catholics fallen into the "schism" would be regained. The measures envisage by the Franciscan order were not new. The persecution of the Orthodox clergy had started much earlier. Even king Louis I commanded (on 20 July 1366) the nobles and the other landowners, the castles and the royal towns on whose lands there stood "schismatic" priests (from the counties of Cuvin and Caraş of Banat) to bring them together with their families before the counts so as to apply upon them the measures that were bound to arrive.[94] This measure is in connection with the plan of achieving the religious unification of the Orthodox following the oath of adhesion to the Roman Church uttered at Buda by the Byzantine emperor Ioannes V, but which remained without practical consequences.[95] For the total elimination of the "schism," even through "sword and war," Bartholomew of Alverna, demanded vehemently the involvement of the "secular arm." The lay and feudal princes were to act for the annihilation of the strong-headed local Orthodox clergy and for the conversion of the common people. Around 1379 or 1380, the vicar considered the conversion also as a condition of the durability of the Hungarian kingdom: "There is also a worldly advantage [of the conversion], namely the greater durability of the kingdom on its fringes and the deeper loyalty of the people to the king and its rulers, for never shall be faithful to their rulers those who are non-believers... through the foreign faith which they share."[96] In other words, the Catholicizing of the Romanians, of the Serbs, and of the Bulgarians would also enhance the cohesion of the feudal world, based on the fidelity of the subjects to their masters. It was still Louis who, in 1366, fixed the landowners of Transylvania—*kenesii*, *iudices*, *voivodae*—when he conditioned recognition as a landowner and a noble on the Catholic religion. In the same year, after Wallachia and Moldavia had affirmed their independence from Hungary, with the aid of some Romanian leaders who had left the territories subjected to the Angevin crown (the lands of Făgăraş and Maramureş) and rebelling against this very crown, the anti-Romanian and anti-Orthodox measures

intensified. The new judicial organization of an exceptional character (28 June 1366) allowed the Hungarian nobility to "exterminate and to make nothing of the malefactors of any nation of this land, namely the Romanians."[97] Still this complex set of problems, in connection with the belonging of the Romanians to Orthodoxy, in connection with the Catholic proselytism and the existence on the outskirts of Hungary of the two free Romanian states, led to the situation in which, gradually, at the end of the 14th century and the beginning of the following one, the Romanians of Transylvania were to be barred from forming a *universitas* and excluded as an ethnic entity from amongst the nations. They ceased to be a component of the state and they ceased participating as a distinct grouping in the exercise of power, in the same manner in which the nobles, the Saxons and the Szeklers continued to do it. Only through ennoblement and Catholicization could the Romanian leaders still preserve their status, but at the price of severing themselves from the mass of their own nation. On the other hand, the Catholicization of all the "schismatics" from within the kingdom also had further important consequences, as the same Bartholomew of Alverna points out, consequences referring to the relations of these "schismatics" to their fellow nationals who had independent states on the borders of Hungary: "Many evils... will cease, evils which (they) now unconsciously commit against the Christians (Catholics) together with the ones outside the kingdom, of the same language and sect as themselves."[98] So, if the Romanians, the Serbs, and the Bulgarians in Hungary had become Catholic, then the "evils" ensuing from their ethno-linguistic and Orthodox solidarity with their free brethren would have ceased to exist. The vicar of Bosnia (as well as the Hungarian king) set forth from a theological argumentation meant to justify the conversion of the Orthodox and arrived at a political one, presented directly and explicitly. It is evident that the political reasons are more important in this entire action. The assimilation of the Orthodox believers to heretics, increasing as the religious union proved to be impossible, had also political and social consequences. King Louis' measures directed against the Romanians have an ideological justification: the "schismatic" landowners—heretics—were considered and declared *iniusti possessores* (unjust owners) and deprived of their lands, peacefully or by the instruments of the crusade. This was the punishment applied to the heretics, according to the Church canons, namely the seizure of their assets or even the theft of these assets.[99] For the special case of Transylvania, the affiliation to the Eastern Church was incompatible with landed property, with the nobility and with the adjacent privileges. Consequently, the Orthodox affiliation was enough reason for the Transylvanian and Hungarian officials to prevent Romanians from being an estate (*universitas*) as the Catholics were.

