

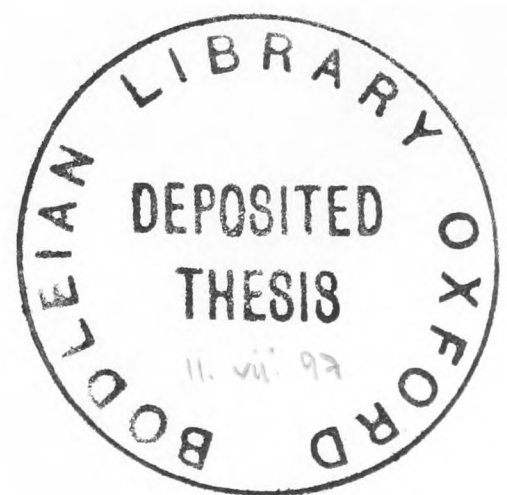
INTERNATIONAL CALVINISM AND THE REFORMED CHURCH
OF HUNGARY AND TRANSYLVANIA, 1613-1658

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the department of Modern History
at the University of Oxford,
Hilary Term 1996

by

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many thanks to the Department of Education for Northern Ireland for their financial support over the past three years, and to my supervisor Prof. Robert Evans for his wise guidance and encouragement. Thanks to all those in universities, archives and libraries in Britain, Hungary and Transylvania without whose assistance this thesis would not have been possible. Thanks also to many friends who helped to keep me going in Belfast, at Brasenose, and in Hungary and Transylvania, especially to all at the Reformed Theological Institute in Kolozsvár where the whole idea started, and to Froukje and Rušica for being true friends. Most of all thanks to my family to whom this thesis is dedicated with much love.

1 Corinthians I:25 "...the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength"

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**INTERNATIONAL CALVINISM AND THE REFORMED CHURCH
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OXFORD D.PHIL, HILARY 1996**

SHORT ABSTRACT

**GRAEME MURDOCK
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The Reformed church in Hungary and Transylvania had extensive connections with western Calvinist churches during the early seventeenth century, and became more closely linked with co-religionists abroad during this period. In this thesis I shall examine the ideology and shared interests of this international Calvinist community, and assess the significant impact which contacts with fellow Calvinists beyond Hungary's borders had on the development of the Hungarian Reformed church. The early seventeenth century saw increasing numbers of Hungarian student ministers travel to western Reformed universities, western Calvinist teachers travel to work in Hungarian schools, and the transfer and translation of foreign Reformed theological works for use in Hungary and Transylvania. This pattern of broad engagement with western Europe heavily influenced the development of education in the Reformed schools of Hungary and Transylvania, as well as the forms of worship and ceremony adopted by the Hungarian Reformed church.

Godly princes, godly gentlemen and clergy were partners in the building-up of the Reformed church of Hungary and Transylvania. The church was indeed reliant in the early seventeenth century on patronage and support from a series of Reformed Transylvanian princes, and from Hungarian nobles. The continuing commitment of these parties to further religious reformation in the region was challenged by some Reformed ministers who, inspired by their experience of Calvinist churches abroad, sought to introduce presbyterial government and reforms of church ceremony and discipline, an agenda dubbed locally as Puritanism.

International Calvinist contacts however largely served to bolster the theological orthodoxy of the Reformed community of Hungary and Transylvania against its confessional rivals, invigorating the Reformed church's zeal to defend its position with a stridently anti-Catholic ideology. Comparisons with other Reformed churches reinforced commitment in Hungary to tighten standards of discipline with an ethos of morality which was distinctively Reformed. International Calvinism therefore assisted the Reformed confessionalisation of Transylvania and eastern Hungary in the early seventeenth century. However the ties binding Transylvania with the rest of the Calvinist world in this period also encouraged Transylvania's princes to adopt a diplomatic policy of Protestant cooperation tinged with apocalyptic ideas, which was ultimately to jeopardise the stability of the principality and the place of Reformed religion in east-central Europe.

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ABSTRACT

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The aim of this thesis is to examine the Reformed church of Hungary and Transylvania in the early seventeenth century, and to consider the church's growing relationship with fellow Calvinists beyond Hungary's borders. I shall outline the ideology and shared interests of the international Calvinist community, and assess the importance of contacts between Hungarian ministers and teachers, and western Calvinists on the development of Reformed religion in Hungary and Transylvania. The Reformation and the growth of the Reformed church had profound significance for Hungary and Transylvania, with enduring political consequences for Transylvania's role in Europe, alongside changes to local religious institutions and to the practice of religion and piety amongst ordinary Hungarians. The Reformed church in Hungary and Transylvania has been undeservedly ignored by western historians, whilst Hungarian studies have often lacked an appreciation of the wider questions at stake. This study will therefore set out the major issues of church-building which confronted the Hungarian church during the early seventeenth century, directly comparable with the experience of Calvinist churches elsewhere and with extensive bonds linking the Hungarian Reformed church to the international Calvinist community. This thesis therefore seeks to contribute to the study of Hungarian history and European Calvinism in the early modern period.

Transylvania became more closely wedded to Reformed religion during the early seventeenth century, as the orthodox and public church of the Transylvanian state. Reformed church-building in early seventeenth century Transylvania formed one part of a Europe-wide pattern of consolidation of territorial princes'

powers, and of the position of the confessions which they supported. Reformed ideology was at the heart of early seventeenth century Transylvanian public life, and had aims and values which can be identified as held in common with Calvinists across the continent. Calvinist ecclesiology envisaged a supra-national community of true believers, joined together by shared doctrine, and by opposition to the forces of the Papal anti-Christ. This essential unity was expressed by advocates of a Reformed, or a pan-Protestant, confessional policy to defeat the Papacy, and led to international alliances in which Transylvania played a significant role during the early seventeenth century. The force of this Reformed ideology was experienced by the Caroline regime in England, a victim of the political consequences of being seen to repudiate the aim of creating a godly commonwealth at home and abroad. Transylvania's princes feared similarly dire results when Puritans, the storm-troopers of further reformation, were identified in the Hungarian church from the 1630s. I shall therefore also address the importance of Hungarian Puritanism, and the commitment within the Hungarian church to further reformation.

[chapter 1] In this chapter I shall trace the progress of the Reformed church in Hungary and Transylvania from a late sixteenth century Reformation, with the slow building-up of Reformed congregations across this region. By the early seventeenth century the Transylvanian principality had emerged as a semi-independent, and Reformed dominated state. The patronage and support of a series of Transylvanian princes was central to the success of Calvinist church-building at the height of this confessional age. I shall contrast the greater advances made by the Reformed church in Transylvania and eastern Hungary, with the weaker position of Protestants in Habsburg and Ottoman Hungary.

The building-up of a Calvinist church in Hungary and Transylvania was supported by an expanding network of local academies and schools, and I shall examine the efforts of lay patrons and the clergy hierarchy to improve standards of education for student ministers. By the early seventeenth century the Reformed church in Hungary and Transylvania had developed a territorial church structure with a solidifying hierarchy of

elected bishops and archdeacons. I shall detail the strengthening of this church order, with only very limited involvement for ordinary lay members in church government during this period through the slow establishment of some presbyteries.

[chapter 2] In the early seventeenth century the Hungarian Reformed church had increasing contact with co-religionists in western Europe. Indeed for international Calvinist alliances to be effective, activists in participating countries needed to remain in close contact with one another, and this was often achieved through cosmopolitan Reformed educational centres. Transylvania was influenced by such direct educational links with the international Calvinist community, as well as playing its part in shaping that community. Transylvania's princes, nobles, and town councils financed Reformed student ministers to study abroad at universities in Germany, the Dutch Republic, and England.

I shall set out the favoured destinations of Hungarian Reformed students across this period, and suggest what impact was made on Hungarian and Transylvanian student ministers by study in such universities as Heidelberg, Leiden, Franeker and Utrecht, and by periods of residence in London. I shall emphasise that contact with the main academic centres of international Calvinism on the whole buttressed the orthodoxy of the Hungarian Reformed church, stimulating polemic attacks on competing confessions in the region. Increasing contact with western co-religionists came primarily through this peregrination of Hungarian clergy westward, but was reinforced by the transfer in the other direction of recent western Calvinist literature, and of illustrious foreign Protestants escaping more troubled regions for the relative security of early seventeenth century Transylvania.

[chapter 3] I shall highlight the important influence of one group of leading Protestant theologians and teachers on the Reformed church in Hungary and Transylvania. (Johann Alsted, Johann Bisterfeld, Jan Comenius, John Dury, and Samuel Hartlib) I shall chart the major impact which they made on clergy training, and on the development of Reformed education in Hungary

and Transylvania through their teaching in local schools, publication of text-books, and efforts to reform patterns of learning on the basis of Christian encyclopedism. I shall also examine the careers of János Tolnai Dali and János Apáczai Csere, as Hungarians took up the cause of further reformation in education. The pattern of intellectual communication between such leading Reformed personalities, and the educational and religious interests which they shared, reveal much about the priorities of the international Calvinist community and about Transylvania's role in that community during this period.

[chapter 4] Local inter-denominational arrangements in Transylvania and Hungary fell somewhere between toleration and confessional absolutism. By the early seventeenth century traditions in Transylvania of accepting religious differences, were increasingly challenged by ties of confessional loyalty. I shall survey the growth during this period of open polemic conflict between Reformed dominated Transylvania and eastern Hungary, and Habsburg and Catholic dominated western Hungary. I shall also chart the rise in tension between the Reformed church and Transylvania's anti-Trinitarians and Sabbatarians, as connections grew between the Reformed community in Transylvania and co-religionists in the rest of Europe. A more complicated relationship developed between the Reformed and Lutheran churches of this region, with irenic appeals made towards Lutherans, alongside continuing inter-confessional rivalry and doctrinal disputes. I shall also examine issues surrounding the Reformed mission to the Eastern Orthodox population of Transylvania.

[chapter 5] The identity of the Hungarian Reformed church was constructed on an initial acceptance of Reformed statements of faith, with alterations then made to liturgy, the sacraments, and to patterns of religious life in the region. In the light of international contacts with foreign Calvinists, I shall highlight support in the early seventeenth century Hungarian church for a more practical theology, and the concentration by some ministers on the importance of personal piety. I shall trace the contribution of Albert Szenczi Molnár in providing many of the building block texts of Reformed religious worship, and trace the

arguments which developed between those committed to traditional practices, and those wishing to make further changes to liturgy and ceremony under the banner of Christian freedom. These arguments will be illuminated by describing the issues at stake in debates amongst the Reformed clergy during this period over the conduct of communion and baptism, public prayer, homiletics and church music.

[chapter 6] A minority of Hungarian student ministers were inspired by their experiences of foreign Calvinist churches to demand further reforms of the church in Hungary and Transylvania. The Hungarian church hierarchy reacted defensively, recognising a potential threat to church order, and acted to protect established orthodoxy. I shall trace the conflicts which developed over innovation and innovatory opinions, and attempts to limit and control contacts with western co-religionists. Supporters of presbyteries posed a challenge to the traditional episcopal order, and I shall examine how growing debates over these issues led to party labelling amongst the clergy (Puritans, Presbyterians, and Independents).

I shall detail the use of Puritan as a term of abuse in the Hungarian church, and the efforts of János Tolnai Dali and his supporters in north-eastern Hungary, identified as Puritans, to reform church practices. I shall also look at arguments between Transylvanian bishop István Geleji Katona and Pál Medgyesi, over Medgyesi's campaign to supplant the regime of archdeacons and superintendents with presbyterial church government. I shall examine how this debate became entangled with court parties, so that reform-minded clergy came to be viewed by the Transylvanian prince as a possible political threat in the 1650s.

[chapter 7] Commitment in Hungary and Transylvania to the imposition and tightening of Reformed discipline in the early seventeenth century is directly comparable with equivalent processes in other European Reformed churches. I shall emphasise that in Hungary, as elsewhere, a distinctively Reformed ethos of discipline emerged in the offences concentrated on by the clergy, the form of punishments which were handed out, and the institutions through which discipline was exercised. I shall look

at two areas as examples, Zemplén county and the town of Kiskomárom, to establish the pattern of Reformed discipline in Hungary, and the importance during this period of a Reformed church programme to control swearing, drinking, arguments and fighting, and immorality connected with sex and marriage.

I shall show that public shaming was seen by the church and lay authorities as the key element of punishment, with determined efforts by the clergy hierarchy to gain the co-operation of local lay elites to punish offenders severely. The Reformed church also applied its own range of spiritual punishments against wrongdoers leading ultimately to excommunication of the unrepentant. Reformed visitations became semi-inquisitions into local religious and moral life during this period, although the effectiveness of such moral supervision will be questioned. I shall also examine the impact of presbyteries, and the disciplinary agenda of supporters of presbyteries, on the imposition of discipline in the Hungarian church.

[chapter 8] The Reformed clergy of Hungary and Transylvania emerged in the early seventeenth century as a well disciplined elite, visibly different from other orders. Regulations stipulated appropriate behaviour and public activities for ministers and students alike with strict controls on their dress. I shall suggest that this increased separation of the Reformed clergy from their surrounding communities was essential to any success in their crusade against popular immorality in Hungary and Transylvania.

The relationship between Transylvania's princes, Reformed noble patrons and clergy was decisive in shaping commitment in the Hungarian church to further reformation. I shall outline the efforts of Reformed discipliners to shape the attitudes of Transylvania's princes and Hungarian Reformed noble patrons towards sin and discipline. During this period Reformed princes in Transylvania were given an idealised role as godly magistrates by the Reformed clergy, and there was a powerful concentration on the motifs of Biblical Israel and Old Testament kings. Israel was a common and significant image in the international Calvinist world which could represent both a godly commonwealth, and the universal true church. Meanwhile increased disciplinary zeal

amongst Reformed ministers affected their relationship both with local noble patrons and with their congregations. I shall examine the importance of godly gentlemen in the Hungarian Reformed church, especially in conflicts which arose between ministers and nobles on prerogatives about disciplining, and between the clergy and their congregations over the payment of incomes, and the exercise of ministers' responsibilities.

[chapter 9] During this period there was consistent Reformed advocacy of a confessionally based foreign policy, which was to affect significantly Transylvania's involvement in the Thirty Years War. I shall stress the influence of apocalyptic notions on Reformed Transylvania and its princes, whilst recognising that godly princes were capable of successfully combining their own interests with the demands of a pious Protestant conscience. I shall outline the spread of apocalyptic and millenarian ideas in the Hungarian Reformed church, with a widespread belief in the imminence of the end of the world, and in the possibility of a thousand year rule by Christ before the Last Judgement.

Transylvania's participation in the Swedish invasion of Poland in 1657, was powerfully affected by notions of an apocalyptic destiny for Reformed Transylvania. Reformed ideology also proved able to offer explanations for the disastrous results of the venture by II.György Rákóczi into Poland. A critical and pessimistic mood in the late 1650s identified the failures of church and state to reform morality, wipe out idolatry, and push through plans and projects for further reformation as the causes of divine displeasure, Transylvanian defeat, and the reverses suffered by the Reformed church in the second half of the seventeenth century. The Transylvanian state emerged weakened from the Polish crisis of the late 1650s, and I will suggest that whilst international Calvinism was a sustaining and formative ideology and support for Transylvania, it also encouraged Transylvania's clergy and princes to aspire to grander European designs than the principality's limited resources could support.

PREFACE

All the Hungarian names cited in this thesis will appear with the Christian name first and family name second. Thus, Gábor Bethlen rather than Bethlen Gábor, and István Miskolczi Csulyak rather than Miskolczi Csulyak István. The spelling of many Hungarian family names can be somewhat problematic, and I shall stick consistently to my preferences; eg. Zsuzsanna Lórántffy, Albert Szenczi Molnár, Zsigmond Rákóczi etc. Quotations from early modern Hungarian have been kept to a minimum, but where cited the often erratic original spelling will be faithfully reproduced except where the meaning is obscured. All the names of towns in Hungary and Transylvania will be given in their Hungarian form. German, Slovak and Romanian equivalents for large towns in northern Hungary, eastern Hungary, and Transylvania are given below:

Gyulafehérvár	Alba Iulia- Weissenburg
Kolozsvár	Cluj- Klausenburg
Nagyvárad	Oradea- Grosswardein
Marosvásárhely	Târgu Mureş
Székelyudvarhely	Odorhei Secuiesc
Kassa	Košice
Dés	Dej
Torda	Turda
Szatmár	Satu Mare
Pozsony	Bratislava- Pressburg
Nagyenyed	Aiud

CHRONOLOGY AND LEADING CHARACTERS

THE TRANSYLVANIAN PRINCES

1604-1606	István Bocskai
1606-1608	Zsigmond Rákóczi
1608-1613	Gábor Báthori
1613-1629	Gábor Bethlen
1629-1630	Catherine of Brandenburg
1630	István Bethlen
1630-1648	I.György Rákóczi
1648-1657/8	II.György Rákóczi
1657	Ferenc Rhédei
1658-1661	Ákos Barcsai
1661-1662	János Kemény

REFORMED SUPERINTENDENTS, ARCHDEACONS, CHAPLAINS AND TEACHERS IN HUNGARY AND TRANSYLVANIA

1604-1613	Lukács Hodászi (superintendent- Eastern Tisza)
1605-1618	Mihály Tasnádi Ruber (superintendent- Transylvania)
1612-1628	István Pathai (superintendent- Western Danubia)
1618-1633	János Keserői Dajka (superintendent- Transylvania)
1622-1652	János Samarjai (superintendent- Upper Danubia)
1629-1638	Johann Alsted (Gyulafehérvár academy)
1629-1655	Johann Bisterfeld (Gyulafehérvár academy)
1629-1641	János Kanizsai Pálfi (superintendent- Western Danubia)
1629-1641	István Keresszegi (superintendent- Eastern Tisza)
1629-1645	István Miskolczi Csulyak (archdeacon- Zemplén)
1633-1649	István Geleji Katona (superintendent- Transylvania)
1638-1648	Pál Medgyesi (chaplain to I.György Rákóczi)
1646-1649	János Tolnai Dali (chaplain to Zsigmond Rákóczi)
1650-1660	György Csulai (superintendent- Transylvania)
1650-1654	Jan Comenius (Sárospatak school)
1655-1658	Isaac Basire (Gyulafehérvár academy)

ABBREVIATIONS

DREL	Dunántúl Református Egyházkerület Levéltára (Pápa)
<u>EPK</u>	Erdélyi Protestáns Közlöny
<u>ETA</u>	Erdélyi Történelmi Adattár
<u>ÉTTK</u>	Értekezések a Történelmi Tudományok Köréből
Hartl.	Hartlib Papers (H50), Sheffield University
<u>ITK</u>	Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények
MOL	Magyar Országos Levéltár (Budapest)
<u>MPEA</u>	Magyar Protestáns Egyháztörténeti Adattár
<u>MPEIF</u>	Magyar Protestáns Egyházi és Iskolai Figyelmező
<u>MPEF</u>	Magyar Protestáns Egyházi és Iskolai Figyelő
<u>PEIL</u>	Protestáns Egyházi és Iskolai Lap
<u>RMK</u>	Régi Magyar Könyvtár
SNK	Tiszáninneni Református Egyházkerület Nagykönyvtára (Sárospatak)
<u>TT</u>	Történelmi Tár
ZEP	Zempléni Egyházmegye Protocolluma

Introduction

INTRODUCTION: INTERNATIONAL CALVINISM

International Calvinism can hardly be dismissed as a historical cliché, nor merely as a product of contemporary propaganda and a figment of Catholic imagination, since there was a solid basis to the elusive sense of Calvinists' solidarity of purpose in the early modern period. The Reformation's second wind of Calvinism grew rapidly from its origins in Swiss citadels, to France, the Netherlands, Scotland, territories in Germany, Hungary and other areas of central Europe. Calvinism quickly became an international religion, although Reformed churches were surviving almost everywhere in threatened circumstances. Calvinism proved flexible in adversity, adapting to some unpromising surroundings from the oral culture of the Gaelic Highlands of Scotland, to Transylvanian society on the frontier of Christian Europe. A sufficiently coherent core of shared doctrine, confessional statements and organisation was nevertheless retained to sustain sentiment between Reformed churches of belonging to a recognisably international movement.¹

Reformed churches indeed exhibited expressions of international Calvinist solidarity. From mutual recognition of doctrinal confessions there followed attendance by Reformed student ministers from across the Calvinist world to study together at cosmopolitan academic centres such as Geneva, Heidelberg, Leiden and Utrecht. The establishment of Reformed

¹ A.Pettegree, A.Duke and G.Lewis(eds), Calvinism in Europe 1540-1620 (Cambridge, 1994); M.Prestwich(ed.), International Calvinism, 1541-1715 (Oxford, 1985).

religion in Hungary and Transylvania opened a period of extensive contacts with the international Calvinist community in the early seventeenth century, and the role of Hungarians and Transylvanians at these western Reformed universities will be examined further in chapter 2. Fraternal relations were also fostered between Calvinists by a shared experience of mistreatment at the hands of confessional opponents, and by the common threat of persecution. Financial support was extended by local Reformed communities for displaced refugees to set up churches in their new homes. This international network of professors, ministers, churches and peoples, extended on occasions to include princes as well. Calvinist princes were encouraged to develop a policy of international Protestant co-operation against sources of oppression, predominantly perceived to be the Habsburgs as the prime agents of the Catholic church. Diplomatic and military plans for Protestant union were however repeatedly thwarted in this period by the failure of French monarchs to live up to expectations, and without whose support grandiose plans against the Habsburgs proved to be completely impractical.

Reformed church building, the second stage of Reformation or 'second reformation', the late sixteenth century consolidation of Lutheran churches, and the Counter-Reformation of the Catholic church have been seen as part of one process of religious renewal in early modern Europe in three parallel, although different confessional guises. Reforms took place during this period in Protestant and Catholic churches alike, and the formation of tighter regulations on doctrine and discipline ran everywhere

alongside the centralising tendencies of early modern states. Church and state were indeed partners in the exercise of social control and the process of state-building, with the power of the state essential to any success in renovating religious life.² Certainly the building-up of Reformed churches across Europe was marked by intensive efforts to impose high standards of theological orthodoxy and moral discipline. Reformed churches were however generally opposed to exercising control through episcopal regimes or clergy hierarchies, rather favouring governing lay presbyteries and clergy synods. Depicted by their opponents as democrats and radicals, Calvinists did indeed oppose some rulers of different religions, as in the Netherlands and France. However Reformed churches worked wherever possible in partnership with lay authority, a buttress to civil power rather than a challenge to it. In Brandenburg for example a Calvinist court tried to impose reform on predominantly Lutheran estates, and Calvinism was espoused at the courts of other German princes, and by seigneurs in France.

Calvinists believed that their church alone was the true inheritor of the traditions of the early church, and that they held a monopoly on doctrinal truth. The ideology of Reformed religion proposed that the work of the first reformation had not yet been brought to completion. Abraham Scultetus, when court

² H.Schilling, 'Confessionalization in the Empire: Religious and Societal Change in Germany between 1555 and 1620' and 'The Second Reformation- Problems and Issues' in Religion, Political Culture and the Emergence of Early Modern Society (Leiden, 1992), pp.205-301; R.Po-Chia Hsia, Social Discipline in the Reformation: Central Europe 1550-1750 (London, 1989); A.Pettegree, 'The Clergy and the Reformation: from 'devilish priesthood' to new professional elite', in A.Pettegree(ed.), The Reformation of the Parishes (Manchester, 1993), pp.1-22.

preacher to Johann Sigismund, the Hohenzollern Calvinist convert from Lutheranism, declared that now "the leftover papal dung is to be swept completely out of Christ's stable".³ The work of further reformation by Calvinist churches was marked by such determination to wage a continuing war on superstition and immorality, to become detached from sacramental Lutheran theology, and to advance a strident anti-Catholicism. The standard Calvinist identification of the Pope as Antichrist, gave the Reformed church a clear and common enemy. Reformed ideology stressed the need to complete the reformation of Christian theology, worship, doctrine and church practices, and to effect above all a 'reformation of life' through the exercise of church and community discipline. Whilst all the major confessions wished to impose orthodox standards of belief and upright behaviour on reticent and often unwilling adherents, the distinctive mark of Reformed church-building was its particular agenda of a thorough-going reform of language, dress, drinking, sexual morality, and behaviour on the Sabbath and at festivals, and its emphasis on the administrative mechanisms needed to achieve these goals. The pattern of discipline which the Reformed church attempted to impose in Hungary and Transylvania will be addressed in chapter 7.

