

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

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Abstract:

During its whole medieval existence, Hungary preserved its heterogeneous structure, in spite of the homogenization especially by the Angevins. In recent papers it is estimated that around A.D. 1500 Hungary had 4 million inhabitants, slightly exaggerated. But let us nevertheless admit that the number is real. At the time of their invasion Pannonia must have amounted to about 100,000-120,000 people. If at the end of the Middle Ages the kingdom had 4 million, which more than 3 million were Magyars, as claimed of late, it means that the Magyar population grew about 30 times a millennium, something happened nowhere in Europe at that time. It follows that both the demographic data (and the ethno-confessional ones lead us to the conclusion that, without the possibility of specifying the exact numbers in absolute figures, the proportion of non-Magyars and non-Catholics in medieval Hungary constantly remained less than that of Magyars and Catholics. Whole provinces, such as Slovakia, Croatia, Dalmatia, Bosnia, Sirmium, Voivodina, Banat, Crișana, Maramureș, the area inhabited by the Cumans etc., are constantly presented in different sources as "Romanian," "schismatic," or "heretical." The towns were, as we have seen, mostly German. It follows that the ethno-confessional image of medieval Hungary, although modified by the Reformation and then by the Counter Reformation, differs essentially from the one outlined before the First World War, when the "minorities" officially accounted for less than 10% of the entire population. In other words, these "minorities" have always represented a majority, whence the lack of a homogeneous kingdom that inherited the tradition of the "holy crown" of Saint Stephen.

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