The problem that arises is to assess what was achieved out of this whole struggle, out of this whole effort extending over several centuries, greatly enhanced under the Angevins and, obviously, continued afterwards. Our analysis went no further than the time of Louis I which definitely represents a distinct stage in this sense and in connection to which an answer can be phrased, albeit a relative one. The great action of conversion carried out by the second Angevin, within the framework created by the Papacy with the aid offered by the Franciscan order, unfolded in special political-confessional conditions: the joint resistance of Wallachia and Moldavia, the conquest of Vidin by the Magyars and the journey of the emperor (*basileus*) Ioannes V to Buda, which seemed to announce the bringing towards Catholicism of the spiritual centre of the eastern world itself—Byzantium,[100] the personal Hungarian Polish union of 1370–1382 etc. Almost everything was in vain, because Catholicism was being promoted especially through political-military means, directly connected to the imposing of the sovereignty of the Hungarian kingdom or to the strengthening of this sovereignty in the places where it had already imposed itself. As a result, the refusal of accepting Catholicism by the Romanians, the Serbs, the Bosnians, the Bulgarians and others, meant, in fact, to a large extent, the rejection of the political dominion of Hungary. In fact, for the Romanians, we have precious evidence of this fact, recorded in the 14th century: in 1374, Pope Gregory XI knew that a part of the "multitude of the Romanian nation," who lived "on the fringes of the Hungarian kingdom towards the Tartars," had accepted to give up the Greek schism due to the endeavour of King Louis I; but the pontiff was also informed that, in fact, the greater majority of the Romanians of the aforementioned region had not accepted to be Catholicized, because "they are dissatisfied with the service of the Hungarian priests" and they demand a superior hierarchy, speaking the Romanian language (*qui linguam dicte nationis scire asseritur*).[101] In other words, in 1374, when Moldavia and Wallachia were simultaneously in open conflict with the Hungarian kingdom (whose sovereign had also become king of Poland, another Catholic state), east of the Carpathian Mountains there raged a confessional dispute having a political-national substratum, a dispute whose reverberations had reached the Papal Curia. The occurrence of the language as an argument of the opposition of the Romanians against the effort of conversion was regarded as strong evidence of the appearance of the nation in Romanian history.[102] We would add that the opposition of the Romanians also reflects their refusal to accept the conversion via Hungary, whose expansionist tendencies in the name of Catholicism had been obvious for a long time.

From the blockading in 1345 by Louis I of the letters sent by the Pope to the Romanian nobles (among whom Nicolas Alexander, son and heir of Basarab I, the great voivode of Wallachia), up to the ascertaining of Bartholomew of Alverna

that through Catholicization the "schismatics" from within the kingdom could be broken off from their fellow nationals from outside the kingdom (1380), we notice a continuity of the policy of the Hungarian kingdom in the area. We're talking here about the determination of King Louis I to be an obligatory intermediary between the Papacy and the Orthodox and Romanian people of his area of domination and hegemony, of assuring the conversion of the Romanians within the framework and under the aegis of the political-religious hierarchy of Hungary: the refusal of allowing the direct connection between the Romanians and the centre of Catholicism was the ecclesiastic manifestation of the effort of the Hungarian royalty to hinder the evolution of the Romanian society towards a powerful and independent statehood.[103] That is why, through the establishment of the metropolitan sees connected directly to Constantinople—the other European centre of legitimizing independent political power—the Romanians in Wallachia and Moldavia counteracted the policy of the Hungarian royalty, and the Romanians from within the Hungarian state presently subordinated themselves to this new superior Romanian hierarchy (the metropolitan bishop of Wallachia was also *exarchos* of Transylvania and of Hungary). Thus, the Catholic propaganda carried out amongst the Romanians from without the kingdom yielded no important practical results.

Nonetheless, what was the outcome of the proselytism carried out in Hungary? At a first glance, success should seem to have been noteworthy, since it is known that after Louis fought the "schismatic" countries that had risen against his sovereignty, he decided to do away with the internal "schism." A writing having a polemic character, drawn up by the Franciscan monks, sustains that, around A.D. 1380, 400,000 "schismatics" had been re-christened in the Roman rite in the course of a year; amongst them we should also see numerous Romanians—the most important mass of Orthodox populace in the kingdom.[104] But the number of 400,000 individuals converted in one year cannot be accepted (perhaps only reduced 10 times), because it comes from a source interested in exaggerating and because the precise estimates, in figures, for that period, are always doubtful. If we were to assume that Catholic proselytism in Hungary had known only 10 years as glorious as the one evoked, we would come to the number of 4 million converted Orthodox, which was greatly in excess of the then population of the kingdom, even if we admitted that this population was entirely Orthodox. Still, the assertion of this number of 400,000 individuals converted in one year indicates the great proportion of non-Catholics amongst the population of Hungary. If the historical sources could launch such an exaggerated number, it means that nobody doubted the great numbers of "schismatics" in Hungary.