The Reformed church and Calvinists could therefore present a dour image to the world as harsh disciplinarians fiercely

³ H.J.Cohn, 'The Territorial Princes in Germany's Second Reformation, 1559-1622' in M.Prestwich(ed.), International Calvinism 1541-1715 (Oxford, 1985), pp.135-165; B.Nischan, 'The Second Reformation in Brandenburg: Aims and Goals' in The Sixteenth Century Journal 14 (1983), pp.173-187; B.Nischan, Prince, People and Confession. The Second Reformation in Brandenburg (Philadelphia, 1994).

maintaining doctrinal orthodoxy. Behind this public face however lay a private world of more exotic religious and philosophical interests, also central to the beliefs of early modern Calvinists. Religious reform was at the centre of Calvinist ideology, and questions of renewal and regeneration were at the heart of early modern Calvinism, made manifest in Reformed religion in such guises as Puritanism, pre-pietism, mysticism, attachment to alchemical projects, Christian encyclopedism, interest in the 'brothers of the rosy cross', and apocalyptic expectancy. I shall also consider the importance of such elements in examining what international Calvinism stood for, and the role of the Reformed church of Hungary and Transylvania in the early seventeenth century international Calvinist community.

THE REFORMED CHURCH OF HUNGARY AND TRANSYLVANIA

(i) The Hungarian Reformation, and the Establishment of
Reformed Religion in Hungary and Transylvania

The early modern principality of Transylvania was a semi-independent vassal of the Ottomans, lodged somewhat precariously between Habsburg-ruled western Hungary, the more directly subjugated Ottoman territories of central and southern Hungary, and Romanian principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia. The writ of Transylvania's ruling princes in the early seventeenth century ran from the eastern Carpathian mountains, to the plains and semi-independent market towns of the eastern partium of the Hungarian kingdom, and into periodic control of counties in north-eastern Hungary. The rump of Hungarian counties under Habsburg control extended in an arc towards this contested north-eastern area.¹ The catastrophic collapse of the medieval Hungarian kingdom after the battle of Mohács in 1526 had left Hungary divided territorially and politically, and also accelerated religion division with the decimation of Catholic

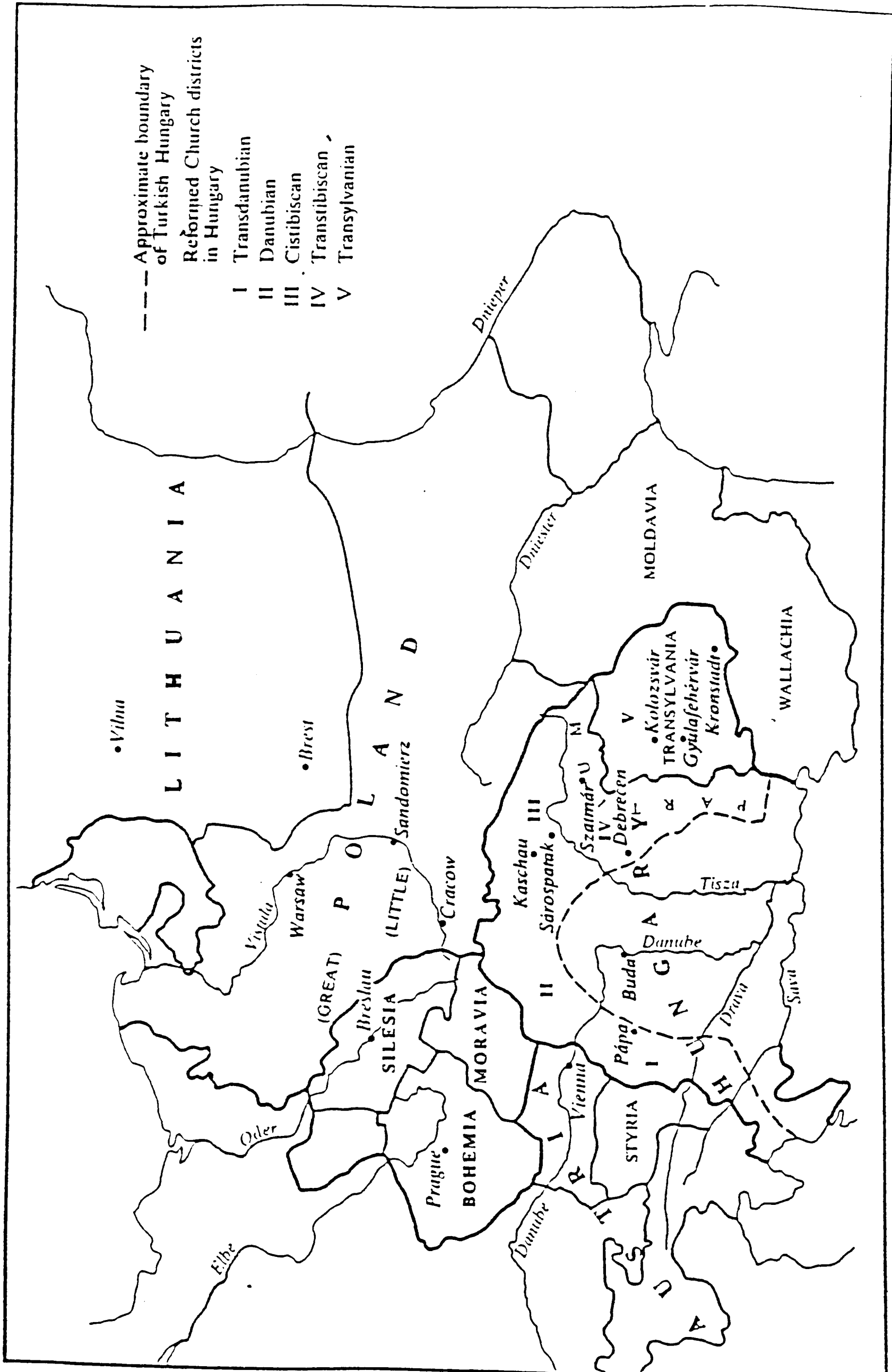
¹ See P.Zs.Pach(ed.), Magyarország története (10 vols.), vol.3/1-2, 1526-1686, A.R.Várkonyi(ed.), (Budapest, 1987); B.Köpeczi(ed.), Erdély története (3 vols.), vol.2, 1606-1830 L.Makkai, Z.Szász(eds.), (Budapest, 1988); published in English as The History of Transylvania (Budapest, 1994); K.Benda(ed.), Magyarország történeti kronológiája (3 vols.), vol.2, 1526-1848, (Budapest, 1989); R.J.W.Evans, The Making of the Habsburg Monarchy, 1550-1700 (Oxford, 1979); the chronicle of János Szalárdi, Síralmas magyar krónika (ed.)F.Szakaly, (Budapest, 1980).

church structures in war-affected areas. Abandonment of Catholic religion amongst the Hungarian nobility from the 1570s was not marked by a wave of anti-clericalism, but rather a mood in favour of 'purified' and reformed religion in the face of apocalyptic signs of divine judgement against Hungary, which the Turkish invasion and ongoing occupation was seen to entail.²

Protestant ideas and heterodox doctrinal opinions spread to Hungary from the 1520s, with those of roughly Lutheran origin first to make an impact. Direct contact with Wittenberg ensured that German towns in the region were the most quickly affected, and by 1550 the church of Transylvania's Saxons decided to adopt Lutheran reforms. The proposed reformation of religion which was offered, proved attractive to German and non-German peoples alike, but whilst German and Slav communities tended to adhere to Lutheranism, Hungarians were drawn to adopt Calvinist confessions. From the 1550s Hungarian towns began to be influenced by the progress of Protestantism, with reform-minded individuals encouraging the spread of Reformed or Calvinistic ideas, despite limited links with Swiss reformers.³

² Idolatry was seen to be at the root of divine displeasure by Gáspár Heltai, Két könyv minden országoknak és királyoknak jó és gonosz szerencséjeknek okairól (Debrecen, 1563), RMK 1/52; (RMK is a reference catalogue of old Hungarian books, giving details of each volume and where it may be consulted.) Mihály Sztárai, História a zsidó Ákháb királynak bálványozásáról; written in 1549, (Debrecen, 1619), RMK 1/490; G.Kathona, Károlyi Gáspár történelmi világképe (Debrecen, 1943); I.Révész, 'Debrecen lelki válsága 1561-1571' in ÉTTK 25/6 (Budapest, 1936).

³ Pál Debreceni Ember, Historia Ecclesiae Reformatae, in Hungaria et Transylvania (Utrecht, 1728), F.A. Lampe(pub.), pp.51-558; Péter Bod, Historia Hungarorum Ecclesiastica (Leiden, 1888/9), L.W.E.Rauwenhoff(pub.), book 2, pp.264-350, and book 3; Péter Bod, Magyar Athenas avagy az erdélyben és magyarországon élt tudós emberek... (1766), in I.Torda(ed.), Bod Péter válogatott művei (Budapest, 1982), pp.237-459; J.Zoványi, A



--- Approximate boundary
of Turkish Hungary

Reformed Church districts
in Hungary

- I Transdanubian
- II Danubian
- III Cistibiscan
- IV Transibiscan
- V Transylvanian

Map Hungary and her Neighbours, c.1600

In 1556 the diet of the Transylvanian estates meeting at Kolozsvár brought all Catholic church property under the control of the prince, and in 1557 the Lutheran Saxon church's right to free practice of religion was guaranteed. In 1558 the diet outlawed 'sacramentarianism', but nevertheless a Reformed version of Protestantism with its distinctive doctrine on the sacraments strengthened, and found advocates in a series of doctrinal debates against local Lutherans. Péter Méliusz, who was in contact with Theodore Beza, gained acceptance for a new confession for the church in eastern Hungary in 1561, which was adopted in 1563 by the Torda synod of the church of Transylvania's Hungarians. This Debrecen confession was pitted firmly against Papists and Muslims, both described as having abandoned God's ways for their own traditions and superstitions. Typically for central Europe, the fledgling Hungarian Reformed church was eclectic in its sources of confessional inspiration, with a mixture of Calvinist, Zwinglian, Melanchthonian and Bezan views reflected in this Debrecen and later confessions, and in Hungarian Reformed church canons.⁴

reformáció magyarországon 1565-ig (Budapest, 1921); J.Zoványi, A magyarországi protestántizmus 1565-től (Budapest, 1977); I.Révész, A magyar református egyház története (Budapest, 1949); R.J.W.Evans, 'Calvinism in East Central Europe: Hungary and her Neighbours' in M.Prestwich(ed.), International Calvinism 1541-1715 (Oxford, 1985), pp.167-197; D.P.Daniel, 'Calvinism in Hungary: the theological and ecclesiastical transition to the Reformed faith' in A.Pettegree, A.Duke, and G.Lewis(eds.), Calvinism in Europe 1540-1620 (Cambridge, 1994), pp.205-230; K.Péter, 'Hungary' in B.Scribner, R.Porter, and M.Teich(eds.), The Reformation in National Context (Cambridge, 1994), pp.155-168.

⁴ Debrecen articles of 1567 accepted the 1556 Genevan confession, and identified the Pope as the anti-Christ; A.Kiss, A xvi. században tartott magyar református zsinatok végzései (Budapest, 1881), no.12, p.571; M.Zsilinszky, A magyar

In 1564 the Transylvanian diet recognised two distinct Protestant churches; one for Saxons, the other for Hungarians. Reformed Protestantism proved to appeal almost exclusively to Hungarians, and although religious and ethnic boundaries by no means entirely coincided in Transylvania or in Hungary, ethnic cohesiveness cannot be discounted wholly in reinforcing attachment to Reformed religion. Undoubtedly a mixture of family, local, feudal and regional loyalties largely determined emerging patterns of religious adherence, but Calvinism became effectively bound to converted Magyar communities. Protestant religion in Transylvania continued to splinter in the 1560s, with further doctrinal and polemic debates arising from an anti-Trinitarian movement led from 1565 by Ferenc Dávid, then head of Transylvania's Hungarian Protestants, and with some backing from the prince, János Zsigmond. In 1568 the Transylvanian diet at Torda recognised the constitutional validity of four competing 'received religions' in Transylvania; Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed, and anti-Trinitarian. Freedom of worship was offered to supporters of all four religions, and individual ministers were given the right to teach Christianity according to their understanding of it, with the diet describing faith as a gift from God which could not be compelled.⁵

Whilst individual polemicists, and those involved in theological debates from the mid-sixteenth century argued about doctrinal and ceremonial issues, it would seem that the plurality

országgyűlések vallásügyi tárgyalásai a reformációtól kezdve (Budapest, 1880).

⁵ S.Szilagyi (ed.), Monumenta Comititalia Regni Transylvaniae. Erdélyi országgyűlési emlékek vol.2 (Budapest, 1877), pp.338-344

of confessions caused by the weakness of a divided political centre in Transylvania, fostered local traditions of accommodating or even tolerating religious differences.⁶ Rather than attempt to advance the cause of their weakened Catholic church, the constitutional acceptance of four received denominations was in fact employed by sixteenth century Catholic princes to unite the interests of the three political 'nations' in the diet; the Hungarian nobility, Saxon Germans, and the Szekler people of eastern Transylvania.⁷ Forced conversions were prohibited by law, and religious persecution was minimal, with denominational disputes rarely characterised by violence. Control of church property was in theory decided by the 'maior pars' in each parish, with the majority denomination then having to provide an alternative place of worship for any displaced minority. In 1572 any further doctrinal innovation was proscribed in Transylvania, in an attempt to stifle more threatened divisions amongst the established confessions. This was especially concerned to curb a radical Sabbatarianism, then emerging amongst Transylvania's anti-Trinitarians.⁸

The administration of the Protestant church of

⁶ L.Rácz, 'Vallási türelem erdély- és magyarországon' in Protestáns Szemle 46 (1934), pp.198-204; Á.R.Várkonyi, 'Pro quite regni-az ország nyugalmáért' in Protestáns Szemle 1993, pp.260-277.

⁷ The Szeklers were Transylvanian equivalents of Cossacks, gaining constitutional privileges in return for military service. I.Imreh, Székelyek a múltó időben (Budapest, 1987).

⁸ In 1653 a codification of Transylvanian state laws ('Approbatae Constitutiones'), confirmed the resolution of the 1568 Torda diet, forbade any imposition of religion on the peasantry, and repeated the 'maior pars' law; D.Márkus et al.(ed.), Magyar törvénytár. 1540-1848 évi erdélyi törvények (Budapest, 1900).

Transylvania's Hungarians only finally divided into Trinitarian and anti-Trinitarian branches from 1576. From the 1580s support for anti-Trinitarianism however subsided, with draining internal disputes, and a comparatively weak position caused by limited rights of visitation given to their superintendent. Severe restrictions were also placed on the movements and activities of Catholic priests in Transylvania, with the Transylvanian princes' acquisition of the lands of chapters and bishops giving them a direct interest in limiting any Catholic revival. Jesuits were excluded from Transylvania in 1588, readmitted, and then excluded again by prince Zsigmond Rákóczi in the early seventeenth century. Meanwhile Transylvania's Romanian Orthodox population also had rights for the free practice of their religion, although these were only granted as a privilege by the prince, and the leader of the Orthodox church was placed under the authority of the Reformed superintendent.⁹

During the sixteenth century in Ottoman controlled central and southern Hungary individual ministers had supported Protestant reforms, but only slow progress was made towards the building-up of Protestant churches. In Habsburg Hungary even the limited freedoms extended to some Lutherans were not granted to Reformed religion, and royal decrees continued to be promulgated against Calvinists in the 1560s and 1570s. However Protestant

⁹ M.Balázs, Az erdélyi antitrinitarizmus az 1560-as évek végén (Budapest, 1988); A.Pirnát, Die Ideologie der Siebenbürger Antitrinitarier in den 1570er Jahren (Budapest, 1961); S.Kohn, A szombatosok: történetük, dogmatikájuk és irodalmok (Budapest, 1890); K.Zach, Orthodoxe Kirche und Rumänisches Volksbewusstsein im 15. bis 18. Jahrhundert (Wiesbaden, 1977); Princely privileges were extended in the seventeenth century to Anabaptists and Jews; E.Jakab, 'Erdély és az anabaptisták a xvii.-xviii. században' in Keresztény Magvető 11 (1876), pp.1-14.

churches in northern and western Hungary slowly grew, and split into distinct Evangelical and Reformed branches. With increasing numbers of nobles converting to Protestantism from the 1570s to the 1590s, both churches could find local patrons by the first decades of the seventeenth century willing to protect them from Catholic interference. The Catholic church in Hungary however remained a powerful institutional force through the Archbishop of Esztergom, and through episcopal representation at the Hungarian diet. The Reformed church in western Hungary was therefore dependent on the continuation of local noble patronage, and clearly in a weaker position than co-religionists to the east.

From the 1590s it was nevertheless the Reformed church which was gaining in strength amongst the fractured remains of Hungarian and Transylvanian religion. A new pattern of Reformed religiosity slowly spread into the localities, with changes made to church buildings, forms of worship, ceremonies and liturgy. Reformed canons ordered decoration to be cleared from churches, and windows, organs, candles, images, and altars were removed.¹⁰ The wafer was replaced by bread in a communion service held only seven times a year in Reformed congregations, with ordinary water used at baptisms, and vernacular singing introduced. Ministers were obliged by canons to explain the Scriptures clearly during services, introduce regular catechising, and make simplifications to the 'superstitious'

¹⁰ For the 'destruction' of churches at Marosvásárhely and Kolozsvár in Transylvania from the turn of the century; Ferenc Nagy Szabó of Marosvásárhely, 'Memorial' in ETA 1, (Kolozsvár, 1855), pp.71-2, and Bálint Segesvári, 'Kronika, 1606-1654', ETA 4, (Kolozsvár, 1862), p.190.

celebration of religious holidays. Ceremony was altered, with Psalms replacing traditional liturgical songs, and readings from the Bible in Hungarian becoming an integral part of church services.¹¹

The Transylvanian principality proved to be an effective, if limited, proto-absolutist state in the early seventeenth century. Elected princes were capable of exercising real authority over a diet of the three Transylvanian 'nations'. From the reconstruction of Transylvania after the devastation of the Fifteen Years War, Gábor Bethlen and his Reformed successors consolidated the centralised feudal structure of their state. Transylvanian princes were served by a chancellery and treasury at the seat of government at Gyulafehérvár, and advised on all major political questions by a council of appointed nobles. The prince himself raised the armed forces, and much expense and effort was dedicated to a ring of defensive castles along the frontier. Transylvania's estates met in a single chamber diet twice a year until 1622, and then normally only annually, with nobles in public offices, unlimited numbers of 'royalist' nobility, and representatives of the three 'nations' commanded by the prince to attend. Church leaders were not represented in

¹¹ Kiss, zsinatok végzései, the Debrecen confession of 1561 pp.73-285, and especially pp.146, 153, 156-7, 189, 196-7, 236-7 and 240; the 1567 Debrecen articles, pp.563-613, especially pp.574, and 586-7. Ministers from the 1570s were ordered to possess a Bible; 1577 Nagyvárad articles, pp.690-5, no.6; I.Szilágyi, 'Az erdélyi h.h. anyaszentegyház közzsínatai...' in MPEIF 3 (1872), pp.1-9, 77-84 and 473-479; 1606 Transylvanian canons, and from 1642 and 1643 synod resolutions; G.Nagy, Fejezetek a magyar református egyház 17. századi történetéből (Budapest, 1985).

the prince's council, but usually attended these diets. The grievances which estates presented to the diet could only be dealt with after the prince's propositions had been answered, and the initiative at the diet therefore clearly lay with the princes, especially once securely in power and in sufficient control of patronage to ensure the support of ^{regalist} ~~royalist~~ nobles. Although during interregna monopoly rights could be overturned and taxes rescinded by the estates, each new prince steadily regained traditionally held prerogatives, restricting the estates to detailed points and general grumbling.¹²

The Transylvanian estates generally recognised the advantages during the election of new princes of promoting one outstanding candidate, so that the involvement of the Ottomans could be kept to a minimum. Transylvania's princes still gave oaths of loyalty to the Turks, and paid sums to the Porte as tribute on their election. Elections for princely office were also influenced by Transylvania's eastern Hungarian lands, and the displaced Heyduck Protestant mercenaries living there, who had been driven from Ottoman occupied Hungary. I. György Rákóczi, the most extensive landowner in north-eastern Hungary, was for example able to put together a coalition with Heyduck support that enabled him to gain the Transylvanian throne in the 1630s. The combination of personal and princely lands in Hungary and Transylvania then made Rákóczi's position dominant, even against the Turkish-backed challenge of István Bethlen. The Transylvanian princely title continued to be decided by election throughout

¹² Zs. Trócsányi, Az erdélyi fejedelemség korának országgyűlései (Budapest, 1976); Zs. Trócsányi, Erdélyi központi kormányzata, 1540-1690 (Budapest, 1980).

this period, but diets accepted nominations by Gábor Bethlen of his second wife Catherine of Brandenburg as his successor in 1626, by I.György Rákóczi in favour of his eldest son in 1642, and by II.György Rákóczi for his son Ferenc in 1653.¹³

Princes also had to gain approval from Constantinople for the involvement of Transylvania in any international conflict, and both Gábor Bethlen and I.György Rákóczi showed anxiety to act within this restraint. The Turkish invasion of Transylvania in 1658, which brought to an end a period of military success, was indeed sparked by II.György Rákóczi's failure to gain permission for his campaign against Poland in 1657, and in the 1660s the Turks were able to impose a condition that the Transylvanian army could only be used outside its borders on the express orders of the Porte. This military catastrophe in Poland of the late 1650s, with subsequent territorial losses and internal political divisions, led to a real decrease in the independent power of Transylvania's princes during the second half of the seventeenth century in relations both with the Ottomans and the Habsburgs.

The tone of early seventeenth century politics and religion in Hungary and Transylvania was reset by the Fifteen Years War, the bloody Habsburg occupation of Transylvania in 1603 led by General Basta, and the revolt of the Hungarian nobility in 1604 under István Bocskai. The Zsitvatorok and Vienna peace treaties at the end of the Fifteen Years War in 1606 saw the recognition

¹³ V.Biró, Az erdélyi fejedelmi hatalom fejlődése (Kolozsvár, 1917); Zs.Trócsányi, 'Bethlen Gábor erdélyi állama' in Jogtudományi Közlöny 1980, pp.617-622; L.Rácz, 'I.Rákóczi György erdélyi állama' in Jogtudományi Közlöny 1981, pp.495-502; L.Rácz, 'Főhatalom a xvi.-xvii. századi erdélyben' in Jogtudományi Közlöny 1981, pp.857-864.

of the integrity of Transylvania's borders by its larger neighbours, but Transylvania henceforth maintained a hostile relationship with Habsburg Hungary in particular, which periodically sparked into open warfare during this period. Transylvanian militancy against Catholic Hungary opened accusations of too cosy a relationship between the principality and its Ottoman overlords. István Bocskai's rebellion had been backed by the Turks, and influenced in part by Calvinistic notions of rights of resistance against tyranny. Bocskai, whilst accused of being engaged in a Protestant-Turkish pact against Catholic Europe by opponents, was idealised by Hungarian Protestants as a liberator supported by God to take revenge on sinning higher authorities.¹⁴

Transylvania built ever closer links during the early seventeenth century with other Protestant powers, which will be examined further in chapter 9. From cautious and pragmatic

¹⁴ A promise to hand over territory (Lippa and Jenő) to the Turks in return for this support was eventually honoured in 1616 by Gábor Bethlen, and which gave new life to Catholic accusations. One Catholic chronicler in Transylvania even accused Bocskai of being in league with the devil; Ferenc Nagy Szabó of Marosvásárhely, 'Memorial' in ETA 1, (Kolozsvár, 1855), p.100; For more sympathetic views of Bocskai as fighting for religious liberty, see Ferenc Pápai Páriz, Romlott fal felépítése (Rudus Redivivum) (1685), MPEA 5 (1906), pp.129-173; also István Szamosközy, Erdély története (1598-9, 1603), (Budapest, 1981); K.Benda, 'Le droit de résistance de la Bulle d'Or hongroise et le calvinisme' in B.Köpeczi, É.Balázs(eds.), Noblesse Française Noblesse Hongroise XVIe-XIXe Siècles (Budapest/Paris, 1981), pp.155-163; K.Benda, 'A kálvini tanok hatása a magyar rendi ellenállás ideológiájára' in Helikon 17 (1971), pp.322-330; K.Révész, 'Bocskay István apologiája' in Protestáns Szemle 18 (1906), pp.304-312; L.Makkai, 'Nemesi köztársaság és kálvinista teokrácia a 16. századi Lengyelországban és Magyarországon' in Ráday Gyűjtemény Évkönyve 3 (1983), pp.17-29; K.M.Setton, Venice, Austria and the Turks in the Seventeenth Century (Philadelphia, 1991); P.F.Sugár, Southeastern Europe under Ottoman Rule, 1354-1804 (London, 1977).

beginnings under Gábor Bethlen, and his interventions in the Thirty Years War, a path of Protestant military cooperation was established which the Rákóczi princes were also to follow. Gábor Bethlen's successful advance into Habsburg Hungary from August 1619 led to the capture of Pozsony and the offer of the Hungarian throne by the diet in August 1620. The subsequent defeat of Bethlen's Bohemian and Palatinate allies at the White Mountain in November 1620 however weakened his position. By the Nikolsburg peace treaty of December 1621 Bethlen renounced his claim to the Hungarian crown, gaining in return imperial lands in Silesia, and seven counties in north-eastern Hungary for his lifetime. Further campaigns against the Habsburgs led to peace treaties at Vienna in 1624 and at Pozsony in 1626, which largely confirmed these Nikolsburg arrangements. In November 1626, a Westminster treaty of mutual cooperation was signed between Transylvania and England, later ratified by England's Dutch and Danish allies. In the 1630s negotiations were held between I.György Rákóczi and the leaders of the anti-Habsburg coalition in the Thirty Years War, leading eventually to an alliance between Transylvania, France and Sweden in 1643. I.György Rákóczi's intervention in the Thirty Years War in 1644 proved short-lived, but by the Linz peace he regained the seven north-eastern Hungarian counties previously held by Bethlen until his death in 1648. In 1657 II.György Rákóczi embarked on a campaign in Poland, again in alliance with Sweden, but once the Swedes were forced to retreat to face the Danes, Rákóczi was left with no option but to surrender and

retreat.¹⁵

In Hungary the Reformed church had gained the right to the free practice of religion thanks to the success of István Bocskai's rebellion of 1604. The ratification of the Vienna peace in 1608 offered paper rights of undisturbed religious adherence to Hungarian peasants, but effectively devolved absolute rights of religious patronage to the Hungarian nobility. Since Hungarian nobles were at that time largely Protestant, the 1608 agreement reflected their confidence about further expected advances in converting Hungarian society, particularly those who lived on the lands of Catholic nobles, weighed against the risk of the re-catholicisation of peasants on Protestants' lands. However such confidence proved unwarranted, and arguments at the Hungarian diet after 1608 largely revolved around the consequences of noble reconversions to Catholicism. The effects of this could be disastrous with Protestant ministers and teachers expelled from their parishes and schools.¹⁶ In the face of this vulnerable

¹⁵ I.Lukinich, Erdély területi változásai a török hódítás korában, 1541-1711 (Budapest, 1918), pp.199-335. The Silesian lands of Ratibor and Oppeln were lost by the Vienna peace of 1623. The seven counties of north-eastern Hungary were Abaúj, Zemplén, Borsod, Bereg, Szabolcs, Szatmár and Ugocsa, of which Szatmár and Szabolcs were retained in 1648. S.Szilágyi, 'Adalékok Bethlen Gábor szövetkezéseinek történetéhez' in ÉTTK 2/8, (Budapest, 1873), pp.78-93; S.Szilágyi, 'Bethlen Gábor fejedelem uralkodása történetéhez' in TT 1879, pp.242-243. S.Szilágyi, Okirattár Strassburg Pál 1631-1633-iki követtsége és I.Rákóczi György első diplomáciai összeköttetései történetéhez (Budapest, 1882); S.Gergely, 'I.Rákóczi György összeköttetése francziaországgal' in TT 1889, pp.686-687, and 692-694; S.Szilágyi, Okmánytár I.Rákóczi György svéd és franczia szövetkezéseinek történetéhez (Budapest, 1873), xviii, xxiii and xliv.

¹⁶ Zsilinszky, A magyar országgyűlések vallásügyi tárgyalásai, pp.358-9; K.Péter, 'Az 1608 évi vallásügyi törvény és a jobbágyok vallásszabadsága' in Századok 111 (1977), pp.93-113.

and slowly weakening position in western and north-western Hungary, Protestants argued that the freedom of religion established in 1608 could only have meaning if it included rights to possess a place of worship. At the Pozsony diet of 1619, Gábor Bethlen supported a presentation of grievances by Hungarian Protestants with demands for an end to Catholic interference with the organisation and discipline of the Reformed church. In response to these grievances the palatine of Hungary, Zsigmond Forgách, drew up a confirmation of the Vienna peace, and recognised that conflicts remained unresolved over whether freedom of religion in Hungary was 'una cum templis', and whether local majorities or landowners had precedence in deciding religious adherence.¹⁷

At the 1634 Sopron diet the Reformed church again presented complaints of mistreatment at the hands of Catholic nobles, alleging that curbs had been placed on freedom to worship, that ministers had been thrown off Catholic lands, and that some Reformed churches had been occupied. At the height of Transylvanian military success under I.György Rákóczi in the 1640s, negotiations at Linz in 1645 led to a redefinition of Protestants' freedom of worship in Hungary to include rights to use churches, graveyards, and church-bells. At the Pozsony diets of 1646 and 1647, it was further agreed after protracted negotiations, that the interpretation of the Linz peace meant the

¹⁷ For this proclamation of May 1618; 'Zsoldos Benő-féle időrendes sorozat', A.II.72, 1-2 in the Tiszáninnení egyházkerületi levéltár (Sárospatak). For a Reformed minister's view on events at the time of the Pozsony diet see Máté Sepsi Laczkó, 'Krónika, 1521-1624' in ETA 3, book 3, (Kolozsvár, 1858), pp.119-246.

Catholic church would have to hand back some 90 churches to Protestant denominations, out of some 300 which Protestants claimed had been illegally seized. These concessions did not however survive the waning of direct Transylvanian military influence in western Hungary, and Catholic nobles' restrictions on the free practice of Protestant religion were steadily reimposed.¹⁸

After 1648 Protestants in western Hungary turned in vain for redress to the diet, and faced the forced expulsion of their ministers, the denial of access to churches, the confiscation of books, disturbance of burials, forced adherence to Catholic holidays, blocks on Protestant gild membership, forced payments to Catholic priests, and the outright destruction of Protestant schools and churches. At the 1662 Hungarian diet Protestants' complaints of some 400 occupied churches went unheeded. Worse still was to follow, and by 1674 a court at Pozsony had impeached remaining Protestant nobles and ministers in Habsburg Hungary, with threats of imprisonment and death for those who would not convert, resign, or go into exile.¹⁹

Continuous Reformed princely governance in the early seventeenth century was primarily responsible for making Transylvania and

¹⁸ I.Szabó, Tanulmányok a magyar parasztság történetéből (Budapest, 1948); M.Zsilinszky, A linczi békekötés és az 1647-ki vallásügyi törvényczikkek története (Budapest, 1890).

¹⁹ Some Protestant ministers were taken to Naples in 1675 to be sold as galley-slaves. 26 ministers were rescued from this fate by Admiral de Ruyter in February 1676 after an international outcry in Protestant countries. For the effects on one area in western Hungary see G.Kúr, A Komáromi református egyházmegye (Pozsony, 1993).

eastern Hungary more closely tied to the Reformed church. There was a close identification between the princes' perceived interests, and those of their church.²⁰ Reformed religion became an ideological support to Transylvania's rulers, as the public church and orthodox religion of the principality. Princes determinedly promoted the welfare of their co-religionists, whilst never seeking to equate confessional loyalty with political loyalty.²¹ Gábor Bethlen's reign established this trend towards a Reformed dominated Transylvanian state in the early seventeenth century, and the personal commitment of Gábor Bethlen and I.György Rákóczi to their faith was noted abroad and at home. A report in England of 1620s Transylvania stated that, "both Papists and Arrians professe in great freedome; for that the Prince at his Inauguration is always sworne to defend them, its members politike of the Kingdome....As for Religion, Bethlen himselfe is a zealous Calvinist, seldome going without a Latine Testament in his pocket...[he] takes the right course to advance Religion; to incourage, countenance, and promote learning, etc. to doe that in beating down heresie by the Word, which the laws of his Nation forbid him to do by the Sword".²²

²⁰ Ö.Miklós, A magyar protestáns egyházalkotmány kialakulása a reformáció századában (Pápa, 1942); J.Pokoly, 'Az erdélyi fejedelmek viszonya a protestáns egyházakhoz' in Protestáns Szemle 8 (1896), pp.546-561 and 608-624.

²¹ Calvinism was similarly a state ideology in the Dutch Republic, despite not being numerically dominant. Calvinism was, "a part of the official historical and national self-conception of the politically, culturally and socially dominant segment of the population, almost an integral part of the official state ideology held by Dutch society as a whole", from H.Schilling, 'Religion and Society in the Northern Netherlands' in Religion, Political Culture and the Emergence of Early Modern Society (Leiden, 1992), pp.378-9.

²² Giovanni Botero, The World, or an historicall description of the most famous kingdomes and commonweals therein 1630, a section written by the Hungarian Reformed student on peregrination Péter Maksai Őse; I.Gál, 'Maksai Péter angol nyelvű Bethlen Gábor életrajza 1629-ből' in ITK 80 (1976), pp.223-238, with the quotes from pp.224-5, 226, and 229; János Redmeczki, Az felséges Bethlen Gábornak öt rendbeli Isten anyaszentegyházával

At home, Transylvanian princes were given an idealised role as godly magistrates by their Reformed clergy, and portrayed as aiming to create in Transylvania the conditions for faith and morality pleasing to God, on which the survival of the state was seen to be dependent. Transylvania's unique position as a lone eastern Reformed outpost, on narrow ground between Habsburg and Turkish powers identified as demonic, led to a powerful concentration amongst Transylvanian Calvinists on the motif of Biblical Israel. Successes by Transylvanian princes in the early seventeenth century against the Habsburgs reinforced the impression amongst Reformed ministers that their rulers were comparable to biblical kings of the Old Testament, and that Transylvania was a resting place of divine favour. Reformed princes were depicted as defenders of a godly citadel, and liberators and guarantors of true faith, a role which will be examined in more detail in chapter 8.

The status and fortunes of the Reformed clergy and church in Transylvania therefore steadily advanced during the early seventeenth century; Reformed ministers' families gained tax exemptions, and the clergy became ennobled in Transylvania and eastern Hungary in 1629. Backing was given by princes to the Reformed church in disputes with other denominations, Reformed

cselekedett jótéteményéről (Kassa, 1622), and published by L.Makkai in Erdély öröksége vol.4, (Budapest, 1994), pp.24-46; I.Révész, 'Bethlen Gábor, a kálvinista fejedelem' in Protestáns Szemle 26 (1914), pp.339-358; Gy.Szekfü, Bethlen Gábor (Budapest, 1929); M.Tarnóc, Erdély művelődése Bethlen Gábor és a két Rákóczi György korában (Budapest, 1978); J.Barcza, Bethlen Gábor, a református fejedelem (Budapest, 1980); K.Kovács(ed.), Bethlen Gábor állama és kora. Bethlen-bibliográfia, 1613-1980 (Budapest, 1980); Századok 115 (1981), 'Bethlen Gábor és kora', pp.659-750; especially articles by B.Köpeczi, L.Makkai, Zs.Trócsányi, K.Benda and I.Bitskey.

schools were promoted, and the publication of Reformed tracts and other theological works was supported.²³ Transylvania's princes also responded to demands from the Reformed church to extirpate heresy, particularly aiming from 1610 at Sabbatarianism, and in 1638 at Transylvania's mainstream anti-Trinitarians. The balance of power had shifted decisively in the early seventeenth century towards a leading role for the Reformed church in Transylvanian society. In local disputes to establish the majority who could take possession of church buildings, Reformed supporters could often count upon princely interference in their interests. Anti-Trinitarians and Catholics lost out to the combined weight of Reformed princes, nobility and clergy in towns and localities across the region, although the Reformed church's rivals survived best in remoter Szekler lands in the east. A fuller examination of inter-confessional relations in Hungary and Transylvania will follow in chapter 4.²⁴

Transylvanian princely and noble patronage was also responsible

²³ Tax exemptions for the widows and orphans of ministers from July 1605 in 'Tiszántúli református egyházkerület levéltárának...válogatott iratai', MOL box no.2177, no.1. Ennoblement in 1629 was connected with Bethlen's effort to protect the Reformed church in the counties of north-eastern Hungary, due to return to the Habsburgs on his death; I.Kiss Rugonfalvi, Az egyházi rend közjogi helyzete erdélyben és Bethlen Gábor armális (Debrecen, 1936).

²⁴ I.Juhász, A székelyföldi református egyházmegyék (Kolozsvár, 1947), p.39. F.Zayzon, A székelyudvarhelyi evang. reform. egyházközség története (Székelyudvarhely, 1893). Also see the inquisition of 1619 in the Háromszék region led by János Keserői Dayka, and the 1644 investigation held by I.György Rákóczi, in S.Szilágyi, 'Egyháztörténelmi adatok- Az unitáriusok egyháztörténelméhez a xvii.-ik században' in Keresztény Magvető 11 (1876), pp.62-64; Bod, Historia, book 3, chapter 11, p.310-311; 'Segesvári Bálint krónikája, 1606-1654' in ETA 4, (Kolozsvár, 1862), pp.157-218, especially pp.192 and 209.

for the development in the early seventeenth century of an expanding network of Reformed academies, schools, libraries and printing-presses, to give improved training to Reformed student ministers, and to attempt to broaden access to basic learning. Patrons acted in Transylvania as counterparts had done in German Reformed territories with determined efforts to improve Protestant educational facilities. Gábor Bethlen laid plans to found a college in Transylvania following the devastation of the Fifteen Years War. In 1622, officials were appointed from the state council to supervise a princely academy at Gyulafehérvár, and the prince himself had the title of chief warden of the college. Laws from 1624 introduced a 1,000 forint fine for any interference by landowners against the sons of peasants becoming students, and by 1628 Bethlen was able to write to his chaplain Péter Alvinczi expressing pleasure at the flourishing of his new college.²⁵

The weight of patronage shifted under Bethlen's successor, I.György Rákóczi, to the school at Sárospatak on his north-eastern Hungarian estates with support given for new teachers and new school-buildings there.²⁶ In 1636 I.György Rákóczi also

²⁵ Bethlen made extensive provision in his will for the academy as well as other schools. Bod, Historia, vol.3, chs.13-15, pp.399-424; I.Mészáros, Az iskolaügy története Magyarországon, 996-1777 között (Budapest, 1981), pp.368-406; E.Thury, Iskolatörténeti adattár (Pápa, 1906), February 1636; J.Pokoly, Az erdélyi egyház története (5 vols.), (Budapest, 1904), vol. 4, chs.13, and 15; I.Juhász, Zs.Jakó, Nagyenyei diákok, 1662-1848 (Bucharest, 1979), pp.5-46; F.Varó, Bethlen Gábor kollégiuma (Nagyenyed, 1903); K.P.Szathmáry, A gyulafehérvári-nagyenyei Bethlen-főtanoda története (Nagyenyed, 1868).

²⁶ The number of theological students at Sárospatak increased in this period; 'Nomina Studiosorum Illustris Scholae Saros Patachinae' from MOL box no.1903, pp.1-35. L.Makkai, 'A

made provision for a second teacher at the school at Nagyvárad, and was responsible for new school buildings at Szászváros in Transylvania in 1645.²⁷ Rákóczi also supported a Reformed school at Kassa in 1644, and the dowager princess Zsuzsanna Lórántffy opened a Romanian school at Fogaras in 1657.²⁸ In other larger schools in eastern Hungary at Debrecen and Nagybánya, and in western Hungary at Pápa, town councils made a greater contribution to the development and management of local schools, along with occasional though significant support from princely and noble donations.²⁹ There were also advances made in printing facilities at these various Reformed centres, with a new printing-press established at Sárospatak in 1650, and new presses also set up at Nagyvárad, and at Gyulafehérvár in the

kollégium története alapításától 1650-ig', in A Sárospataki református kollégium (Budapest, 1981), pp.17-59; J.Gulyás, A sárospataki ref. főiskola rövid története (Sárospatak, 1931), pp.1-20; J.Marton A sárospataki református főiskola története 1621-ig (Sárospatak, 1931), pp.129-156; J.Román, A sárospataki kollégium (Budapest, 1956).

²⁷ B.Csernák, A református egyház Nagyváradon 1557-1660 (Nagyvárad, 1934), pp.125-263; J.Koncz, A marosvásárhelyi evang. reform. kollégium története (Marosvásárhely, 1896); D.Dósa, A szászvárosi év. ref. Kún-kollégium története (Szászváros, 1897), pp.1-20.

²⁸ Z.Náhlik, 'Lórántffy Zsuzsanna fogarasi román iskolája' in I.Mészáros(ed.), Tanulmányok a magyar nevelésügy xvii.-xx. századi történetéből (Budapest, 1980), pp.17-29.

²⁹ At Pápa the numbers of students fluctuated, but increased at Debrecen; L.Ruzsás, A pápai kollégium története (Budapest, 1981), pp.7-40; E.Kis, A dunántúli ev. ref. egyházkerület pápai főiskolájának története, 1531-1895 (Pápa, 1896), pp.9-48; 'Series Studiosorum in Schola Debrecina' in the Tiszántúli egyházkerület kéziratára (Debrecen), sign. R.495; F.Zsigmond, A debreceni református kollégium története 1538(?) - 1938 (Debrecen, 1938), pp.31-73; F.Thurzó, A Nagybányai év. ref. főiskola (Schola Rivulina) története 1547-1755 (Nagybánya, 1905), pp.41-47; I.Szilágyi, 'A máramarossziget reform. tanoda történeteinek rövid vázlata' in Sárospataki Füzetek 1 (1857/8), pp.957-971.

1620s. Stocks of books at libraries of the major Reformed colleges were also significantly enhanced during this period, especially at Gyulafehérvár, and at the new college library founded at Sárospatak in 1641.³⁰

During the early seventeenth century foreign Protestant teachers were invited to lead the Gyulafehérvár academy, and had extensive influence over the curricula and organisation of Hungarian schools, as authors of text-books and school regulations, as we shall see in chapter 3. In 1629 three prominent Reformed professors, Johann Alsted, Johann Bisterfeld and Ludwig Piscator were persuaded to abandon the academy at Herborn in war-torn Germany and move to Gyulafehérvár.³¹ In 1655 II.György Rákóczi invited Isaac Basire, an exiled Anglican priest then working near Constantinople, to lead the teaching staff in the Transylvanian capital. Other Reformed schools also attracted foreign teachers, most notably Sárospatak, with the Moravian educationalist Jan Comenius finally succumbing to repeated invitations from the Rákóczi family and beginning to teach there in 1650.

A raft of new school regulations attempted to standardise the administration of these developing Hungarian Reformed schools, detailing the requirements made on teachers, subjects

³⁰ A.Ballagi, A magyar nyomdászat történelmi fejlődése, 1472-1877 (Budapest, 1878); L.Naményi, 'A nagyváradí nyomdászat története' in Magyar Könyvszemle 16 (1901), pp.280-291; K.Irinyi, K.Benda, A négyszáz éves debreceni nyomda (1561-1961) (Budapest, 1961), pp.7-59, 313-408; Zs.Jakó, A Bethlen kollégium könyvtárának kezdetei és első korszaka (Kolozsvár, 1973).

³¹ This was despite competition for Alsted's services from Leiden, Franeker and Harderwijk; S.Szilágyi, 'Bethlen Gábor levele Alvinczi Péterhez' in EPK 1879, pp.26-27.

to be taught, and rules for student life. German models from Wittenberg, Heidelberg and Herborn were widely copied and woven into traditional domestic regulations at Sárospatak, Debrecen and Pápa, with an appointed school director and student officers drawn from the student body, or 'collegium', in charge of discipline.³² In 1630 the recently arrived German professors at Gyulafehérvár drew up new regulations outlining the duties of the academy's director and teachers, and the standards expected of students. These regulations were renewed in 1656, with the academy renamed a 'school university', and a coat of arms and stamp chosen by the school council, deliberately aping the practices of foreign universities.³³ The system of 'particular' schools in Hungary and Transylvania as satellites of these larger colleges, meant that advances made in organisation and teaching at such centres, did percolate down to some extent to schools in market towns and larger villages. These smaller schools were indeed served with teachers drawn from the ranks of former

³² R.Békéfi, 'A sárospataki ev. ref. főiskola 1621-iki törvényei' in ÉTTK 18, no.3, (Budapest, 1899), pp.44-73. R.Békéfi, A debreczeni ev. ref. főiskola xvii. és xviii. századi törvényei (Budapest, 1899), pp.79-117; I.Révész, 'A debreceni főiskoláról' in MPEIF 1 (1870), pp.275-290 and 391-427; É.S.Kiss, 'Diákzendülések a debreceni kollégiumban' in Mészáros, Tanulmányok, pp.31-39; G.Lamperth, A pápai református főiskola története, 1531-1931 (Pápa, 1931), pp.21-35.

³³ K.Szabó, 'A gyulafehérvári Bethlen féle főtanoda szervezeti szabályzata' in TT 1879, pp.797-805. The school at Kolozsvár copied the Gyulafehérvár regulations in 1656; R.Békéfi, 'A marosvásárhelyi ev. ref. iskola xvii. századi törvényei' in ÉTTK 18, no.8, pp.26-37; Z.Vargha, A gyulafehérvári főiskola 1657-iki szabályzata (Budapest, 1907); P.Török, 'II.Rákóczy György ismeretlen iskolatörvénye' in Erdélyi Irodalmi Szemle 4 (1927), pp.118-124.

college students.³⁴ Smaller village schools were widespread, although complaints were frequently aired about the variable standard of teaching available, and responsibility for the maintenance of school standards fell largely on local church authorities during regular visitations.³⁵

The weakening of the Transylvanian state in the late 1650s, and Jesuit encroachments from western Hungary, rolled back the educational advances which the Reformed church and its patrons had made. Pápa was the first large Reformed school to be affected, and in 1651 the deputy regional governor Ferenc Bottka wrote to András Klobusiczky, administrator of the Rákóczi estates at Sárospatak, that "although in times past our school at Pápa was filled with intelligent and knowledgeable men, it has become so wasted that it is almost completely destroyed".³⁶ In 1656 the leaders of the Protestant community in Pozsony wrote to Zsuzsanna Lórántffy of their difficult situation, claiming that

³⁴ I.Magyarósi, A zilahi ev. ref. anyaszentegyház története (Kolozsvár, 1880); J.Barcsa, A debreceni kollégium és partikulái (Debrecen, 1905), pp.5-36. In 1648 the Zemplén church authorities tried to divide the schools in their area into four distinct categories; ZEP/1638-1651, MOL box no.1908, pp.159-163.