Finally, for estimating the proportion of Catholics in Hungary towards the end of the 14th century there exists the pertinent text of Antonio Bonfini. The historical humanist, although he brought praise to the illustrious king, no longer had an interest in exaggerating too much. He was no longer directly involved, since he was writing, on the basis of certain sources, almost one century after these events. On the other hand, this learned scholar of the Hungarian past shows a preoccupation for truth and truthfulness. That is why he seems perfectly responsible when he states that, following the full-scale proselytiying actions of Louis, more than one third of the population of the kingdom was Catholic. We deem this assertion realistic from several standpoints. First of all, the quoted author (official historian to King Mathias Corvinus) knew in depth the confessional and ethnic situation in 15th century Hungary and it cannot be admitted that he made risky observations concerning the previous century. Secondly, he too had no interest whatsoever in minimizing the proportion of the Catholics in the kingdom; on the contrary, the text had to reflect a reign dedicated to expanding and strengthening the Catholic faith. After all, Bonfini himself belonged to this confession. Thirdly, before making the estimate as to the proportion of the Catholics, the author makes use of the phrase "according to the opinion of everyone" (*praeter omnium opinionem*), which proves that this fact was commonplace in that epoch, it was only obvious and it came as no surprise to anyone. In a country such as Hungary which, especially under Mathias Corvinus, considered itself a "gateway to Christianity," it would have been more than imprudent for an official historian of the Court to use in such an official work proportions that could overshadow the glory of a king whom the successors called "the Great." We cannot but admit that for the contemporaries of this king, as for the spirits of the 15th century, the proportion of over one third Catholics in Hungary was natural and it satisfied the pride of a kingdom of missionary ambitions, having the role of an outpost of the Western Christian faith. Fourthly, the entire historical evolution of medieval Hungary brings to light a policy of inclusion into the state of as many foreign territories, peoples and populations as possible, with different languages, customs and confessions. In accordance with this picture offered by the sources, medieval Hungary was a multinational and multiconfessional state, in which the dominant nation (from a political point of view), along with the Western Christian faith, especially after 1204 and with renewed intensity under the Angevins, made progressive efforts of consolidating its status. The results of this long-term effort, organized and coordinated by the royalty, in collaboration with the Papacy and with certain monastic orders (but carried out more often than not through unsuitable means and pushed towards ends having nothing to do with the faith) show that, at the end of the reign of Louis I, over

one third of the inhabitants of the kingdom belonged to the Catholic Church. A series of other sources only come in support of Bonfini, as it has been seen, since entire provinces and countries of the kingdom appear as non-Magyar and non-Catholic. As far as Transylvania is concerned, the proportion of Catholics must have been at least equal to the kingdom's average, but there is evidence that they were less numerous. For instance, in 1356, Transylvania was looked upon by the Pope as a "heretic" (Orthodox) province a fact which reveals the overwhelming mass of Romanians which conferred a distinctive personality to the voivodate of Transylvania even from the time of the Romanian duke Gelou. Bonfini's fragment also auggests that, although the Jews had been driven out, the Cumans continued to have pagan customs, and the inhabitants of Bosnia and of Slavonia continued to be "heretics." Along with the Orthodox, they enhanced the mass of non-Catholics in the kingdom.

Conclusions

The assimilation of the non-Magyar groups and the peoples that were to be found on the territory of medieval Hungary was only a minor-scale undertaking up to 1400, for a number of reasons: the relatively small number of Hungarian conquerors in relation to the territory that they took under their domination and even to the populations found on this territory; the unfolding of the lives of these populations and peoples, as well as of the majority of the groups, colonized later in closed communities, well-defined geographically and institutionally; the colonization of a great number of foreign populations, which, in some areas, along with the pre-Magyars, formed the majority of inhabitants; the bestowing of certain generous privileges upon the colonists and the recognition, following some vehement protests, complaints, and requests, of some of the old freedoms of the pre-Magyar locals[105]; the successful efforts of homogenizing (which led towards Magyarization) only in the case of a part of the elite of the non-Magyar inhabitants an elite that accounted for an infinitesimal proportion of the population, but which appeared with priority in the written sources; the existence of certain long standing traditions of culture and sedentary civilization with the majority of these peoples and populations, traditions which, if not incompatible, were very different from those of the Magyars, at least until the 11th century, and in some instances, the differences were preserved even after the Hungarians had become sedentary, Christian and "Western." In this sense, enlightening is the case of the Magyar language, a Finno-Ugric language of the larger group of Ural-Altaic languages, totally different from the European