³⁵ In Zemplén almost all parishes had a school, whilst around Debrecen this was true of only a half of congregations, and in central Transylvania perhaps only one fifth to one third of parishes definitely had a working school; 'Reditus Ecclesiasticus dioecesis Debreczinensis' in 1621 in the 'Tiszántuli ref. egyházkerület-Debreceni egyházmegye jegyzőkönyvei' vol.1, (1615-1655); MOL box no.1884, pp.414-426; K.Sebestyén, 'A kolozs-kalotai (kalotaszegi) református egyházmegye népoktatásának adattára a xv. századtól 1900-ig' in MPEA 17, (Budapest, 1993); J.Lugossy, 'Nagybányai, másképp aranyasmeggyesi egyházvidék személyzete a xvii. században' in Protestáns Szemle 6 (1847), pp.186-191.

³⁶ L.Ruzsás, A pápai kollégium, pp.7-40; B.Szilágyi, 'Ferenc Bottka kéri Klobusiczky Andrást...pápai iskola számára' in MPEIF 7 (1876), pp.43-4.

there was quite simply nowhere left for Protestant children to go to school in their area, and asked Lórántffy to support their efforts to build a new school.³⁷ Advances by competing Jesuit schools in the 1610s and 1620s turned into a takeover of Reformed schools in western Hungary by the middle of the century, whilst Sárospatak was lost with the reconversion to Catholicism of Zsófia Báthori, the widow of II.György Rákóczi.³⁸ In Transylvania meanwhile the princely academy and library at Gyulafehérvár was destroyed by the invading Tartar army of 1658, and the school at Nagyvárád lost after a Turkish siege in 1660.³⁹ The main centres of Reformed education which survived into the second half of the seventeenth century were the princely academy, now based at Nagyenyed, and colleges at Kolozsvár and Marosvásárhely in Transylvania, and at Debrecen in eastern Hungary.

(ii) Reformed Church Organisation and Government

The Reformed church in Hungary and Transylvania retained a hierarchical form of government, an obvious blot on its Calvinist

³⁷ S.Szilágyi, 'Pozsony városának előljárói evang. főiskola építéséhez fogvan, kérnek Lórántfi Zsuzsanna fejedelemtől' in MPEIF 6 (1875), pp.153-4.

³⁸ Zsófia had been a recalcitrant convert from Catholicism to Calvinism at her wedding to II.György Rákóczi in 1643, as reported by a Polish delegate Jerzy Ballaban; G.Várkonyi, II.Rákóczy György esküvője (Budapest, 1990), pp.13-45.

³⁹ A letter from György Csulai in November 1658 confirmed to II.György Rákóczi that the school at Gyulafehérvár was irreparably damaged; S.Szilágyi, 'Egyháztörténelmi adatok' in EPK 1880, pp.344-5.

credentials. All-clergy synods elected regional superintendents and area archdeacons in the church's heartland territories of Transylvania, eastern and north-eastern Hungary (Transylvanian, eastern Tisza, and northern Tisza church districts).⁴⁰ In Transylvania, the ruling princes had inherited powers previously held by Catholic church officers, and continued to confirm all the Protestant denominations' selections for the office of superintendent, also granting rights of visitation and ordination.⁴¹ The Reformed superintendent in Transylvania gained the powers to call together area archdeacons as a clergy presbytery, or 'senatus ecclesiasticus', and presided over full clergy synods, which had powers to alter church canons, and ordain new ministers.

The Debrecen confession had laid down the obligations for these superintendents to lead the church in teaching, preaching and discipline. Synods from the 1560s confirmed the desire for an appointed representative to speak for the church, but not for a leader to rule over it. Superintendents were charged to look after the interests of the church and its schools, supervise archdeacons, and maintain clergy discipline. Area archdeacons

⁴⁰ J.Zoványi (ed.), Magyarországi protestáns egyháztörténeti lexikon (3rd ed.) S.Ladányi, (Budapest, 1977); Transylvania (Erdély) had around 450 churches in Vajdahunyad, Gyulafehérvár, Nagyenyed (Küküllő), Kolozskalota, Dés (Szék), Maros, Udvarhely, and Háromszék (and Fogaras). The Northern Tisza region (Tiszáninnen) had around 400 churches (c.1700) in Borsod, Abaúj, Zemplén and Ungvár. The Eastern Tisza region (Tiszántúl) had around 670 churches (c.1700) in Bihar, Közép Szolnok, Szabolcs, Szatmár, Máramaros, Ugocsa, Bereg, Érmellék, Békés, Debrecen, Szilágy, Zaránd, Nagybánya, and Nagykunság.

⁴¹ For the confirmation of Lukács Hodászi as the eastern Hungarian superintendent by Gábor Bethlen in July 1608 see 'Tiszántuli református egyházkerület levéltárának...válogatott iratai', MOL box no.2177, no.4.

were in turn responsible for regular visitations of local churches, which became semi-inquisitions into local religious life. The Debrecen confession ordered that such visitations of local congregations, ministers, and church officers in eastern Hungary should be held twice or three times a year, whilst in northern Hungary only an annual visitation was required. Archdeacons also had the powers to call 'partial' area synods, bi-annually in Transylvania until 1623, and thrice annually after 1649, when reports from visitations and local complaints were heard, and the financial and other interests of local clergy discussed.⁴²

Articles drawn up at Debrecen in 1567 on church order in eastern Hungary increased the distinctiveness of leading ministers. Superintendents and archdeacons were described not only as the heads of the church, but also as the heads of individual ministers, and were to be 'presidents' at local and regional synods, leading ministers in knowledge, and defending the church against its opponents. It was also emphasised that the superintendent was not allowed to do anything without the prior approval of his archdeacons. Nevertheless this was the beginning of a shift from a system of government for the Hungarian Reformed church based on a clerical presbytery, to one dominated by

⁴² Kiss, zsinatok végzései, pp.263, 601, and Upper Hungarian articles of 1595, pp.709-722, no.52; Pokoly, Az erdélyi egyház története, vols. 2 and 4; Péter Bod, Smirnai szent polikárpus... erdélyi református püspököknek historiájuk (Nagyenyed, 1766), pp.55-95; J.Zoványi, A tiszántúli református egyházkerület története (Debrecen, 1939); J.Barcsa, A tiszántúli év. ref. egyházkerület történelme (Debrecen, 1906), pp.1-110; K.Kiss, A szatmári reform. egyházmegye története (Kecskemét, 1878); J.Soltész, A nagybányai reformált egyházmegye története (Nagybánya, 1902).

superintendents supported by archdeacons and synods.⁴³ The gradual accretion of powers by church leaders in Transylvania accelerated after the disruption of the Fifteen Years War. The Transylvanian synod at Marosvásárhely in 1606 agreed that those raised above others by the grade of their office or knowledge deserved the respect of those underneath them, and canons drawn up by the Transylvanian superintendent dictated that it was only on more important matters that the superintendent was obliged to seek agreement with his archdeacons.⁴⁴

Power came increasingly to rest in the hands of the superintendent, by now frequently referred to in Transylvania as a bishop. The synod at Marosvásárhely in 1639 decided that the superintendent had to give his agreement to, rather than only confirm as previously, the appointment by synod of any new archdeacon. The national synod of all the church districts of Hungary and Transylvania held at Szatmár in June 1646 marked a further significant step towards strengthening church order. Meeting in the presence of I.György Rákóczi, over one hundred delegates supported the continuation of the established form of hierarchical government. Paralleling events in the Dutch Republic at the synod of Dordrecht, the church hierarchy intended the Szatmár synod to mark the imposition of confessional discipline

⁴³ György Gönci, De Disciplina Ecclesiastica, seu Gubernationis Ecclesiasticae Legitima Forma, in Ungarica Natione Cis Tibiscus (Debrecen, 1613), RMK 2/350, containing articles of 1567, 1577, and 1591. Kiss, zsinatok végzései; Debrecen confession, pp.73-285, Nagyvárad articles of 1577, pp.563-613, no.19, 20 and 31, and 'Shorter Articles', pp.691-695, no.11; Ö.Miklós, A magyar protestáns egyházalkotmány kialakulása a reformáció századában (Pápa, 1942).

⁴⁴ Szilágyi, MPEIF 3 (1872), pp.1-9, 77-84 and 473-479.

in Hungary and Transylvania, with dissident voices condemned as disturbing the peace of the church and state. The conclusions of the national synod included a request for new canons to be written by the Transylvanian bishop, István Geleji Katona, which it was hoped would later be adopted by all church districts. These 1649 canons backed an 'aristocratic-democratic' balance as the best form of church government for Hungary and Transylvania, confirming the important role assigned to superintendents (episcopi provinciarum), and to archdeacons.⁴⁵

There was however also a more decentralised tradition of authority in the Hungarian Reformed church, particularly in the northern Tisza district. Here the church had no overall head, with clergy owing obedience to archdeacons, assisted by strong area clergy presbyteries.⁴⁶ The leaders of the northern Tisza church proved tenacious in defending their arrangements from outside pressure to appoint a superintendent after the national synod at Szatmár in 1646, with I.György Rákóczi demanding that a bishop be elected. In August 1646 the four northern Tisza archdeacons replied by claiming that each archdeacon in their area had the effective authority of a bishop, being able to call synods, ordain candidates for the ministry, and go on visitations. It was nevertheless agreed that any of the archdeacons could henceforth intervene outside their immediate

⁴⁵ István Szilágyi Benjámin, 'Acta Synodi Nationalis Hungaricae...1646' SNK sign. vol.21; A.Kiss, Egyházi kánonok-Geleji Katona István 1649 és a Szatmárnémetiben 1646 évben tartott zsinat végzése (Kecskemét, 1875), pp.81-98, and canon no.85 on church authority; I.Révész, A szatmárnémeti nemzeti zsinat és az első magyar református ébredés (Budapest, 1947).

⁴⁶ Kiss, zsinatok végzése; 1595 articles of Upper Hungary, pp.710-722, nos.27 and 55.

area if doctrinal innovation was suspected elsewhere. In 1648 the archdeacons subsequently agreed to co-operate even more closely on common matters, and created a coordinating 'praeses' post to be rotated between them, with powers of intervention across the district to defend orthodoxy.⁴⁷

In Habsburg and Ottoman controlled Hungary (Danubian, western Danubian and upper Danubian church districts) the church also developed a hierarchical structure, but with weaker centres of power, and based on more scattered congregations than the consistent parochial system in the east.⁴⁸ In the upper Danubian region of north-western Hungary a separate Reformed church administration dated from the Galánta synod of 1592. In 1623 a synod at Komját formulated canons which ratified the role of superintendents and archdeacons in the region, and their powers of visitation over local churches.⁴⁹ In the western Danubian district a Reformed superintendent was only appointed from 1612, when arguments between Protestant ministers supporting Lutheran and Reformed views over communion became irreconcilable.

⁴⁷ ZEP/1638-1651, pp.159-160; P.Finkei, 'Magyar protestáns egyháztörténeti kútfők' in Sárospataki Füzetek 1 (1857/8), pp.471-473; L.Hegedüs, 'A tiszáninnen helv. hitv. egyházmegyék kormányzata a Carolina resolutio kiadatása előtt' in Sárospataki Füzetek 3 (1859) pp.475-483. Superintendents were not introduced in northern Tisza until 1734.

⁴⁸ Zoványi, protestáns egyháztörténeti lexikon, the Western Danubian district (Dunántúl) had 130-150 churches in Vép, Körmend, Németújvár, Vízlendva, Pápa, Veszprém and Kiskomárom. The Danubian region (Dunamellék) had 160 churches in Tolna, Vértesalja, Pest, Solt, Kecskemét and from 1629 Külső-Somogy. The Upper Danubian region (Felsődunamellék) was in Bars, Csallóköz, Komját, Komárom and Drégelypalánk.

⁴⁹ Canones Ecclesiastici in Quinque Classes Distributi... (1623 Komját canons), (Pápa, 1625) RMK 2/438; E.Thury, A dunántúli református egyházkerület története (Pápa, 1908).

Reformed ministers met at Köveskút, selected area archdeacons, and adopted canons for the western Danubian church. These Köveskút canons asserted the superintendent's authority to call bi-annual synods, conduct visitations, and to discipline disobedient ministers, but only acting with the approval of archdeacons by whose advice the superintendent was supposed to be guided in everything.

The weaker position of the Reformed church in western Hungary encouraged the adoption of a more collegiate power structure. At a synod held in 1618, clergy presbyteries were formed to assist area archdeacons during their visitations, and to help with general supervision of local clergy and congregations. In 1628 the superintendent in the western Danubian district, Samuel Pathai, was forced to resign and move to eastern Hungary after Catholic threats were made against him. Pathai's successor János Kanizsai Pálfi, was himself excluded from one of the main Protestant centres at Pápa, after the Catholic Eszterházy and Csáky families gained patronage over the town. In response the western Danubian church appointed 25 'morally irreproachable' leading ministers to form a district clergy council to assist their beleaguered superintendent, and deflect Catholic pressure away from him personally.⁵⁰

Meanwhile in central and southern Hungary the organisation

⁵⁰ Thury, A dunántúli református egyházkerület; Gy.Mokos, 'Kanizsai Pálfi János levele a gyulafehérvári professzorokhoz in ITK 15 (1905), pp.489-490; Gy.Mokos, A hercegszöllősi kánonok más egyházi kánonokkal egybevétve (Budapest, 1901); Köveskút canons in E.Thury, '1550-1617 adatok a dunántúl és felsődunamellék kerületekről' in MPEA 7 (1908), pp.127-140; E.Thury, 'Adatok a dunántúli ref. egyházkerület történetéhez' in MPEA 8 (1909), pp.1-101, and MPEA 9 (1910), pp.1-113; E.Tóth, A pápai református egyház története (Pápa, 1941).

of the Reformed church made slow and uncertain progress. Letters of approval were required from the Turkish authorities to guarantee the undisturbed practice of religion, and for the right of any church to hold synods. Strict controls were imposed on Protestant and Catholic churches alike in Ottoman Hungary, particularly through limits on constructing and renovating church buildings, and there was forced recognition of Islamic holidays. Canons from 1567 at the Herczegszöllős synod adopted a hierarchical order for the Reformed church in southern Hungary, with proposed annual synods, and these occurred whenever possible in lower Danubian areas (Baranya districts), and with more regularity and freedom in the more northern Danubian church district. The Komját canons were adopted by the Danubian church in 1626, and the jurisdictions of archdeacons slowly solidified, although rights of visitation continued to require the agreement of local Ottoman officials. By the 1650s Reformed ministers in Ottoman Hungary were however in many respects, for all their real grievances, in a more secure position than many of their colleagues in Habsburg Hungary.⁵¹

⁵¹ The records of Hatvan and Gyöngyös show approval given by Turkish officials for the renovation of damaged churches; 'Gyöngyös református egyh. község levéltárából' at the Dunamellék ref. egyházkerületi levéltára (Ráday College, Budapest), nos.19 and 26 (1634 and 1653). 'Simandianum (Mihály Simándi) Protocollum' (kerületi (Danubian region) jegyzőkönyvek, 1629-1731) MOL box no.1890; Pál Thuri, Idea Christianorum Ungarorum sub Tyrannide Turcica (Oppenheim, 1616) RMK 3/1174; A.Földváry, Adalékok a dunamelléki év. ref. egyházkerület történetéhez (Budapest, 1898); G.Kathona, Fejezetek a török hódoltsági reformáció történetéből (Budapest, 1974), pp.58-70; A.Földváry, A magyar református egyház és a török uralom (Budapest, 1940); M.Fábién, A dunamelléki ref. egyházkerület története (Sárospatak, 1867); Gy.Mokos, Adalékok a dunamelléki reform. püspökök életéhez (Pápa, 1892); Mokos, A herczegszöllösi kánonok.

The participation of ordinary lay members in the government and institutions of the Reformed church in Hungary and Transylvania was minimal in comparison with other Calvinist churches. The greatest progress was made in western Hungary towards appointing presbyters to assist local ministers in the fulfilment of their duties. János Kanizsai Pálfi gained the agreement of Samuel Pathai for lay 'church councillors' to be appointed from the Pápa congregation in 1615. At the Pápa synod in 1630, Kanizsai recommended the setting up of 'governing congregational presbyteries' during archdeacons' visitations throughout the Western Danubian region. The role of these presbyters was to assist in disciplining the community, and to act as the guardians of local morality.⁵² The advantages of increased involvement by ordinary lay church members through presbyteries in tightening community discipline, and towards better meeting the material needs of the parish were also raised in other Reformed church districts. Ministers, with experience of western Reformed practices and the presbyterial system of the Dutch and German Reformed churches, led demands in the 1630s and 1640s for an end to hierarchical and episcopal government in Hungary and Transylvania. With the encouragement of some clergy leaders and noble patrons, most notably the widow of I. György Rákóczi,

⁵² 'Veszprémi ref. egyházmegye protokolluma' at the Dunántúli református egyházkerület nagykönyvtárának kéziratár (Pápa) sign. 0.969, ff.114-122. A 1650 renewal of the Pápa presbytery rules; 'A pápai református egyházközség levéltára Liskay-féle besorolás' DREL sign. 29 (published in MPEIF 9 (1878), pp.32-6). The presbytery records of Kiskomárom from 1634, 'A kiskomáromi ref. egyházközségi legrégébbi anyakönyve, 1624-1732' MOL box nos.1882, and A.1525; J. Pokoly, 'Az első magyar ref. presbyterium keletkezése és szervezete' in Protestáns Szemle 2 (1890), pp.202-220; Thury, A dunántúli ref. egyházkerülete, pp.246-253.

Zsuzsanna Lórántffy, lay presbyteries were indeed started in the northern Tisza district, and in some major towns such as Sárospatak, Fogaras and Nagyvárad.⁵³

It was however widely feared at the Transylvanian court, and by many in the church leadership, that any changes to the hierarchical church order would lead to widespread innovation and heterodoxy. A sectarian split comparable to the anti-Trinitarian movement of the 1560s was envisaged, only this time inspired by foreign Calvinist sectarians, whether Arminians, Puritans, Presbyterians or Independents.⁵⁴ The challenge from supporters of presbyterial government in Hungary and Transylvania reached its height in the 1640s, and the Transylvanian regional synod in 1646 assented to the piecemeal introduction of lay presbyteries, with the help of local patrons. This resolution was repeated by the national synod at Szatmár of the same year, but presbyteries were only envisaged to run in parallel with the continuing hierarchical regime of superintendents and archdeacons. All serious debate over any further innovation to church government

⁵³ K.Révész, 'A presbyterium legelső nyomai hazai református egyházunkban' in Protestáns Szemle 4 (1892), pp.419-446; J.Pokoly, 'A fogarasi egyházközség levéltárából' in MPEA 8 (1909), pp.120-5; Csernák, A református egyház Nagyváradon, pp.125-263; G.Komjáthy, Adalékok az ungvári ev. ref. egyház történetéhez (Ungvár, 1906), p.12; G.Illyés, 'Az Apafiak szerepe a külföldi református egyházmegye történetében' in Református Szemle 1930, pp.468-472, and 482-286.

⁵⁴ J.Zoványi, Puritánus mozgalmak a magyar református egyházban (Budapest, 1911); L.Makkai, A magyar puritánusok harca a feudálizmus ellen (Budapest, 1952); L.Makkai, 'The Hungarian Puritans and the English Revolution' in Acta Historica 5 (1958), pp.13-45. The Hungarian Puritan agenda of further reform has been seen as a platform to make the Reformed church more explicitly Calvinist; I.Révész, 'Szempontok a magyar kalvinizmus eredetéhez' in Századok 68 (1934), pp.257-275; G.Szabó, A magyar református orthodoxia a xvii. század teológiai irodalma (Budapest, 1943).

was ended by Transylvanian laws of 1653, which made any effort to change church administration or doctrine a civil offence. Reform-minded ministers who continued to be defiant were demoted, and even imprisoned, and I shall return to make a detailed examination of these debates in chapter 8.⁵⁵

Rather than approve any devolvment of powers from the clergy hierarchy to individual ministers, supported by local lay fora, Transylvania's princes were to widen the role offered to noble patrons in church government in the second half of the seventeenth century. A consistorial system was set up by the prince with an ecclesiastical council of invited lay and clergy leaders, which met regularly in parallel with the general synod from 1671, to deliberate on major questions facing the church. This body slowly gained authority at the expense of the clergy hierarchy and the general synod. The Reformed church in Hungary and Transylvania was forced everywhere into more straightened circumstances during the second half of the seventeenth century, with the loss of Transylvanian territory to the Turks, and reverses in battles against Catholic competitors in western and northern Hungary. Increased persecution and isolation from western co-religionists lowered the international perspective of the Hungarian Reformed church, and a golden era of consolidation and expansion regressed into a grim defence of Reformed privileges, freedoms, churches and schools.

⁵⁵ Kiss, Egyházi kánonok, canon 99; Márkus, Magyar törvénytár, 1653 laws.

THE HUNGARIAN REFORMED CLERGY AND
INTERNATIONAL CALVINISM

(i) The peregrinatio of Reformed Students

The international Calvinist commonwealth rested on close contact between activists from across the Reformed world. International connections were often established when Calvinist ministers, teachers and theologians gathered to study together at academic centres. The bonds forged between Calvinists at Reformed universities reinforced sentiment of an international brotherhood of true believers. The cosmopolitan character of Calvinism was fashioned and strengthened in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries at such universities and academies as Geneva, Heidelberg, Leiden and Utrecht. In this chapter I shall establish the main lines of direct educational links between Transylvania and the developing international Calvinist community of the early seventeenth century, with the Reformed church in Hungary and Transylvania increasingly involved in international exchanges between Calvinist pastors, professors and students.

The so-called peregrination of many Hungarian student ministers to Germany, the Dutch Republic and England in this period was only made feasible through the patronage and financial support of Transylvania's princes, Hungarian nobles and town councils. It was hoped that the expense of sending student ministers to be educated abroad would soon be repaid on their

return home by their service in local Reformed schools as directors and teachers, and then after ordination as ministers in parishes. In this chapter I shall reconstruct the main activities of Hungarians and Transylvanians attending foreign universities during this period, examining the subjects which they studied, and the professors who influenced them. Reformed universities in Germany and the Dutch Republic, I will argue, served to reinforce Hungarian student ministers familiarity with, and commitment to, orthodox Calvinist theology, and encouraged polemic theological attacks against competing confessions. There were however variations on the main Calvinist theological themes to be heard in different countries and institutions, and the Hungarian church leadership was concerned to monitor the impact which student ministers' attendance at western Calvinist universities was having on their Reformed church. Fears were indeed aroused in Hungary and Transylvania that some international influences might act to undermine the established domestic church order and orthodoxy. This potential threat was perceived arising particularly from student ministers who had visited England, and conditions and limitations were steadily imposed on the destinations and activities of Hungarian student ministers abroad. However the commitment of the Hungarian church establishment to protect domestic orthodoxy during this period never led to any suggestions for withdrawal from the international Calvinist community.

During the seventeenth century Transylvania could not boast a university of its own and so Reformed Transylvanian princes, whilst developing local colleges, also supported student

ministers to travel to universities abroad. In the sixteenth century Reformed students from Hungary had tended to follow Lutheran colleagues to Wittenberg. However the rise in doctrinaire Lutheranism in Saxony, and the imposition of Lutheran formulas for prospective students at Wittenberg from 1592 forced Hungarian Calvinists to look elsewhere.¹ Hungarian and Transylvanian Reformed student ministers henceforth played a significant role in adding to the cosmopolitan atmosphere of new Calvinist academies at Heidelberg in the Palatinate, Frankfurt an der Oder in Brandenburg, Herborn in Nassau, Marburg in Hesse and at Bremen. In Heidelberg for example from 1610 until 1615, over one third of non-German students attending the university were from eastern and central Europe including Hungarians and Transylvanians, as well as Poles, Bohemians, Moravians and Silesians. Even in distant Leiden, where there were more foreign than Dutch students in the second quarter of the seventeenth century, at first mainly Hungarian then also Transylvanian students accounted for almost one in twenty of the some 5,500 foreign students.²

Students from east-central Europe were therefore involved in a major academic peregrination to western Europe in the early

¹ G.Szabó, Geschichte des Ungarischen Coetus an der Universität Wittenberg, 1555-1613 (Halle, 1941), pp.105-123 on the imposition of the Formula Concordiae in 1592; I.May, 'Az altdorfi egyetem magyar hallgatói' in ITK 70 (1966), pp.165-166.

² C.P.Clasen, The Palatinate in European history 1559-1660 (Oxford, 1963), p.36; Ö.Miklós, Magyar diákok a leideni staten collegeben (Debrecen, 1928); Israel has commented for Dutch universities that in "proportion to population of the home country, Hungarians formed the largest category among the foreign student population"; J.Israel, The Dutch Republic. Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477-1806 (Oxford, 1995), p.901, also see pp.569-575 and 899-902.

seventeenth century, reaching a peak in the 1640s. Student ministers from the Hungarian Reformed church travelled in greatest numbers to Heidelberg, until it fell to Catholic forces in 1622, when attention switched to a new Protestant road through Brandenburg and Bremen, and to the first substantial contacts with the universities of the Dutch Republic. The Dutch Republic was the axis of international Calvinism after the decisive victory of orthodoxy at the Dordrecht synod, and from the 1630s Hungarians travelled in ever greater numbers via Cracow to Danzig, before venturing onwards to Franeker, Leiden, Utrecht and Groningen. Some Reformed students from Hungary and Transylvania were emboldened to risk a further voyage from the Dutch coast to England, arriving in London, and visiting both Oxford and Cambridge. The well-heeled and the very adventurous also travelled during this period into France, Switzerland, Italy and even Scotland, bringing back to Hungary and Transylvania a enormous breadth of experiences, contacts and literature.³

Reformed patrons who supported this student peregrination were engaged in a deliberate effort to create a well educated clergy elite to lead the Hungarian church, and thereby to consolidate

³ Albert Szenczi Molnár at the turn of the century studied at Wittenberg, Heidelberg, Strasburg, Marburg, Altdorf and Herborn, and visited Basel, Zurich, Geneva, Prague, Venice, Rome, Holland and London, see 'Napló, Ephemerides, Diarium, vel Adversaria mea' in J.Vásárhelyi, G.Tolnai(eds.), Szenci Molnár Albert válogatott művei (Budapest, 1976), pp.469-551; L.Kropf, 'Egy ismeretlen magyar költő skóciában, 1628' in ITK 24 (1914), p.19; E.Veress, Olasz egyetemeken járt magyarországi tanulók anyakönyvei és iratai (Budapest, 1941); M.Szabó, 'Erdélyi diákok külföldi egyetemjárása a xvi.-xviii. században' in Zs.Jakó, S.Tonk and E.Csetri(eds.), Művelődéstörténeti tanulmányok (Bucharest, 1980), pp.152-168.

University	1610-1619	1620-1629	1630-1639	1640-1649	1650-1659	Total
Heidelberg	91	17	0	0	3	111
Wittenberg	4	0	0	0	0	4
Herborn	4	0	0	0	0	4
Marburg	24	0	0	0	0	24
Frankfurt	0	98	5	1	6	110
Bremen	1	25	10	0	0	36
Basel	3	12	2	0	1	18
Geneva	0	0	0	0	2	2
Leiden	0	52	93	96	38	279
Utrecht	0	0	0	61	124	185
Franeker	0	66	74	127	97	364
Groningen	0	0	9	38	58	105
Deventer	0	0	0	36	0	36
Harderwijk	0	0	0	3	1	4
Total	127	270	193	362	330	-

Table 1: Registrations and attendances by Hungarian and Transylvanian Reformed students at western European universities between 1610-1660.⁴

⁴ Before 1610 there were 20 Hungarian students at Heidelberg in the 1580s, 52 in the 1590s, and 37 in the 1600s; J.Szeremlei, 'A heidelbergben tanult magyarok névsora' in Sárospataki Füzetek 5 (1861), pp.452-471, 556-567, and 6 (1862), pp.559-567; J.Zoványi, 'Adatok a heidelbergi egyetem magyarországi hallgatóinak névsorához' in Protestáns Szemle 16 (1904), pp.111-114 from G.Toepke, Die Matrikel der Universität Heidelberg von 1386 bis 1662, vol.2 (Heidelberg, 1886); 'A wittenbergi egyetem magyarországi hallgatóinak névsora 1601-1812' in MPEA 14 (1930), pp.111-174; Á.Hellebrant, 'Adalék a külföldi iskolázás történetéhez a xvii. században' (Herborn) in Századok 17 (1883), pp.154-155; I.Zsindely, 'A bázeli egyetem anyakönyvéből' in Sárospataki Füzetek 4 (1860), pp.161-165; K.Szál, 'A magyarhoni h.h. egyházra vonatkozó egyes adatok a genfi papi testület jegyzőkönyvéből' in Sárospataki Füzetek 6 (1862), pp.922-9; B.S.Nagy, 'A genfi akadémia magyar diákjai (1566-1772)' in ITK 87 (1983), p.388; J.Zoványi, 'A marburgi egyetem magyarországi

the Reformed church's domestic dominance. Hungarian Reformed student ministers at the university of Heidelberg alone included eleven future superintendents, and 29 future regional archdeacons. The first student at Heidelberg to be supported by the princely patronage of Gábor Bethlen arrived in 1614, and the Bethlen family sponsored over twenty students at Heidelberg before 1622. Princely support for study abroad was further highlighted by the peregrination of both István and Péter Bethlen. Gábor Bethlen took a personal interest in the progress of his nephews, and in 1625 for example gave instructions to those accompanying Péter Bethlen that he was not to be allowed to speak Hungarian during his time abroad, and ordered strict

hallgatói 1859-ig' in Irodalomtörténet 37 (1955); J.Zoványi, 'A magyarországi ifjak az odera melletti Frankfurt egyetemében' in Protestáns Szemle 1 (1889), pp.178-202; I.Czegle, 'A brémai főiskola magyar diákjai (1618-1750)' in ITK 78 (1974), pp.88; Of 959 students registered at universities in the Dutch Republic between 1623 and 1711, 578 were at school in either Debrecen or Sárospatak; G.Kathona, 'A debreceni és sárospataki tanulók részvétele a hollandiai és angliai peregrinációban 1623-tól 1711-ig' in Theológiai Szemle 22 (1979), pp.89-94; F.Teutsch, 'Die Studirenden aus Ungarn und Siebenbürgen an der Universität Leiden 1575-1875' in the Archiv des Vereins für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde (Hermannstadt) 16 (1881), pp.204-226; G.Antal, 'Az utrechti és leideni egyetemeken járt magyar ifjak névjegyzéke' in PEIL 31 (1888), pp.278-9, 409-412 and 437-441; 'Verzeichniss der Studenten aus Ungarn und Siebenbürgen an der Universität Utrecht in den Jahren 1643-1885' in the Archiv des Vereins für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde 22 (1889), pp.79-92; L.Segesváry, Magyar református ifjak az utrechti egyetemen 1636-1686 (Debrecen, 1935); Á.Hellebrant, 'A franekeri egyetemén tanult magyarok' in TT 1886, pp.599-608, 792-800; Ö.Miklós, 'A groningeni egyetemén tanult magyarok névsora' in Dunántúli Protestáns Lap 1917, pp.194-197 and 202-207. Deventer was a renowned 'Illustrious School' in the 1640s; L.Segesváry, 'A deventeri athenaeumon tanult magyarok 1644-9' in Századok 71 (1937), pp.506-508. Harderwijk was founded in 1648; J.Zoványi, 'A harderwijki egyetem magyarországi hallgatói' in ITK 1 (1891), pp.433-6.

monitoring of Péter's behaviour and application to his studies.⁵ The Rákóczi family and other nobles also gave financial support to student ministers to cover the expenses of their peregrination, as did the councils and leading families of such large towns as Kassa, Nagyszombat, Sárospatak, Debrecen and Szatmár.⁶

Students on peregrination generally kept their patrons well informed of their progress, writing home with frequent requests for more funds. Gáspár Komáromi for example wrote to his Rákóczi patrons in 1613 of his arrival at Marburg, and disappointment that he had passed a winter there without any possibility to study theology. Komáromi had therefore decided to move on to Heidelberg, commenting that whilst many of his colleagues were dabbling in all sorts of subjects without mastering any of them, he wished to concentrate his efforts on studying the Bible.⁷ The

⁵ I.Lukinich, A Bethlen-fiúk külföldi iskoláztatása 1619-1628 (Budapest, 1926); S.Gergely, 'Bethlen Péter utazása történetéhez' in TT 1884, pp.590-2; I.S.Kovács, I.Monok(eds.), Magyar utazási irodalom a 15-18.században (Budapest, 1990), pp.34-38. One chronicler viewed the support by Bethlen for his relatives to travel to Germany as a sign of his good governance; János T.Redmeczki, 'Az felséges Bethlen Gábornak öt rendbeli isten anyaszentegyházával cselekedett jótéteményéről' (1622) in Erdély öröksége 4, (ed.) L.Makkai (Budapest, 1994), pp.24-46.

⁶ Prominent amongst students at Heidelberg were György Csulai (1619), István Geleji Katona (1615-7, 1619), János Kanizsai Pálfi (1609), János Dajka Keserői (1609), István Miskolczi Csulyak (1603), István Melotai Nyilas (1601), János Samarjai (1609), Mihály Simándi (1620) and István Tolnai (1620). J.Zoványi, Magyarországi protestáns egyháztörténeti lexikon (3rd. ed.) S.Ladányi (Budapest, 1977); J.Heltai, Alvinczi Péter és a heidelbergi peregrinusok (Budapest, 1994), vol.21 of Humanizmus és reformáció, p.45; J.Heltai, 'Adattár a heidelbergi egyetemen 1595-1621 között tanult magyarországi diákokról és pártfogóikról' in the Országos Széchényi Könyvtár Évkönyve 1980, pp.243-345.

⁷ S.Szilágyi, 'Egyházi férfiak levelei' in EPK 1875, pp.69-70. A letter took three months to get from Cambridge to Kassa; L.Kemény, 'Thállyai János Cambridge-i tanuló levele' in ITK 19

diary of István Miskolczi Csulyak, later archdeacon of Zemplén, recorded his travel from 1601 to 1607 to Poland, Prague and Wittenberg, and his stay at Heidelberg for almost four years. Miskolczi's plans to proceed from Heidelberg to France and England were thwarted only by news of his patron's untimely death which forced Miskolczi to return home.⁸

Early pioneers from Hungary who attended universities in Germany were instrumental in establishing a network of contacts for other Hungarian students who followed them. Albert Szenczi Molnár through his friends at various Reformed academies, and in refugee French and Flemish congregations, and Péter Alvinczi at Heidelberg, were able to provide Hungarians and Transylvanians with assistance once they too had arrived in Germany. Imre Pataki wrote from Frankfurt in August 1623 to his patron Kata Kisvárdai, that he had gained letters of introduction through Molnár to continue his studies, but could not proceed northward because of a lack of finances.⁹ For many students, peregrination was indeed a constant battle against poverty, and László Gyöngyösi gave a graphic description of his difficult life as a foreign student in the 1650s in the Dutch Republic, describing his "lamentable fate" in spending three years away from home in "a wretched and sickly state".¹⁰

(1909), pp.484-5.

⁸ Kovács, Magyar utazási irodalom, pp.301-313.

⁹ 'Adatok angliában járt magyar deákokról és egyéb angol emlékek' in Adattár 3, Művelődési törekvések a század második felében, (ed.) B.Keserü (Szeged, 1971), pp.419-441.

¹⁰ László Gyöngyösi, A keresztyeni vallásnak fundamentumai quoted in Segesváry, Magyar református ifjak az utrechti egyetemen.

From the 1620s Hungarian students flocked to study theology at the Dutch universities, and most attended more than one institution.¹¹ One student, Pál Kismarjai Veszelin kept a travel album of signatures and inscriptions which showed the broad range of classes he attended in different universities during 1653 and 1654, including those of Johann Coccejus at Leiden, Samuel Maresius at Groningen, and of Nicholas Arnold at Franeker. The album is also filled with inscriptions in Hebrew, Greek, Latin and Aramaic from teachers and fellow students, both Hungarians and others, welcoming Kismarjai into the academic brotherhood. The album displayed a common fascination with sacred, secret and exotic languages. One fellow Hungarian student included an inscription in the ancient runic writing of Transylvania's Szeklers, and István Bányai added his inscription of February 1654 in English, "prayer is like Jonathon's bowe, which sent out the arrowes, but faith is like Jonathon's boy, which fetcht(sic) backe the arrowes".¹²

The novelties and dangers of international travel in the early seventeenth century can hardly be overestimated. Márton Szepesi Csombor wrote in awe-struck tones of his impression of the academy at Leiden, and of the academic procession which preceded

¹¹ János Apáczai Csere (1648-1651; Leiden, Franeker, Utrecht and Harderwijk), Pál Keresztúri (1622-1624; Frankfurt, Leiden and England), Pál Medgyesi (1628-1631; Frankfurt, Leiden and England), István Szilágyi Benjámín (1639-1641; Frankfurt, Franeker and Utrecht), János Tolnai Dali (1632-1639; Leiden, Franeker, Groningen and England), András Váczi (1644-1647; Franeker, Deventer, Leiden, Groningen, Utrecht and England), and Ferenc Verécsi (1633-1635; Leiden, Franeker and England); from Zoványi, Magyarországi protestáns egyháztörténeti lexikon.

¹² 'Kismarjai Veszelin Pál peregrinációs albuma 1653-1654' p.275, in the Debrecen nagykönyvtár kéziratára, sign R.692.

a lecture by the Leiden university rector. Szepsi later moved on to England, but failed in his effort to visit an English university, when he confused Canterbury for Cambridge (Cantabrigae).¹³ Gábor Haller meanwhile kept a diary whilst a student at Franeker and Leiden in the 1630s. Haller took a wide range of classes in logic, mathematics, geography and rhetoric, and also attended dance lessons from 1632. Already by December 1631 however Haller had been forced to borrow money from fellow Hungarian students, and in 1633 recorded that he had behaved badly after drinking, later promising himself not to drink any more wine for a month.¹⁴ Peregrination could involve enormous personal sacrifices, with Mátyás Rudabányai from northern Hungary working for almost a decade to collect sufficient money to travel abroad. Rudabányai eventually set off by ship for England in the 1650s, but fell foul of Barbary pirates, and was carried off to prison at Tunis. Before 1660 a collection was taken up at Sárospatak to try to pay the ransom for his release, but it seems that Rudabányai died in a foreign gaol some time after 1678, proof of the not inconsiderable sense of adventure and courage required of Hungary's seventeenth century wandering Reformed students.¹⁵

Contact between student ministers from the Hungarian Reformed

¹³ Márton Szepsi Csombor, Europica Varietas (1620) S.Kovács, P.Kulcsár(eds.), (Budapest, 1979), pp.171 and 183-193.

¹⁴ 'Haller Gábor naplója, 1629-1644' in ETA 4, (Kolozsvár, 1862), pp.1-103.

¹⁵ E.Tanka, 'Rudabányai A. Mátyás levele tuniszból 1678 Dec.1' in Lymbus Füzetek 6 (1989).

church and Protestants in England expanded from sporadic visits in the late sixteenth century and early decades of the seventeenth century, with the road to London and the English universities more frequented by Hungarians from the 1620s. The presence of Hungarian and Transylvanian students in England was for example noted by John Milton;

"not for nothing...the grave and frugal Transylvanian, sends out yearly from as far as the mountainous borders of Russia and beyond the Hercynian[sic] wilderness, not their youth, but their stay'd men to learn our language, and our theologic arts".¹⁶

The exact number of student ministers who spent part of their peregrination in England is difficult to ascertain, but probably around 100 Hungarians and Transylvanians are likely to have visited England between 1610 and 1660, suggesting that one in eight students who travelled to Holland also moved on to England. Evidence for study in England by Hungarians comes from a variety of sources such as gaps in registrations at Dutch universities, student's albums, book dedications and travel passes during the Commonwealth. The precise activities of Hungarian Reformed students once in England remain however even more uncertain. Hungarians and Transylvanians certainly visited the English universities, some receiving financial aid from Cambridge colleges, but were less frequently recorded at Oxford. Péter Szerencsi for example visited Cambridge in 1641, and later wrote to William Sancroft at Emmanuel, thanking him for his hospitality at Cambridge, and asking for financial assistance. Szerencsi related in his letter that Hungarian students travelling through

¹⁶ John Milton, Areopagitica (London, 1644), and (ed.) J.W.Hales, (Oxford, 1898), p.45.

Cracow had been robbed of money intended to support him.¹⁷

One surviving travel album provides an unusually complete record of Péter Körmendi's movements in England between 1660 to 1663.¹⁸ This inscription book certainly suggests the kind of pattern which previous Reformed students might well have followed in England in the early seventeenth century, and indicates the warm welcome which awaited Hungarians who arrived at their distant destination. Körmendi stayed in London during 1660, but in early 1661 travelled to Somerset, staying at Blagdon for over a year, and acquiring inscriptions and good wishes in his album from four neighbouring Somerset ministers. One minister wrote in particular of Körmendi's exemplary accomplishments in reading biblical commentaries, and in applying himself to writing. On his departure the strength of local good will towards Körmendi was summarised in a moving tribute made by the Blagdon landowner to his departing guest;

"Psal 125:2. As the mountaynes are around about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people from henceforth even for ever. God is good to us; when He sends evill; because He sends evill for our good.

¹⁷ G.Kathona, 'Pótlások az 1711-ig angliában tanult magyar diákok névsorához' in ITK 80 (1976), pp.92-98; B.Trócsányi, 'Református theológusok Angliában a xvi. és xvii. században' in Angol Filológiai Tanulmányok 6 (1944), pp.115-146; 'Adatok angliában járt magyar deákokról és egyéb angol emlékek' in Adattár 3, pp.419-441; J.Pongrácz, Magyar diákok angliában (Pápa, 1914); G.Gömöri, Erdélyiek és angolok (Budapest, 1991), pp.20-37; G.Gömöri, 'Magyar látogatók a Cromwell-kori angliában' and 'Magyar peregrinusok a xvii.századi Cambridge-ben' in Angol-Magyar kapcsolatok a xvi.-xvii.században. Irodalomtörténeti Füzetek (Budapest, 1989); B.Pettkő, 'Külföldi alumnusok levelei' in TT 1885, pp.179-184; Calendar of State Papers (Domestic) SP16; 1627/8, no.92/26; 1651/2, no.31/22; 1655, no.8/587; 1656, no.76/544, no.112/213, no.76/601, and no.77/233.

¹⁸ Miklós Bethlen also described his peregrination from 1661 to 1664 to Germany, Holland, England and France; E.Windisch(ed.), Bethlen Miklós önéletírásai (Budapest, 1955), chs.13-16.

Mr Peter Keörmendi having sojourned in Somerset-shire about the space of a yeare, hath so demeaned himselfe, during his residence here, That I esteeme him worthy of this deserved Testimony...: That he is a man of singular piety, learning, and candour; whose patience under the hardships of his peregrination is exemplary, and whose prayers for, and longings after his owne country (now almost ruined by the barbarous Turks) are incessant, to whome I wish divine protection in his travells by Land and Sea, And all prosperity in his alone Country, when God shall please to returne him in health, safety and comfort thither. Better a mans owne works praise him than an others' words Apr. 1 1662 Tho: Baynardi Esq. Blagdoniensis in agro-Somerset."¹⁹

In June 1662 Körmendi was again in London, and in contact with the minister of the Dutch and French foreigners' church, before visiting Norwich, where he was received by the minister of the French church there. Körmendi also wrote in 1662 to Bishop Cosin of Durham, appealing for financial assistance, and was no doubt aware that Isaac Basire had been appointed archdeacon of Northumberland on his return to England in 1661, after spending six years in Transylvania. Körmendi was at any rate able to afford to travel to Amsterdam in September 1662 where he met Jan Comenius, and then to Utrecht, Groningen and to Leiden. In 1663 Körmendi travelled back to England and went to Cambridge, meeting theology professors at Trinity and Gonville and Caius. He finally set off for home via Germany, and was received at Hamburg in October 1663 by Andreas de la Fontaine, minister of the local French and Flemish congregation there.²⁰

¹⁹ 'Körmendi Péter peregrinációs albuma 1662(sic)-1663' in the Dunamelléki református egyházkerület kéziratára (Ráday college, Budapest), sign. K-1.461, pp.89-90.

²⁰ Körmendi's letter in the 'Cosin letter book' 1A, no.84, Durham University Library. The esprit de corps of 'academic ministers' can only have been enhanced by their collective financial difficulties. Mátyás Harsányi wrote in Körmendi's book in January 1661, "Prov. 17:17 A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity", 'Körmendi Péter peregrinációs albuma 1662(sic)-1663', p.125.

Péter Körmendi's inscription book demonstrates that there were established contacts for Hungarians not only on the continent but also in England, drawn from foreigners' churches and others with connections to those churches. Contact between Hungarian students and foreigners' churches in England was no doubt a product of natural sympathy between refugees and foreign students, and an extension of established links with French and Flemish congregations in Germany. The foreigners' congregation at Austin Friars in London showed its concern for refugees with collections for the Palatinate in the 1620s, but in the 1630s came under attack from Archbishop Laud who considered foreign churches as nests of schism and Calvinist radicalism. Hungarians in London from the 1630s were indeed therefore more likely to be received by opponents of Laudian hierarchy, and by advocates of ceremonial and church governmental reform.²¹

Amongst other English contacts Albert Szenczi Molnár, when on a visit to London in 1624 had met George Abbot, the previous Archbishop of Canterbury who was sympathetic to those advancing an avowedly Protestant foreign policy for England.²² By the 1630s however it was reformers such as Samuel Hartlib who were in contact with Hungarian students, most notably with János

²¹ S.L.Adams, 'The Protestant Cause: Religious Alliance with the west European Calvinist Communities as a Political Issue in England, 1585-1630' (D.Phil Oxford, 1973); O.P.Grell, Dutch Calvinists in Early Stuart London (Leiden, 1989), chs.5-6; J.Hessels(ed.), Ecclesiae Londino-Batavae Archivum Epistulae et Tractatae formationis Historiam Illustrantos (Cambridge, 1897), vol.3, especially nos.3124 and 3494.

²² R.Dán, G.Gömöri, 'Szenci Molnár Albert angliában' in ITK 83 (1979), pp.278-280; G.Gömöri, 'Szenci Molnár Albert művei és bibliakiadásai cambridgei könyvtárakban' in Acta Historiae Litterarum Hungaricarum 10-11, (Szeged, 1971), pp.297-301.