Latin, Slavic, Germanic, and Greek etc., languages and very difficult to learn. Of course, Catholicization increased somewhat the number of Magyarophones but this process still comprises only a part of the elites, which amounted to very little, on the one hand, and which did not automatically and presently imply the abandon of the mother-tongue. Only the Reformation, after the 16th century, acted more decisively in this direction. Catholicism could no longer contain the common people (the masses) who already had a faith of their own (a Christian one, generally speaking), because it had used unsuitable, often violent means, it had been expressed in languages unknown to the subjects, it had brought to the foreground political and economic aims, it pretended the ecclesiastic tithe from the newly converted, against the instructions etc. On the other hand, the Romanians, the Serbs, the Bulgarians, the Ruthenians etc., that is, the great Orthodox masses in the kingdom, had, outside the borders of medieval Hungary, the substantial support of their fellow nationals, of the same language and confession, who had formed their own and often powerful states belonging to the sphere of Byzantine spirituality.

All these made Hungary preserve it heterogeneous structure, in spite of the homogenizing policy promoted especially by the Angevins. In recent papers, it is estimated that about A.D. 1500, Hungary had 4 million inhabitants,[106] which we deem slightly exaggerated. But let us nevertheless admit that the number is real. At the time of their invasion of Pannonia, the Hungarians must have amounted, as we have seen, to about 100,000–120,000 people. If at the end of the Middle Ages the kingdom had 4 million inhabitants, of which more than 3 million were Magyars, as claimed of late,[107] it means that the Magyar population grew about 30 times over in about half a millennium, something that happened nowhere in Europe at that time. It follows that both the demographic data (scarce as they are) and the ethno-confessional ones lead us to the conclusion that, without the possibility of specifying the exact number of inhabitants in absolute figures, the proportion of the non-Magyars and non-Catholics in medieval Hungary constantly remained more important than that of the Magyars and Catholics. Whole provinces, such as Slovakia, Croatia, Dalmatia, Bosnia, Sirmium, Voivodina, Transylvania, Banat, Crişana, Maramureş, the area inhabited by the Cumans etc., are constantly presented in different sources such as Slavic, Romanian, "schismatic," or "heretical." The towns were, as we have seen, mostly German. It follows that the ethnic and confessional image of medieval Hungary, although modified by the Reformation and then by the Counter reformation, does not differ essentially from the one outlined before the First World War, when the "minorities" officially accounted for more than half of the entire population. In other words, these "minorities" have always represented a major-

ity, whence the lack of viability of the kingdom that inherited the tradition of the "holy crown" of Saint Stephen.

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Notes

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Abstract

Testimonies on the Ethno-Confessional Structure of Medieval Transylvania and Hungary (9th–14th centuries)

During its whole medieval existence, Hungary preserved its heterogeneous structure, in spite of the homogenizing policy promoted especially by the Angevins. In recent papers it is estimated that around A.D. 1500 Hungary had 4 million inhabitants, which we deem slightly exaggerated. But let us nevertheless admit that the number is real. At the time of their invasion Pannonia, the Hungarians must have amounted to about 100,000–120,000 people. If at the end of the Middle Ages the kingdom had 4 million inhabitants, of which more than 3 million were Magyars, as claimed of late, it means that the Magyar population grew about 30 times in about half a millennium, something happened nowhere in Europe at that time. It follows that both the demographic data (scarce as they are) and the ethno-confessional ones lead us to the conclusion that, without the possibility of specifying the exact number of inhabitants in absolute figures, the proportion of non-Magyars and non-Catholics in medieval Hungary constantly remained more important than that of Magyars and Catholics. Whole provinces, such as Slovakia, Croatia, Dalmatia, Bosnia, Sirmium, Voivodina, Transylvania, Banat, Crişana, Maramureş, the area inhabitded by the Cumans etc., are constantly presented in different sources such as Slavic, Romanian, "schismatic," or "heretical." The towns were, as we have seen, mostly German. It follows that the ethnic and confessional image of medieval Hungary, although modified by the Reformation and then by the Counter reformation, does not differ essentially from the one outlined before the First World War, when the "minorities" officially accounted for more than a half of the entire population. In other words, these "minorities" have always represented a majority, whence the lack of viability of the kingdom that inherited the tradition of the "holy crown" of Saint Stephen.

Keyword

Hungary, Transylvania, medieval ethnic and confessional structure, majority and minority, acceptance and exclusion