Tolnai Dali. Hartlib, an exile from Elbing working in London, wrote in a memorandum about practical divinity that he recalled;

"the Prince of Transylvania hath ever since sent his stipendate schollars to learn the language and converse with our ministers, to bee trained up in our way for a seminary to his Churches so that by this wee may see how soone a Correspondencie for the things of Christs kingdome may bee settled, with those that are thus convinced of our partaking of the truth of the Gospell."²³

Hartlib was also in contact with János Bánfihunyadi, a Transylvanian alchemist practising at Gresham's College in London. Bánfihunyadi was certainly himself in touch with visiting Hungarians in London such as Pál Medgyesi and Pál Keresztúri, and probably assisted Hungarian student ministers establish connections with London churches, sympathetic to wandering foreign Calvinists.²⁴ For example a radical minister at Aldermanbury in London called John Stoughton was inspired by meeting Hungarian student ministers to write a millenarian tract about the progress of the church in Transylvania, later published by Samuel Hartlib in 1640. This open letter from Stoughton was dedicated to I.György Rákóczi, whose patronage of school reforms and other improvements, Stoughton believed, was making Transylvania into a strong bastion in the international battle

²³ Hartl. 6/7, f.1a 'Copy Memorandum, concerning public affaires in reference to foreign states' (not dated).

²⁴ Bánfihunyadi, known as 'Hunniades', passed on information to Hartlib about his studies. John Johnston related Hunniades' activity to Hartlib in the 1630s, and Hartlib's notes contained references to Hunniades' knowledge of the magnetic property of load-stone, and on artificial gems; Hartl. 'Ephemerides' 1639, p.31; 'Notes on Natural Philosophie' in Hartl. 31/23, f.19a and 44/1, f.1a, 2a, 6a, 16a, 19a and 20a; M.Rady, 'A Transylvanian Alchemist in Seventeenth-Century London' in The Slavonic and Eastern European Review 72 (1994), pp.140-151; Gy.Orient, Erdélyi alchimisták, Bethlen Gábor fejedelem alchimiája (Kolozsvár, 1927); L.Szathmáry, Magyar alkémisták (Budapest, 1986).

against Rome.²⁵

(ii) The Activities of Hungarians at Universities
in Germany, the Dutch Republic and in England

Hungarian Reformed students' most significant contribution to the academic life of the foreign universities which they attended was the public defence of theological theses, with very few Hungarians managing to gain a foreign university degree during this period.²⁶ Academic disputations were held under the presidency of college professors, but the public defence of a thesis did not necessarily mark any independent contribution by a student to theological study on that subject. Academic disputations frequently focussed on inter-confessional arguments, valuable training for Hungarian and other student ministers on the fundamentals of Reformed theology, and on key areas of dispute with theological rivals. International Calvinist academic

²⁵ John Stoughton, Felicitas Ultimi Saeculi (London, 1640); Bisterfeld mentioned Stoughton in a letter to Hartlib of 1638; J.V.Kvacsala, Korrespondence Jana Amosa Komenského (Prague, 1897) xlv, pp.37-41; J.C.Whitebrook, 'Dr J.Stoughton the Elder' in Congregational Historical Society Transactions, 1913-1915. Also a letter from Ephraim Pagitt, a minister in London to János Tolnai Dali; G.Gömöri, 'Két levél a xvii.századból Tolnai D.János levelezéséből' in Adattár 10- Collectanea Tibortiana (ed.)B.Keserü, (Szeged, 1990), pp.331-7.

²⁶ Gáspár Tiszabécsi was made a 'magister artium' at Oxford in 1653, and his brother Tamás and István Budai also received degrees there. Hungarians in Holland gained doctorates in the 1650s; György Komáromi Csipkes, Sámuel Enyedi and János Pósa-házi at Utrecht, György Mártonfalvi at Franeker, and János Apáczai Csere at Harderwijk; 'Egyházkerületi iratok' 1/J, in the Tiszántul egyházkerület levéltára (Debrecen), sign. D67c, D67e/2 and D69c.

centres thus acted to reinforce doctrinaire Reformed beliefs, a buttress to the orthodoxy of the churches from which student ministers came. The disputation at Heidelberg which András Prágai completed in 1617, for example, set out the fundamentals of Reformed faith, and argued that only opponents used the term Calvinist in an effort to impute schism to Reformed Protestants, who were in fact defending early church traditions.²⁷ Hungarians often undertook disputations directed against anti-Trinitarian errors since, as we shall see in chapter 4, Hungarians were widely expected to have experience of, and require expertise in, refuting Arianism. Many disputations were also directed by student ministers against the Catholic church, with one Hungarian at Utrecht for example arguing that Catholics could not be good citizens of any state since their first loyalty lay with Rome.²⁸

The favourite topic of Hungarian students' disputations published at Heidelberg was the examination of such inter-confessional arguments and doctrinally sensitive issues, or direct polemic attacks against opponents' beliefs. Study in the Palatinate and elsewhere in Reformed Germany brought international confirmation for Hungarian and Transylvanian students' identification of the Catholic church as a demonic

²⁷ András Prágai, An Calviniani, quos vocant, Fundamentum Fidei Sartum, Tectum retineant? (Heidelberg, 1617) RMK 3/1201. Other disputations on this subject included Ferenc Széki, De orthodoxa Antiquitate et Heterodoxa Novitate under Gisbertus Voetius (Utrecht, 1656) RMK 3/1971; also RMK 3/1848 and 3/1986.

²⁸ Melchior Baczoni, De fide Papistarum, salutari an damnabili? (Utrecht, 1648) RMK 3/1689. Also in the 1655 collection of Gisbert Voetius; Miklós Illyefalvi, Quaestio an sedes Romana Compatibilis sit cum Politiis Reformatis.

enemy. Reformed student ministers who travelled to Heidelberg were also exposed to unionistic theology and irenic appeals for inter-Protestant cooperation, the domestic context for which will be examined in greater depth in chapter 4. The naming of the Pope as Antichrist encouraged Hungarians to follow some western Reformed leaders in seeking an accommodation with Lutherans against this commonly identified foe. Abraham Scultetus also made a significant impression on Hungarian and Transylvanian Reformed students who visited Heidelberg. Scultetus was the court preacher to Frederick V. from 1615, and a former teacher at Heidelberg and Wittenberg, whose collected sermons were translated into Hungarian by Albert Szenczi Molnár. Molnár also translated sermons which Scultetus had given at the Reformation jubilee of 1617, adding other tracts on the importance of combatting Jesuit schools, and on the idolatry and superstition which he had witnessed at Loreto, whilst travelling through Italy.²⁹

David Pareus, the New Testament professor and sometime rector at Heidelberg, had a major impact on a generation of Hungarian and Transylvanian Reformed students, many of whom lived in close proximity to Pareus at the university. Pareus was also in correspondence with Gábor Bethlen, and sent Bethlen a copy of his most celebrated work advocating Protestant unity, Irenicum sive de unione et synodo evangelicorum concilianda liber votius. In this 1614 treatise, Pareus outlined the need for Protestant

²⁹ Albert Szenczi Molnár, Postilla Scultetica, az egész esztendő által való vasárnapokra és fő innepekre rendeltetett evangeliomi textusoknak magyarázatja (Oppenheim, 1617) RMK 1/475; Szenczi Molnár, 'De idolo Lauretano et horribili papatus Rom. idolomania et tyrannide' in Secularis Concio Evangelica, azaz: Jubileus esztendei prédikáció Abraham Scultetus után (Oppenheim, 1618) RMK 1/482, pp.75-94.

unity against Catholicism, and suggested a conference of Calvinist and Lutheran rulers and theologians to seek out common ground.³⁰ In January 1617 Bethlen wrote back to Pareus with thanks for this gift, and sent a picture of himself as a New Year's present. Bethlen also recommended to Pareus' care two new students travelling to Germany, Gáspár Bojti and Márton Szilvási. In 1618 Pareus replied to Bethlen, praising Bojti and Szilvási, and writing of his pleasure at the improving situation for the Reformed community in Transylvania, with "the raising up of the true church, and the spreading of good schools, which are the kitchen gardens of every virtue and piety".³¹

David Pareus and his colleagues at Heidelberg organised a course for their students on Reformed dogmatics, which followed the teaching of Pareus' mentor, Zacharias Ursinus. The basics of Reformed theology were covered by lectures, supplemented by academic debates and disputations. At Heidelberg a total of 125 theological disputations are known to have been conducted by Hungarians between the beginning of the seventeenth century and the early 1620s.³² In 1611 a volume of Heidelberg students'

³⁰ P.Uray, 'Az irénizmus magyarországon a 16-17. század fordulóján' in B.Varjas(ed.), Irodalom és ideológia a 16-17. században. Memoria Saeculorum Hungariae vol.5 (Budapest, 1987), pp.187-207.

³¹ Ferenc Pápai Páriz, 'Romlott fal felépítése (Rudus Redivivum)' in MPEA 5 (1906), pp.173-181. Pareus' other Hungarian correspondents included István Miskolczi Csulyak, Albert Szenczi Molnár (who invited Pareus to his wedding), Lukács Hodászi and István Melotai Nyilás; J.Heltai, 'David Pareus magyar kapcsolatai' in Adattár 23, Tudóslevelek- művelődésünk külföldi kapcsolataihoz 1577-1797, J.Herner(ed.) (Szeged, 1989), pp.13-77.

³² A disputation given by György Darnai László under Heinrich Alting, Disputatio Harmonica, Confessionem Augustanae, Palatinae, et Helveticae, Orthodoxum Consensum exhibens (The only copy stolen from Sárospatak by the Soviet Army in 1945); Heltai,

disputations was published, including 43 Hungarians out of a total of 127 disputants, and the involvement of Hungarians was indeed noted in Pareus' introduction to this volume. A second volume of disputations was published in 1620, as a refutation of the views of the Catholic theologian Robert Bellarmine. This work was dedicated to the Transylvanian bishop János Keserői Dajka, with whom Pareus was in regular contact, and had 71 ex natione Ungarica et Transylvania out of 109 respondents.³³

Some of the subjects which Hungarians addressed in these disputations reflected Pareus' irenic concerns. One disputation by István Velich in the second Heidelberg volume tried to distance Lutheran from Catholic opinions over communion theology and the real presence in the sacraments. Velich, and fellow students András Prágai and Pál Kévi stressed in their disputations the similarities between the Reformed and Lutheran communions, an issue which had previously proved the major stumbling block to any rapprochement between the two churches. The Reformed view of communion was also presented by János Samarjai, later a Reformed superintendent in Hungary, who wrote of the bread and wine as sacramental symbols not mere signs, and promoted commonly-held Protestant arguments against the perceived

Országos Széchényi Könyvtár Évkönyve 1980, pp.243-345.

³³ David Pareus, Collegiorum...Theologicorum Pars Prima (Heidelberg, 1611) RMK 3/1097a, only the index and introduction; David Pareus, Collegiorum Theologicorum quibus universa theologica orthodoxa, et omnes prope Theologorum huius temporis controversae perspicue et varie explicantur Pars Altera Postremum est Anti-Bellarminianum succinctum in omnes Rob. Bellarmini Card. controversias (Heidelberg, 1620) RMK 3/1293a. Contributors to this volume included Jan Comenius, ('Johanne Amoso Nivano, Moravo'), my thanks to Howard Hotson for pointing this out.

Catholic idolatry in their adoration of the host.³⁴

Reformed academies in Germany suffered as Catholic forces advanced during the Thirty Years War. The disruption caused to Hungarian peregrination to western Europe was however short-lived, with academic disputations from Dutch universities appearing from the early 1620s. Public theological debate was used in the Dutch Republic, much as in Germany, to aid the study of Reformed dogmatics, and rehearse polemic theological arguments. Students at Franeker for example defended theses on Wednesdays and Saturdays, with lectures given by professors on other working days. A 1625 collection of Franeker disputations, given under William Ames, was directed against Robert Bellarmine's work on Catholic dogmatics, and included 103 disputations by 26 different Hungarian students.³⁵ Between 1623 and 1633 William Ames presided over 112 academic debates at which 34 Hungarian student ministers defended theses.³⁶ William Ames' influence over Hungarian student ministers extended beyond those

³⁴ Pareus, Collegiorum Theologicorum..., Pars altera, pp.326-330, 342-344, 515-520, 520-525 and passim.

³⁵ Bellarminus Ennervatus vel Disputationes Anti-Bellarminae in Illustri Frisiorum Academia, quae est Franekerae, publice habitae, A Guilielmo Amesio, Theologiae Doctore. Tom.1-2 (1625); 'Egyházkerületi iratok' 1/J, in the Tiszántul egyházkerület levéltára (Debrecen), sign. D67a; F.Postma, Disputationes Exercitii Gratia een inventarisatie van disputaties verdedigd onder Sibrandus Lubbertus Prof. Theol. te Franeker, 1585-1625 (Amsterdam, 1985).

³⁶ I.Czegle, 'Amesius korai magyar tanítványai' in Acta Historiae Litterarum Hungaricorum 10-11, (ed.) B.Keserű, (Szeged, 1971); K.Koltay, 'Perkins és Ames recepciója magyarországon 1660-ig' in A.Tamás, I.Bitskey(eds.), Studia Litteraria. Tanulmányok a xvi.-xvii. századi magyar irodalomból (Budapest, 1991), pp.99-109.

who studied immediately under him at Franeker, with former students following Ames' methods in Hungarian schools, and his books becoming widely dispersed throughout Hungary. Ames' religious radicalism had caused his suspension at Cambridge, and his exile from England to Franeker. Along with other proponents in England and Holland of practical divinity, Ames stressed the need to make theology more applicable to everyday life. According to Ames theology was the art of living well, and he advocated methodically organising the study of theology into one essential system, or 'marrow'. Indeed Ames tried to instil personal godliness amongst the student body at Franeker, in particular through his promotion of strict Sabbatarianism.³⁷

One area of great practical importance concentrated on by Hungarians in their disputations at Dutch universities, was mounting attacks against anti-Trinitarian doctrine. There was a major campaign being waged by the Dutch Reformed church against Socinianism from the 1640s, culminating in the prohibition of anti-Trinitarian worship in the Dutch Republic in the 1650s. Dutch professors were anxious that Hungarians and Transylvanians should be familiar with arguments refuting anti-Trinitarianism

³⁷ William Ames, Marrow of Divinity (London, 1642); K.L.Sprunger, 'Technometria: A Prologue to Puritan Theology' in The Journal of the History of Ideas 29 (1968), pp.115-122; K.L.Sprunger, The Learned Doctor William Ames (Chicago, 1972); K.Koltay, 'Two Hundred Years of English Puritan Books in Hungary' in Angol Filológiai Tanulmányok 20 (1989), pp.53-64; Koltay, Studia Litteraria, pp.99-109; M.Hazagh, 'Amesius és a magyar puritanizmus' in Angol Filológiai Tanulmányok 4 (1942), pp.94-112; 'William Ames and the Franeker link to English and American Puritanism' in G.T.Jensma, F.R.H.Smit and F.Westra(eds.) Universiteit Te Franeker 1585-1811 (Leeuwarden, 1985), pp.264-275; P.Berg, Angol hatások tizenhetedik századi irodalmunkban (Budapest, 1946).

before returning home.³⁸ In 1651, 54 Franeker disputations by 26 Hungarian respondents were published in a collegium hungaricum under the presidency of Nicholas Vedelius. Almost all were directed against Socinian and anti-Trinitarian opinions, with some highlighting Arminian and Anabaptist errors as well.³⁹ Lutherans too were increasingly a target for polemic attack, and in 1654 Nicholas Arnold published a volume of 40 disputations by eleven Hungarian students at Franeker, criticising Lutheran ceremony and church practices. In the dedication to this volume addressed to the Friesland Stadholder William Frederick, Arnold wrote that the disputations were by "the most learned young men of Hungary, who for many years past have been frequenting our academy".⁴⁰

A collection of 48 anti-Socinian disputations was published by Johann Polyander in 1640, ten of which were by Hungarian Reformed students at Leiden. Most of these either directly attacked anti-Trinitarian writers, or detailed Reformed theology

³⁸ Disputations by Hungarians at Dutch universities which were published directly against Arianism include; at Franeker, RMK 3/1361, 3/1377, 3/1407, 3/1476, 3/1521, 3/1556, 3/1767, 3/1932 and 3/1984; at Leiden, RMK 3/1503, 3/1550, 3/1686, 3/1687, 3/1703 and 3/1892; at Utrecht, RMK 3/1508, 3/1782 and 3/1972; and at Groningen, RMK 3/1750a.

³⁹ Opuscula Theologica Nova Nicolai Vedelii SS.Theologiae Doctoris ac Professoris in Academia Franecquerana (Franeker, 1651) RMK 3/1557 (Only copy in the Teleki library, Marosvásárhely). Volume 3 of this work was published separately in 1640 as Collegium Hungaricarum, in quo Disputationis LI. Controversiae Theologicae quae nobis cum omnibus adversariis intercedunt, sunt propositae.

⁴⁰ Heinrici Echardi, Lutherani, Scopae Dissolutae seu Fasciculus ejus controversiarum succincte refutatus et quadraginta publicis disputationibus in Academia Franekerana dissolutus a Nicolao Arnoldo (Franeker, 1654) RMK 3/1882a. Contributions from Gáspar Tiszabecsi, István Bányaí, István Némethi and István Budaeus.

on the role and person of Christ. This collection was dedicated to I.György Rákóczi, with Polyander expressing the wish that the church in Hungary continue to flourish under his leadership. Polyander also recognised the valuable contribution of students from Transylvania who had come to Holland to defend orthodoxy, and share with the Dutch church their knowledge of Socinianism.⁴¹ A collection of disputations published by Frederick Spanheim, professor at Leiden and then at Geneva, also included debates in which Hungarian students identified the false churches of their age as those of the anti-Trinitarians, Anabaptists and Papists.⁴² Meanwhile the Huguenot professor at Groningen university, Samuel Maresius, included 19 disputations by Hungarians in a 1650 volume primarily directed against Socinians, but which also included debates on broader questions of practical theology.⁴³

In the 1650s the university at Utrecht, where Gisbert Voetius was the leading theologian, became increasingly popular amongst Hungarian students. Voetius was the champion of orthodox Calvinism in the Dutch Reformed church, as well as a leading

⁴¹ Johann Polyander, Prima concertatio anti-Sociniana disputationibus XLVIII in Acad. Leydensi (Amsterdam, 1640) RMK 3/1553b. The disputations by Hungarians are nos. 3-5, 7, 9, 13, 15, 28, 30 and 48; I.Monok, 'Johannes Polyander magyar kapcsolataihoz' and P.Kulcsár, 'Kapornai Péter levele André Rivethez', (André Rivet was another professor at Leiden who also had Hungarian connections) in Adattár 23, pp.85-89 and 89-115.

⁴² Frederick Spanheim, Disputationum Theologicarum Syntagma (Miscellaneorum Pars Prima), and (Pars Secunda...Anti-Anabaptisticas Controversias complectitur) (Geneva, 1652), RMK 3/1800a, pp.300-350. Hungarian disputants in vol.1 at nos. 15, 31, 32, 36, 40 and 46-49, and in vol.2, nos. 12, 24 and 31.

⁴³ Samuel Maresius, Xenia Academica; sive 1. Disputatio Theologica de Personalitate adeoque Divinitate Spiritus Sancti contra Socinianos (Groningen, 1650) RMK 3/1750a.

advocate of practical theology and further reformation in the Dutch Republic. Voetius sponsored efforts to encourage reforms of morality and a more pure and genuine individual piety, arguing that the "pontifical religion or superstition, ...tries to vilify the true Reformed faith, by the hated name of puritan". Voetius was aware that Hungarians were translating works on practical and personal religion, commenting that;

"besides our Dutch scholars, French, Hungarians, Transylvanians, Germans and Swiss have upheld the standard of this [practical] theology in books translated from English, for which purpose Hungarian, Transylvanian, Dutch, German and Swiss students, both at home and in England, have studied the English language and examined English books".⁴⁴

Two theses by Hungarian students were included in a selection of Utrecht disputations compiled by Voetius, with István Péri examining whether Socinians should properly be called Christians.⁴⁵ A second volume of Utrecht disputations published by Voetius also included eight anti-Catholic disputations by Hungarians, in which the case for the Pope as Antichrist was considered. Several Hungarian disputants refuted Catholic claims that Mary had appeared in a vision at Pozsony in 1641, widely publicised in Hungary at the time by the Esztergom archbishop György Lippai.⁴⁶

Gisbert Voetius was also concerned about possible

⁴⁴ Gisbert Voetius on practical theology in 'Selectae Disputationes Theologiae' in J.W.Beardslee (ed.), Reformed Dogmatics (New York, 1965), pp.265-334, and especially pp.268-9, 282 and 331.

⁴⁵ Gisbert Voetius, Selectarum Disputationum Theologicarum Pars Prima (Utrecht, 1648) RMK 3/1712a, pp.434-441 and 1118-1137.

⁴⁶ Gisbert Voetius, Theologiae in Acad. Ultrajectina Professoris, Selectarum Disputationum Theologicarum Pars Secunda (Utrecht, 1655) RMK 3/1947a; no. 71, pp.1138-1139 by Péter Szatmári Baka.

connections between anti-Trinitarians in Transylvania and the Dutch Republic. In 1638 a Polish Socinian, resident in Holland, had written to an anti-Trinitarian minister at Kolozsvár in Transylvania. The letter however had been intercepted by the Transylvanian prince's agents, and Johann Bisterfeld, teacher at Gyulafehérvár, sent a copy of the letter back to Voetius stressing the continuing need to refute Socinianism. Voetius subsequently had this letter translated into Dutch and published, commenting favourably on the efforts of Hungarians to weaken the anti-Trinitarian church.⁴⁷ In 1639 Johann Bisterfeld reinforced the international perception of Transylvanian Calvinism as partly distinctive through its proximity to anti-Trinitarians, with the publication at Leiden of Bisterfeld's lengthy refutation of a work by a Polish Socinian minister, Johann Crell.⁴⁸ Other major figures in Dutch universities also made an impact on some of their Hungarian students including the liberal theologian Johann Coccejus, who taught at Franeker and then at Leiden. However the numbers of Hungarian students at Leiden fell significantly in the 1650s in favour of Utrecht, and whilst Coccejus' arguments for

⁴⁷ The letter was published in 1639 as Translaet van secckere Latijnsche brief geschreven door eenen Sociniaensch Predicant, waer van het Latijnsche exemplaar (in Transylvanien gheintercipicert zijnde). Suspicion of connections between Dutch Remonstrants and anti-Trinitarians in Transylvania drew a response from Johannes Wtenbogaert, see A.Vári, 'Kapcsolatok az erdélyi unitáriusok és a hollandiai remonstránsok között' in Keresztény Magvető 67 (1932), pp.109-120 and 167-183; Ö.Miklós, 'Statorius János lengyel socinianus lelkész levele Frank Ádám kolozsvári unitárius lelkészhez, 1638-ból' in Keresztény Magvető 52 (1917), pp.68-85.

⁴⁸ Johann Bisterfeld, De Uno Deo. Patre, Filio, ac Spiritu Sancto mysterium pietatis, contra Iohannis Crellii (Leiden, 1639) RMK 3/1550a. Also against Crell and Volkelius; Johann Alsted, Prodromus Religionis Triumphantis (Gyulafehérvár, 1635).

the need to return to an open examination of Biblical texts were to cause considerable controversy in the Hungarian church from the 1650s, they did not receive sufficient support in Hungary to cause such a damaging rift as in the Dutch church, where Coccejans were vehemently opposed by orthodox theologians led by Voetius.⁴⁹

Many theological texts were brought back to Hungary and Transylvania when students' peregrinations came to an end, and they returned to posts as directors of Reformed schools, and ministers in parishes across the region. One of the most impressive collectors of books was István Geleji Katona, the Transylvanian superintendent, who whilst in Heidelberg acquired Calvin's Institutes, along with the works of Aristotle, Theodore Beza, William Perkins, William Whitaker, Amand Polanus, anti-Socinian books, works by David Pareus and by Bartholomaeus Keckermann.⁵⁰ István Miskolczi Csulyak similarly brought back books to Hungary from Wittenberg and Heidelberg including classical works, and biblical commentaries by Bullinger, Calvin, Johann Piscator, Beza, works by Petrus Ramus, Johann Alsted and

⁴⁹ Coccejus knew some Hungarian students whilst a student and teacher at Bremen; G.Gömöri, 'A fiatal Coccejus magyar barátai és tanítványai' in Acta Historiae Litterarum Hungaricarum 25, (Szeged, 1988), pp.189-196; J.Koltay-Kastner, 'Tótfalusi Kis Miklós coccejánizmusa' in ITK 58 (1954), pp.284-299; J.Zoványi, 'Coccejus és theológiai rendszere' in Protestáns Szemle 2 (1890), pp.78-104 and 241-266.

⁵⁰ 'Catalogus librorum...in academia Heidelbergensis et alibi comparatorum'; J.Koncz, 'Geleji Katona István könyveinek lajstroma' in Magyar Könyvszemle 14 (1899), pp.270-276.

David Pareus.⁵¹ Reformed patrons in Hungary and Transylvania were also acquiring increasing stocks of Reformed theological works during this period, with Zsigmond Rákóczi for example possessing a wide collection of books by many prominent Calvinist authors, both foreign and domestic.⁵²

It was not only some individuals in Hungary and Transylvania who were accumulating recent Reformed theological and philosophical texts, largely through the peregrination to western Europe of Hungarian and Transylvanian students. Local school libraries benefited from donations by former students of works by western Calvinist authors. It has been estimated that during this period there were up to 5000 volumes in the library at Gyulafehérvár, up to 2000 at Sárospatak, and around 500 books at the school in Kolozsvár. Catalogues of the Sárospatak school library from 1623 and 1635 show a wide range of works available for study including many works by Keckermann, and by theologians such as Perkins and Pareus. The patronage of Gábor Bethlen allowed the school at Szatmár by 1632 to acquire works by Pareus, Keckermann and William Whitaker amongst others, and in 1633 the Szatmár school also bought up a private collection including more works by Keckermann, and theologians such as Johann Piscator,

⁵¹ Around half of István Miskolczi Csulyak's 381 books were published in Germany, around another 100 in Switzerland, and only one of Miskolczi's books was published in England; Adattár 13. Magyarországi magánkönyvtárak, 1533-1657 vol.1, A.Varga(ed.) (Szeged-Budapest, 1986), no.30, pp.61-77; nos.47, 57, 68 and 69. For the inventory of a Zemplén minister András Demétei in 1657 see J.Zoványi, 'Egy református pap könyvtára a xvii-ik században' in Magyar Könyvszemle 32 (1907), p.381.

⁵² 'Rakocziana' in the SNK, vol.1113; I.Harsányi, 'A Rákóczi könyvtár és katalógusa' in Magyar Könyvszemle 36 (1913), pp.17-28, 136-147, 232-240 and 341-344.

Perkins and Ames.⁵³ In Transylvania, the school library at Kolozsvár had acquired commentaries by all the major Reformed authors by the 1660s with works by Alsted, Pareus and Keckermann again prominent, along with a considerable selection of works in English. Similarly the school library at Marosvásárhely profited from donations by the Transylvanian bishop György Csulai.⁵⁴

This wave of influence from foreign Calvinist universities, professors, and their theological works was not however received with complete equanimity in the Hungarian church. Many leading clergy, although aware of the benefits of a broad engagement with western co-religionists, were fearful that disparate and uncontrolled foreign contacts might produce divisions in the church, and demands for innovation and radical reform. Such concerns led to periodic efforts to control peregrination, and the flow of ideas and literature which were perceived to be of alien origin. Anxieties had been expressed about the impact of contact with Germany even in the sixteenth century. A synod at

⁵³ 'Catalogus librorum in bibliotheca scholae illustris Sarospatachien(sis) existen(tium) cum diligenti inspectione reformatus Anno D(omi)ni 1635' (715 volumes) in Adattár 14. Partiumi könyvesházak 1623-1730, B.Keserű(ed.) (Szeged, 1988), pp.56, 328, 330 and 356-363. By 1674 the Szatmár library showed greater Dutch and English influences including more works of Ames, Comenius and Ramus. The school library at Nagybánya in 1669 had a similar stock of books, Adattár 14, p.377. See also the collections of individual Hungarians in Kassa in the 1650s in Adattár 15. Kassa város olvasmányai, 1562-1731, B.Keserű, I.Monok(eds.) (Szeged, 1990).

⁵⁴ Adattár 16. Erdélyi könyvesházak, vol.1-2 (Szeged, 1991), pp.49-65 and 90; G.Sipos, Olvasmánytörténeti dolgozatok 1. A kolozsvári református kollégium könyvtára a xvii. században (Szeged, 1991); Zs.Jakó, 'A nagyenyedi Bethlen kollégium könyvtárának kezdetei és első korszaka (1622-1658)', in Írás, könyv, értelmiség (Bucharest, 1976), pp.199-209.

Keresztur in eastern Hungary in 1593 decided to write to the university authorities at Heidelberg and Wittenberg asking that no more loans be given to Hungarian students, and denouncing students in Germany who had brought the name of the Hungarian church into disrepute. An eastern Tisza synod in September 1631 at Nyirbátor warned of the danger of Arminianism infiltrating into Hungary, and wanted students to subscribe to conditions dedicating themselves to Reformed orthodoxy before going abroad, and only to visit England with the express approval of their patrons.⁵⁵

Such concerns were sparked into life again with the signing of a 'League of Piety' by ten Hungarian students in London on 9 February 1638. These students, led by János Tolnai Dali, bound themselves to a pact in which they promised to act on what they had learnt in England to restore purity to the Hungarian church, to get rid of all hierarchical authority, and devise new church ceremonies. Miklós Kecskeméti, one of the signatories, handed a copy of this statement over to the eastern Tisza superintendent István Keresszeghi, who then raised the matter at a regional synod at Debrecen in September 1638. Representatives from both the northern and eastern Tisza districts at this synod responded to the students' demands by stating that all such complaints must proceed through the proper channels of the established church hierarchy and clergy synods. The synod also decided not to receive any more 'anglo-academic ministers' (students who had

⁵⁵ Subscriptions by students from 1632 in 'Catalogus Studiosorum Beneficiariorum ad Academias extera' in 1/j, 'Egyházkerületi iratok' no.D1, in the Tiszántúl egyházkerületi levéltár (Debrecen).

visited England) into any position in the church, until they had given absolute assurances of their orthodoxy, and promised to acquiesce to the traditional pattern of Hungarian church government.

The Debrecen synod was also concerned to prevent the infiltration of Arminianism and other "exotic dangers", and decided to set out seven conditions for all future students going to universities abroad. These conditions concentrated on the need for the approval of students' patrons for every part of any academic peregrination, and warned students to avoid such opinions as Puritanism and Arminianism. Hungarian and Transylvanian Reformed students thereafter had to promise to keep these conditions before they were allowed to go abroad.⁵⁶ New conditions were later imposed by the Tokaj synod of the northern Tisza church in February 1646, and confirmed by the national church synod at Szatmár held in June 1646. All students on their return to Hungary from foreign universities had to subscribe to the Heidelberg catechism and the Helvetic confession, and promise not to teach Anabaptism, Socinianism, Puritanism or Arminianism, nor to promote any innovation to the normal practices and festivals of the Hungarian church on their own authority, before they could take up any church office.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Debrecen synod of 1638, ZEP /1629-1645, p.313. Also the 'Tiszántul ref. egyh. kerületi jegyzőkönyvek', vol.1, MOL box no.1883, pp.77 and 650. Names of students subscribing to keep the Debrecen and later Tokaj conditions are recorded from the 1640s in the 'Liber Reditum Ecclesiasticum Comitatus Zempleniensis 1623' MOL box no.1907, pp.474-477.

⁵⁷ István Szilágyi Benjámin, 'Acta Synodi Nationalis... 1646', ff.398-400; ZEP/1638-1651, ff.129-133. A copy of the Tokaj restrictions on travel in the 'Tiszántuli ref. egyházkerület-debreceeni egyházmegye jegyzőkönyve' vol.1, 1615-1655, MOL box

Hungarian student ministers in western universities were not empty vessels waiting to be filled by the ideas of whichever wing of the Calvinist church they first came into contact with in Germany, the Dutch Republic or in England. However several influential themes emerged from the expansion of connections between Hungarians and western co-religionists in the early seventeenth century involving the bolstering of Calvinist dogma, inter-confessional relations with Catholics, Lutherans and anti-Trinitarians, and the development of a practical Reformed theology and religion concerned to promote personal piety. Beyond the lecture halls of Heidelberg, Franeker, Leiden and Utrecht, Hungarian students were likely to be warmly received in the west by those who were most strongly committed to Calvinism as a trans-national movement. When Hungarians began to visit England, links were established with the kind of Anglicans who were in dispute with their own church hierarchy. Tales about these radical London Protestants, and about the content of some theology teaching in the Dutch Republic provoked the Transylvanian Reformed church leadership to act first in a misdirected fashion against possible Arminian infiltrators, and then more accurately against Puritan influences. Despite these perceived dangers the Hungarian church's goal of playing its full part in the Calvinist International was never replaced by an aim of self-sufficiency and merely building-up and defending Calvinism in one country.

**'THREE FOREIGNERS' AND THEIR FRIENDS; REFORMED EDUCATION
IN HUNGARY AND TRANSYLVANIA**

**(i) Foreign Educators in Hungarian Reformed Schools;
Johann Alsted, Johann Bisterfeld and Jan Comenius**

The Reformed church in Hungary and Transylvania did not solely become more involved in, and influenced by, the world of international Calvinism in the early seventeenth century through student ministers being sent westward to study at Reformed academic centres. A series of prominent Protestants moved eastward to serve at new and developing Reformed colleges in Hungary and Transylvania. One circle of leading Calvinist and Protestant intellectuals, at once educational reformers, theologians and teachers, indeed oversaw the development of an advancing network of Hungarian Protestant schools. Three foreigners in particular dominated the landscape, Johann Alsted, Johann Bisterfeld and Jan Comenius. These three were closely connected to one another, and in contact with John Dury, son of an Scottish minister exiled to Poland, and Samuel Hartlib from Elbing. Indeed Comenius, the exiled bishop of the Moravian Brethren, was bound to a common formula of action with Hartlib and Dury by a pact signed in London in 1642 to promote religious peace, and the reform of schools and learning.¹

¹ H.Trevor-Roper, 'Three Foreigners: The Philosophers of the Puritan Revolution' in Religion, The Reformation and Social Change (London, 1967).

As we have seen, Reformed patrons and the church hierarchy in Hungary and Transylvania made determined efforts in this period to improve local educational facilities, by promoting academies and schools, and by supporting elite student ministers to study at western Calvinist universities. The aim of improving public morality and clergy standards through education, had long before been set in the Hungarian church by articles agreed at Debrecen in 1567.² In this chapter I shall stress that Alsted, Bisterfeld and Comenius were instrumental in leading educational reform in the Hungarian Protestant schools of the early seventeenth century. Devoted to international Protestant cooperation within an apocalyptic world-view, these three aimed at a more perfect reformation of religion, and were dedicated to pursuing further reform of schools and learning, as a precursor to an expected universal renewal of churches and states. The preoccupations of these foreigners to usher in a millennial age, were also to play an important role in intensifying apocalyptic expectation in Transylvania, which will be discussed further in chapter 9.

Alsted, Bisterfeld and Comenius were to have a major impact on clergy training, and on the domestic education of Reformed student ministers as the leading authors of school text-books, and as teachers in the main Reformed educational centres at Gyulafehérvár and Sárospatak, and their influence was felt elsewhere in other large schools at Debrecen, Kolozsvár, Szatmár and Nagyvárad. The content of their teaching and text-books, and

² A.Kiss, A xvi. században tartott magyar református zsinatok végzései (Budapest, 1881), 1567 Debrecen articles, no.65, p.602.

their ideas on reforming logic and methods of learning, were to determine the pattern of Calvinist education in Hungary and Transylvania. The influence of Johann Alsted and Johann Bisterfeld extended beyond their development of the curriculum and the improvements which they made to standards of teaching at the Gyulafehérvár academy. Their wider and shared pedagogical aims included setting an encyclopedic agenda for Protestant education, a goal to provide an all-encompassing knowledge later taken up by Comenius during his efforts to restructure the school at Sárospatak in northern Hungary. In this chapter I shall also examine the efforts of native Hungarians and Transylvanians who championed the cause of educational reform, in particular looking at the careers of János Tolnai Dali at the school in Sárospatak, and of János Apáczai Csere at Kolozsvár.

I shall stress that Transylvania's 'three foreigners' were in contact with like-minded reformers elsewhere on the continent and in England, including Samuel Hartlib and John Dury. Indeed correspondence flowed between these figures on such subjects as ecclesiastical peace, practical divinity and plans for universal Christian renewal. Samuel Hartlib was the conduit for much intercommunication between dispersed adherents of such projects and plans for educational, religious and political reform. John Dury meanwhile supported irenic appeals, devised schemes to investigate the secrets of nature, and develop a magical language by which those secrets might be delivered.³ An exiled Silesian

³ Hartl., 68/4; for Dury's advice about studies in 1647, "make use of Keckerman so farre as hee hath written; and what he hath not written of, you will find done by Alstedius". Hartl. 'Ephemerides' 1639, p.42 on Hartlib's preference for Keckermann over Ramus. John Dury corresponded with Bisterfeld in the 1630s

called Cyprian Kinner was another link in this chain of Reformed intellectual communication between Transylvania, Germany and England. Kinner spent part of his exile in Hungary and Transylvania, and was acquainted with Alsted and Bisterfeld from visits to Gyulafehérvár in 1635.⁴ Through such channels this group of Protestant intellectuals remained in contact with one another throughout the period, and the communication between them reveals much about the priorities and interests of leading personalities in the international Calvinist community, and about Transylvania's perceived role in that community. The correspondence and writings of this group confirm that they believed Transylvania had a significant part to play in the European Protestant world, and shared an optimistic, millenarian vision of expected future improvements in the study of philosophy, and in education. Such common interests drew them into irenicism, eschatological excitement and chiliasm, and into

(Hartl. 9/1, f.95b in 1639), and again when Dury was in Zurich in 1654. J.M.Batten, John Dury: Advocate of Christian Reunion (Chicago, 1944); G.H.Turnbull, Hartlib, Dury and Comenius (London, 1947); G.H.Turnbull, Samuel Hartlib- a Sketch of his Life and his Relations to J.A.Comenius (Oxford, 1920); C.Webster, Samuel Hartlib and the Advancement of Learning (Cambridge, 1970); C.Webster, The Great Instauration. Science, Medicine and Reform, 1626-1660 (London, 1975); M.Greengrass, M.Leslie, and T.Raylor(eds.), Samuel Hartlib and Universal Reformation. Studies in Intellectual Communication (Cambridge, 1994).

⁴ Cyprian Kinner, A Continuation of Mr.John-Amos-Comenius School-Endeavours or a summary delineation of Dr.Cyprian Kinner Silesian his Thoughts concerning Education (London, 1648), published by Hartlib; Hartl. 1/33, ff.16-17 and 39a, and 102a for Cyprian Kinner to Hartlib from 1647 to 1649 on Alsted and Bisterfeld; also see Hartl. 4/5, f.4a. Alsted and Kinner conferred amongst other matters on the writings of a Silesian astrologer. Thomas Roe, the English ambassador at the Porte and in correspondence with Transylvanian princes, was a patron and supporter of Dury, and in contact with Hartlib during the 1630s; The Negotiations of Sir Thomas Roe in his embassy to the Ottoman Porte from 1621 to 1628 S.Richardson(ed.), (London, 1740).

even less orthodox fields such as alchemy, astrology and mystic philosophies.

A number of foreign Protestants were attracted to serve in the emerging system of Reformed schools in Transylvania and eastern Hungary. Contact between Gábor Bethlen and Silesia led to the arrival of Martin Opitz, Friedrich Pauli and Jakob Kopisch at the new princely academy at Gyulafehérvár in 1622. Martin Opitz stayed at Gyulafehérvár the longest, and taught Latin before returning home by the summer of 1623, to be followed by Johann Schwarzenbach from Zurich who taught Greek at the academy until 1625.⁵ Just before Bethlen's death in 1629 more foreigners were enticed to Transylvania with the arrival of Alsted, Alsted's son-in-law Bisterfeld, and Ludwig Piscator from Herborn. Alsted was to remain in Transylvania until his death in 1638, Piscator returned to Germany in 1647, and Bisterfeld continued to work for the Transylvanian princes until his death in 1655.⁶ A Moravian exile called Johann Crispinus replaced Piscator in 1647, and taught at the princely academy until 1655. II.György Rákóczi then

⁵ B.Jakab, Opitz Márton a gyulafehérvári Bethlen-iskolánál (Pécs, 1909); I.Komor, 'Tanulmányok a xvii. századi magyar-német kulturális érintkezések köréből. Martin Opitz gyulafehérvári tanársága' in Filológiai Közöny 1 (1955), pp.534-544. A letter of safe passage in 1625 from János Keserői Dajka to Schwarzenbach in the 'Lugossy József oklevél gyűjtemény 1281-1854', at the Tiszántúl egyházkerületi könyvtár kéziratára (Debrecen), sign. R.111, no.68.

⁶ G.Menk, 'Das Restitutionsedikt und kalvinistische Wissenschaft. Die Berufung Johann Heinrich Alsteds, Philipp Ludwig Piscators und Johann Heinrich Bisterfelds nach Siebenbürgen' in Jahrbuch der Hessischen Kirchengeschichtlichen Vereinigung 31 (1980), pp.29-63. Verses which the Germans composed were read at Bethlen's funeral; Gy.Kristóf, 'Zsidó, görög és latin gyászversek Bethlen Gábor temetésére' in Erdélyi Múzeum 36 (1931), pp.90-97.

invited Isaac Basire, an exiled Anglican priest and former chaplain to Charles I., to lead the Gyulafehérvár academy until its destruction during the Tartar invasion of 1658.⁷

Other Hungarian Reformed schools also attracted foreign teachers, most notably the Rákóczi school at Sárospatak where David Valerius, by origin a Spanish Jew, and converted to Christianity by Johann Alsted, taught theology from 1636 until 1639. In 1643 Jan Comenius had been offered a post at Gyulafehérvár to replace Johann Alsted, who had previously taught Comenius at Herborn. Comenius however refused this offer, and only finally succumbed to repeated invitations from the Rákóczi family in 1650, when he began teaching at Sárospatak.⁸ The relative stability of the Reformed church in Transylvania attracted foreign students as well as teachers to the region. There were Poles, Bohemians, Moravians, and visiting Dutch and German students at Gyulafehérvár during this period, with a Polish and a Bohemian student defending theological theses before Johann Bisterfeld in 1641.⁹

⁷ W.N.Darnell(ed.), The Correspondence of Isaac Basire (London, 1831), p.127; MSS.Hunter 10/22 in the Durham Cathedral Library, see Codices Manuscriptae Ecclesiae Cathedralis Dunelmensis (ed.)T.Rud.

⁸ A.Ötvös, 'Geleji Katona István élete és levelei I.Rákóczi Györgyhez' in Új Magyar Múzeum 10 (1859), pp.199-233. A Venetian called Marcus Antonius was probably teaching at the school in Nagyvárad in the 1630s; Adattár 1. Polgári irodalmi és kulturális törekvések a tizenhetedik század első felében, B.Keserü(ed.) (Budapest-Szeged, 1965), pp.239-277; J.Herepei, 'Adatok a Rákócziak váradi kollégiumának történetéhez' in Adattár 2. Apáczai és kortársai, B.Keserü(ed.) (Budapest-Szeged, 1966), p.118; S.Szilágyi, 'I.Rákóczi György fejedelem levelezése Tolnai István sárospataki pappal' in PEIL 18 (1875), pp.802-805.

⁹ J.Herepei, 'Magyarországi iskolákban tanult külföldi ifjak' in Adattár 1, pp.539-543. 'Petrus Mylius, Polonus' defended an anti-Socinian thesis, and 'Samuel Decanus, Bohemus'

By far the most significant impact on Reformed education in Hungary and Transylvania was made by Alsted, Bisterfeld and Comenius. Ideas and proposals which they espoused for school reform, and refinements to methods of learning which they supported, emerged from the German Reformed academic world during the early decades of the seventeenth century. The university at Herborn where Alsted, Bisterfeld and Piscator had worked prior to coming to Transylvania, had been a centre of ideas about reforming Protestant education. From the 1580s Johann Piscator encouraged the study of practical and useful theology, and sought methods to simplify the training of logic towards similar utilitarian goals. In the early seventeenth century Alsted also wanted to reform logic as an academic discipline, and favoured using approaches developed by a Frenchman, Petrus Ramus, as well as a re-ordering of Aristotle's logic devised by Bartholomaeus Keckermann at Danzig. Meanwhile at Heidelberg David Pareus, who had been a firm opponent of Ramist techniques, also warmly embraced Keckermann's systematic Aristotelianism, known as 'methodical peripateticism'.¹⁰

an anti-Catholic disputation; de Domini Nostro Jesu Christo, ...Petrus Mylius, Polonus, and de Divina Scripturae Sacrae Eminentia, ...Samuel Decanus Bohemus (Gyulafehérvár, 1641), RMK 2/570 and 2/571 (Academy libraries of Budapest and Cluj).

¹⁰ W.J.Ong, Ramus: Method, and the Decay of Dialogue (Cambridge[MA], 1958); G.A.Benrath, 'Die Theologische Fakultät der Hohen Schule Herborn im Zeitalter der Reformierten Orthodoxie' in the Jahrbuch der Hessischen Kirchengeschichtlichen Vereinigung 36 (1985), pp.1-17. Szenczi Molnár was in correspondence with Johann Piscator, Alsted and Ludwig Piscator at Herborn, and with Bartholomew Keckermann at Danzig; L.Dézsi, Szenczi Molnár Albert naplója, levelezése és irományai (Budapest, 1898), pp.109, 167, 187-8, 316-7, 332-4 and 433-4; I.Czegle, 'Rámista volt-e Szenczi Molnár Albert' in Adattár 4. Szenci Molnár Albert és a magyar késő reneszánsz (Szeged, 1978), pp.43-48; F.A.Yates, Lull and Bruno. Collected Essays, vol.1 (London,

Alsted meanwhile went further, and his preoccupation with philosophical harmony led him to attempt to draw together the logic of Aristotle, Petrus Ramus, and that used by the medieval mystic Raymond Lull into one system. Alsted was concerned to provide teachers and schools with new techniques to study core subjects such as grammar and rhetoric, and to expand learning over an enormous range of subjects from theology, law and medicine, to metallurgy, agriculture and alchemy. Alsted compiled a universal Encyclopaedia of all known disciplines and subjects, which he envisaged being used as a stepping stone towards the ultimate goal of achieving the perfect organisation of knowledge, lost since the fall of Adam.¹¹

Alsted's efforts to realise these ambitious proposals for 'Christian encyclopedism' continued to develop after his arrival in Transylvania in 1629. In 1637 he proposed to recast the entire Encyclopaedia using a mystic logic of signs and numbers which he believed could develop the human memory. Alsted seemed to be aware that this work was on the fringe of what was publicly acceptable in Calvinist circles. In a letter written shortly after Alsted's death, the Transylvanian bishop István Geleji Katona revealed to I.György Rákóczi that Alsted had declared his later writings to be 'sub anathemate', and ordered them to be

1982).

¹¹ Alsted published works on Lull and logic in 1609, and on the harmony between Lull, Aristotle and Ramus in 1610. The Encyclopaedia Universa was published in 1629. H.Hotson, 'Johann Heinrich Alsted', (Oxford D.Phil, 1994); R.J.W.Evans, 'Alsted és Erdély' in Korunk 32 (1973); P.Cole, A Neglected Educator: Johann Heinrich Alsted (Sydney, 1910); J.V.Kvacsala, 'Johann Heinrich Alstedt' in Ungarische Revue 9 (1889), pp.628-642; L.E.Loemker, 'Leibniz and the Herborn Encyclopedists' in the Journal of the History of Ideas 22 (1961), pp.323-338.

burned. Geleji refused however to co-operate, and so Alsted despite being in his last days, undertook the effort to throw all his papers into an outside toilet. The faithful Geleji had recovered what was salvageable from the mess, no doubt to Alsted's chagrin, and handed all the papers on to Bisterfeld.¹² News of Alsted's work caused great interest amongst the Samuel Hartlib circle in England. Cyprian Kinner reported to Hartlib on the contents of a letter he claimed to have received from Alsted in 1636, which hinted at how Alsted may have been working towards revealing the secrets of learning, and aiming to return to a Adamite state of knowledge.¹³ The Hartlib group was also very anxious to get hold of Alsted's revised 'Encyclopaedia', and in 1648 Hartlib received word that Alsted's son had a copy at Herborn, but it was to remain unpublished.¹⁴

Bisterfeld inherited Alsted's mantle after 1638 in leading the academy at Gyulafehérvár. Bisterfeld too was convinced of the need to develop new teaching strategies, to attain advances in students' knowledge and understanding. Meanwhile Comenius' ideas on educational methods had been developing during the 1640s, so that by the time of his arrival at Sárospatak in 1650 his intentions were clear. Comenius trusted that it would be possible

¹² A.Beke, 'Geleji Katona István levelei Rákóczyhoz' in ITK 4 (1894), pp.336-346, a letter of December 1638.

¹³ "Oceanus noster unus est, sed in tria se diffundit Maria; Theologiam, dico, Kabbalam, et Magiam...Unum, credo, est subjectum omnis mirabilitatis, in caelo et in terra. Sed tria sunt ipsius myrothecia", Hartl. 1/33, Alsted to Kinner, relayed on to Hartlib, 5 Dec. 1636.

¹⁴ Hartl. 1/33; 46/6, f.35a; 'Ephemerides' 1638/34b; "There are many grosse errors left uncorrected in the new Encyclopaedia Alstedi"; Hartl. 'Ephemerides' 1638/35B, p.18, "Alsted is reviewing and setting out de Novo his Encyclopaedia- Neudorf(?)".

to proceed "to the utmost degree of knowledge" in the short period he believed to remain before an imminent apocalypse. Comenius planned the perfection of all human knowledge, scientific, philosophical, political and religious, through a book containing all things necessary to be known, "a store house of universal learning", "to be termed pansophy, an universal harmony", which could be taught to all by uniform methods and principles. Comenius proposed that this pansophia, or 'Christian pansophical philosophy', would be the sum total of previous bodies of wisdom, and encyclopedias, "the common mercury of the nations of the whole world", by which the mysteries of the Scriptures and of nature might be unlocked.¹⁵

Despite large areas of agreement and common interests between Bisterfeld and Comenius, the two men were to argue on various matters.¹⁶ Samuel Hartlib had sent a copy of Comenius' Pansophiae Prodromus to Transylvania before Alsted's death. Bisterfeld read it, and argued in a letter to Hartlib in 1638 that Comenius' ambitions for universal knowledge were flawed because of his neglect of metaphysics, which Bisterfeld thought was key to the right ordering of all knowledge. Bisterfeld

¹⁵ See an edition published by Samuel Hartlib of Jan Comenius, A Patterne of Universall Knowledge (London, 1651), especially pp.3-4, 42 and 55. Jan Comenius, A Reformation of Schooles (London, 1642), published by Hartlib from Pansophiae Prodromus (1639), and The Labyrinth of the World and Paradise of the Heart (1623). Comenius' ambitions were universal; he promoted ideas for world bodies in politics and the administration of justice, 'panorthosia', and the establishment of a universal language, 'panglottia'; M.Spinka, 'Comenian Pansophic Principles' in Church History 22 (1953), pp.155-165; I.Komor, 'A Comenius utópia alkotmánya' in Pedagógiai Szemle 20 (1970), pp.916-922.

¹⁶ In May 1650 Bisterfeld wrote to Zsigmond of some slight caused him by Comenius; J.Kvacsala, 'Bisterfeld János Henrik élete' in Századok 25 (1891), p.552.

stressed that any encyclopedia should be "solid" and ordered by metaphysics, otherwise the essential unity between academic disciplines would be lost. Bisterfeld described a true encyclopedia as nothing other than "the proportions of nature, or a picture of truth". Bisterfeld and Comenius nevertheless corresponded in 1643, discussing reforms of learning, and Comenius even described Bisterfeld as a vehement pansophist. Bisterfeld indeed wrote to Hartlib in 1647 of his strongly held belief in the fundamental unity of knowledge and the possibility of developing schools and text-books which would allow a return to a Genesis state of universal knowledge. Bisterfeld further called into question the wisdom of those who doubted the usefulness of 'pansophic' methods, towards bringing the goal of an all-encompassing knowledge to fruition.¹⁷

**(ii) New Reformed methods of learning for
Hungary and Transylvania?**

In the remainder of this chapter I shall outline the movement towards reforming the schools of Hungary and Transylvania in the early seventeenth century. I shall indicate that although at

¹⁷ J.V.Kvacsala(ed.), Korrespondence Jana Amose Komenského (Prague, 1897), Bisterfeld to Hartlib in 1638, xlvi, pp.37-41. Bisterfeld to Zsigmond Rákóczi in December 1649, S.Szilágyi(ed.), 'Herczeg Rákóczy Zsigmond levelezése' in TT 1888, pp.108-110. Hartl. 7/107, f.1a, Bisterfeld to Hartlib in July 1647; 7/63 for the correspondence between Comenius and Bisterfeld in January and May 1643, and inquiries to Bisterfeld about 'ars Lullistica', Hartl. 'Ephemerides' 1648, p.14. Bisterfeld himself came to be regarded as a magician, with one of his supposed magic-books described in Ferenc Benkő, Parnassusi időtöltés 7. Enyedi ritkaságok (Nagyenyed, 1796), pp.10 and 29.

times the progress of this reform was disjointed, there were sustained efforts during this period to implement proposals for the reorganisation of Protestant education in Transylvania, heavily influenced by the new philosophy and methods of learning outlined above. This drive for improved knowledge spread from the foreigners who worked in the academy at Gyulafehérvár and the school at Sárospatak, to include Hungarians also committed to advancing the renewal of their church and society through educational reform.

Hungarian student ministers who travelled to study in western Protestant universities were indeed at the forefront of early efforts to improve traditional practices in local Hungarian schools. Imre Szilvásújfalvi Anderkó for example was school director at Nagybánya in 1589, and at Debrecen between 1596 and 1599. He had also travelled to study at Wittenberg, visiting Holland and England as well. In 1597 he published Admonitiones de ratione discendi, atque docendi, which noted the failures of domestic education, and advocated that more Hungarian students should attend foreign universities. Szilvásújfalvi also recommended that students at local schools be divided into classes according to aptitude, and that traditional student-led private study groups, and practices of dividing students by the payment of fees and other non-academic criteria should be abandoned. In Debrecen and other higher level schools, he proposed that there should be three classes, with children beginning their education with Latin grammar, and slowly

introduced to the central tenets of the Reformed faith.¹⁸ Szilvásújfalvi's proposals however met with a slow response and in 1648 a synod at Debrecen was still addressing such problems in local schools, and was critical of the continuing lack of class divisions. Regulations introduced in 1657 finally divided the school at Debrecen into six classes, with the school year divided into two terms, and also a requirement for frequent academic disputations to be held.¹⁹

Another main area of criticism of Hungarian schools was that teaching remained only part of a minister's career, with most leaving schools after one or two years service. Other proposals addressed the problems of what should be taught in Hungarian schools, and how to teach it. In 1621 Albert Szenczi Molnár published a collection of seven tracts on educational methods as Syllecta Scholastica, including arguments favouring schooling for girls, and the use of the vernacular in teaching. Molnár also included in his collection regulations used in Palatinate schools on teaching and discipline, and a curriculum for eight years of classes, and as we have already seen such foreign school regulations were widely copied by schools across Hungary and

¹⁸ B.K.Nagy, 'Szilvásújfalvi Imre pedagógiai intelmei' in Studia et Acta Ecclesiastica 3 (Budapest, 1955), pp.879-887; B.Keserü, 'Újfalvi Imre és a magyar későreneszánsz' in Acta Historiae Litterarum Hungaricarum 8, pp.3-16 and 9, pp.3-47 (Szeged, 1968).

¹⁹ Student grievances boiled over into disturbances at Debrecen in 1627, 1644, 1648, 1650 and in 1657; 'A debreceni tanács által alkotott rendszabályok a debreceni főiskolára vonatkozólag, 1657-ből' in MPEIF 5 (1874), pp.395-397; I.Révész, 'A debreceni főiskoláról' in MPEIF 1 (1870), pp.275-290 and 391-427. S.Nagy, A debreceni kollégium (Debrecen, 1940), pp.21-108; F.Zsigmond, A debreceni református kollégium története 1538(?) - 1938, pp.31-73; J.Barcza, A debreceni református kollégium története (Budapest, 1988), pp.5-43.

Transylvania.²⁰

The arrival of Alsted, Bisterfeld and Piscator in Transylvania did not therefore mark the development of a higher academic curriculum and moves to change traditional methods of teaching at the Gyulafehérvár academy and in Transylvania from scratch, and schools indeed continued to be affected by students returning from universities in Germany and the Dutch Republic, and from England. Nevertheless the plan which Johann Alsted and his colleagues submitted in 1630 to improve the Gyulafehérvár academy, "so that it can match those of Germany and France", was fundamental to the academy's evolution. Five classes were proposed to cover the study of Latin, Greek, Hebrew, rhetoric, poetry and theology. It seems likely that besides language teaching, duties were divided between the three German teachers with Alsted responsible for philosophy, Piscator leading classes in theology, and Bisterfeld teaching the natural sciences. The Herborn teachers also asked for the Gyulafehérvár printing-press to be improved with the addition of Hebrew and Greek lettering to allow the publication of school-books, and students'

²⁰ Albert Szenczi Molnár, Syllecta Scholastica with Lexicon Latino-Graeco-Ungaricum (Heidelberg, 1621) RMK 1/513. Molnár never gained a degree at any of the German universities he visited, and was subsequently overlooked on his return to Transylvania for a post at Gyulafehérvár, teaching instead at the school at Kolozsvár; J. Herepei, 'Szenci Molnár Albert tragédiája' in ITK 70 (1966), pp.160-165. Szenczi's achievements were however remembered in verses by Alsted and Bisterfeld; Pál Debrecei Ember, Historia Ecclesiae Reformatae, in Hungaria et Transylvania (Utrecht, 1728), pp.744-745. Márton Szepsi Csombor offered advice to pupils on virtues to be strived for, and vices to avoid in Udvari Schola, melyben...Nyáry Ferencet...minden szép erkölcsökre...oktatja (Bártfa, 1623) RMK 1/527.

disputations.²¹ In the forward to the first of these disputations of March 1630, Johann Alsted again committed himself and his colleagues to raising standards at the Gyulafehérvár academy, and to prepare a three year course of philosophy and theology.²²

Alsted, Bisterfeld and Piscator soon became an integral part of academic life in Transylvania, and involved in the education of the princely family.²³ Alongside their re-organisation of the Gyulafehérvár academy, they devised text-books which shaped the teaching of grammar, rhetoric and logic in the principality.²⁴ Miklós Bethlen recorded in the 1650s that the

²¹ J.V.Ecsedy, 'A gyulafehérvári fejedelmi nyomda második korszaka (1637-58) és utóélete' in the Országos Széchényi Könyvtár Évkönyve 1978, pp.291-341; 'Leges illustris scholae Transilvaniae' in I.Juhász, Zs.Jakó, Nagyenyedí diákok 1662-1848 (Bucharest, 1979), pp.5-46; or see TT 1879, pp.797-865.

²² Gyulafehérvár disputations; Disputatio Philosophica (Gyulafehérvár, 1630) RMK 2/459, under Bisterfeld (Budapest Academy library, but now sadly lost); Disputatio theologica de Deo (Gyulafehérvár, 1630) RMK 2/458, with a forward by Alsted. (Volume stolen from the Sárospatak library by the Soviet army); 22 students' disputations presided over by Bisterfeld in Beata Beatae Virginis Ars, seu, Regia genuini Scripturae Sacrae sensus omnigeniq usus inveniendi via (Gyulafehérvár, 1651) RMK 2/747 (Academy library, Budapest); Gladii Spiritus Ignei, ...seu Scripturae Sacrae Divina eminentia et efficientia (1653) RMK 2/786, under Bisterfeld (Teleki library, Marosvásárhely).

²³ Alsted's forward to Schola Triumphata per illustrem et Magnificum Dominum, D.Georgium Rakoci, Filium Illustrissimi Transylvaniae Principis (Gyulafehérvár, 1638) RMK 2/523; Pál Kereszturi, Christianus Lactens (Gyulafehérvár, 1637) RMK 2/508. Bisterfeld's forward to Pallas Dacica, quam...Sigismundus Rakoci ...auditorum corona praestitit...praecinenta schola aulica, applaudentibus omnibus (Gyulafehérvár, 1640) RMK 2/553. Also see the advice of I.György Rákóczi to his sons as Instructio, quam...tradidit...Georgio Rakoci and Instructio, quam...tradidit...Sigismundo (Gyulafehérvár, 1638/1640) RMK 2/522 and 2/554.

²⁴ Textbooks published at Gyulafehérvár included; Johann Alsted, Rudimenta Linguae Graecae (1634) RMK 2/485; Rudimenta Linguae Latinae (1634/1635/1640) RMK 2/486; Rudimenta Linguae Hebraicae (1635) RMK 2/496; Latinus in nuce (1635/1648) RMK 2/497; Grammatica Latina (1635/1642) RMK 2/498; Prodromus religionis (1635-1641) RMK 2/494. Ludwig Piscator, Rudimenta

syllabus at Gyulafehérvár still owed much to the language texts of the three German professors, and a 1657 curriculum for Gyulafehérvár advised using sections of Alsted's Encyclopaedia, and works by Alsted for Greek, Hebrew and physics, as well as Ludwig Piscator's text on rhetoric.²⁵ The influence of the German professors extended out from Gyulafehérvár into other schools across the region through their former pupils. András Porcsalmi for example was a student at Gyulafehérvár in 1638 and 1639, before moving to teach in the school at Kolozsvár from 1642 until 1666. Porcsalmi copied out lectures given by Bisterfeld on philosophy, and large sections of Alsted's Encyclopaedia, and used them as the basis for his teaching at Kolozsvár.²⁶

In the 1640s the Gyulafehérvár academy was to become increasingly dependent on the services of Johann Bisterfeld. Bisterfeld remained in Transylvania despite offers to move to Leiden university in 1649 and 1650, and indeed married a Transylvanian after the death of his first wife. However Bisterfeld was frequently absent on diplomatic missions on behalf of the Rákóczi family, and his relationship with the

rhethoricae (1635/1644/1649) RMK 2/500; Ars poetica (1642) RMK 2/591; Rudimenta Oratoricae (1645/1649/?) RMK 2/658. Johann Bisterfeld, Elementa logica (1635/1641/ 1645/1649) RMK 2/499; Medulla Prisca Puraeque Latinitatis (tr.) (1646) RMK 2/666.

²⁵ E.Windisch(ed.), Bethlen Miklós önéletirásai (Budapest, 1955), "peripetica [methodical peripateticism?] és aristotelica floréalt" under Pál Keresztúri, chs.8-9, and pp.546-548; 'Schema primum generale sive forma studiorum Albensium' published by Z.Vargha, A gyulafehérvári főiskola 1657-iki szabályzata (Budapest, 1907).

²⁶ I.Török, A kolozsvári év. ref. collégium története (Kolozsvár, 1905); Alsted's texts also formed the core of Latin teaching at Nagybánya; F.Thurzó, A nagybányai év. ref. főiskola (schola Rivulina) története 1547-1755 (Nagybánya, 1905).

Transylvanian bishop István Geleji Katona over the administration of the academy was not without its tensions. In 1640 Geleji wrote to the prince of discipline problems at the college, which he felt had not been dealt with satisfactorily by Bisterfeld and Piscator. Geleji wanted to appoint a "hard, authoritarian Hungarian master" to exercise discipline amongst the students, but thought that the pre-eminence which the German teachers had achieved at the academy, would prevent any Hungarian from establishing sufficient authority over the students.²⁷

In 1638 the school inspectors at Sárospatak reported that "logic, rhetoric, philosophical and theological debate...have died in Sárospatak", and complained that proper analysis was absent from teaching at the school. The Zemplén church authorities also thought that holidays at Sárospatak were too long, the school buildings in poor condition, and that the students' food was bad.²⁸ In 1639 János Tolnai Dali returned to Hungary after a long peregrination abroad in the Dutch Republic and England, and was supported by I.György Rákóczi to become the new director and revive the Sárospatak school. János Tolnai Dali was a former student of Bisterfeld at Gyulafehérvár, and of William Ames at Franeker, and whilst in London had been in contact with the Hartlib circle. After a long battle over the conditions of his appointment, the Zemplén authorities finally agreed to approve

²⁷ Ötvös, Új Magyar Múzeum 10 (1859), nos.6, 7 and 10, pp.199-233; Kvacsala, Századok 25 (1891), pp.447-478 and 545-577; F.W.Cuno, 'Bisterfeld János Henrik' in MPEF 4 (1882), pp.295-304.

²⁸ J.Zoványi, 'Miskolczi Csulyak István zempléni ref. esperes (1629-45) egyházlátogatási jegyzőkönyvei' in TT 7 (1906), pp.292-295.

Tolnai's tenure. Tolnai however soon realised the worst fears of local traditionalists, and his reform initiatives were to bring turbulence to the Sárospatak school, and the Zemplén Reformed church.²⁹

István Szilágyi Benjamin recorded that the text-books used at the school in Sárospatak during the early 1630s were dominated by the works of Bartholomaeus Keckermann on rhetoric and logic, and that books by Alsted were used to teach metaphysics.³⁰ János Tolnai Dali however wanted the school to follow the tradition of interpreting Ramism which he had encountered in the universities of the Dutch Republic, influenced above all by William Ames. Supported by his colleagues Dániel Kolosi and János Bényei, Tolnai acted dramatically to change this school syllabus, replacing the core text-books by Keckermann, and stopped teaching metaphysics altogether. Instead Tolnai began to teach from the Dialectics of Petrus Ramus, and concentrated solely on the writings of Ames for theology teaching. This attachment to the works of Ames and Ramus was to prove an enduring one, with the predilection of schools in Hungary for Ramist logic to continue into the eighteenth century when it had long since died out in

²⁹ L.Makkai, 'Tolnai Dali János harca a haladó magyar kultúráért' in ITK 57 (1953), pp.236-249; J.Zoványi, Puritánus mozgalmak a magyar református egyházban (Budapest, 1911), pp.37-85.

³⁰ István Szilágyi Benjamin, 'Acta Synodi Nationalis Hungaricae...1646' SNK vol.21, pp.50-52; J.Szombathi(1788), A sárospataki főiskola története (Sárospatak, 1919), (eds.) J.Gulyás, G.Szinyei; L.Szimonidesz, 'A sárospataki ref. főiskolában és sárospatak környéke iskolaiban használt, ismert és ismeretlen tankönyvek in Magyar Könyvszemle 58 (1942), pp.410-413.

the west.³¹

Early seventeenth century proponents of reforms to patterns of learning and a more practical theology at Herborn and elsewhere in Reformed Germany, also tended to support the authority of Reformed princes and established forms of church government. The attempts of Tolnai and his supporters to reform the syllabus and teaching at Sárospatak, were however linked by opponents with English and some Dutch supporters of Protestant educational and religious reform who tended to be anti-hierarchical, and opposition to Tolnai was marked by accusations of Puritanism and Presbyterianism. Thus, whilst school reform at Gyulafehérvár had been enthusiastically supported by Reformed patrons, fears of a challenge to church order through educational reform at Sárospatak were aroused at the Transylvanian court from the 1630s. Ministers such as Tolnai continued to urge further renewal in education and wanted, by changing methods of learning and the use of the vernacular, to spread knowledge into more areas of study, and more widely in society. This brought conflict with the clergy hierarchy who wished rather to consolidate advances already made in developing a network of local Protestant schools in the face of strengthening Catholic competition.

³¹ For the reception of Petrus Ramus in Transylvania see; Dialecticae libri duo (Nagyvárad, 1653) RMK 2/799 (includes William Ames, 'Technometria', 'Demonstratio Logicae Verae', 'Theses Logicae', 'Disputatio Theologica adversus metaphysicam' and 'Disputatio Theologica de perfectione S.S.Scripturae'). György Mártonfalvi, Petri Rami Dialecticae libri duo...ungarico idiomate resoluti et illustrati (Utrecht, 1658). Mártonfalvi's attachment to Ramist methods extended into homiletics and demands for simple speech (Mártonfalvi and György Komáromi Csipkes published Ars concianandi Amesiana at Debrecen in 1666); B.Tóth, 'Ramus hatása Debrecenben' in Könyv és Könyvtár 17 (1979), pp.85-107.

The Transylvanian superintendent István Geleji Katona responded to the changes introduced by Tolnai at Sárospatak by writing to I.György Rákóczi in October 1640, refuting Tolnai's right to bring about such reforms of a school syllabus on his own authority, and defended Keckermann's Logic as a text-book unsurpassed by other available texts on logic. Indeed in June 1639 Geleji had led the Transylvanian Reformed synod to recommend Keckermann's Logic for use in Transylvania's schools.³² Geleji wrote that his personal experiences at Heidelberg suggested that teaching from Keckermann's works was fundamental to developing an understanding of theology, and helped to structure polemic defences of orthodox religion. Geleji also cited support from Bisterfeld, that he would rather "his own logic book were burned, than see it replace Keckermann's work".³³

Whilst a visitation of the school at Sárospatak in 1641 proceeded relatively smoothly, by 1642 new assistant teachers had been appointed who were unsympathetic to Tolnai's reforms. During the Sárospatak school visitation by the regional church authorities in 1642 some students began to complain that logic, philosophy, metaphysics and polemic theology had been thrown out of the curriculum, and that there had been no examination of grammar in four years. The inspectors' report found that a syllabus, "of no use to the students" was now based solely on Ames' Technometria and Ramus' Dialectics, (from 1640 until 1642

³² I.Szilágyi, 'Az erdélyi h.h. anyaszentegyház közzsínatainak végzései...kivonatban' in MPEIF 3 (1872), pp.1-9, 77-84 and 473-479.

³³ 'Liber Reditum Ecclesiasticum Comitatus Zempleniensis 1623', MOL box no.1907, pp.466-470; J.Erdélyi, 'Gelei(sic) István levele' in Sárospataki Füzetek 1 (1857/8), pp.177-180.

Tolnai covered the first 26 chapters of Ames' work) and that Tolnai had acted "against school regulations", and "exterminated peripatetic logic". István Miskolczi Csulyak, the archdeacon in Zemplén, wrote to the prince in April and November 1642 with news of the perceived deterioration in standards at the Sárospatak school. According to Miskolczi this had been caused by the removal of proper logic teaching, and the failure of János Tolnai Dali to heed the advice and warnings of the inspectors. Tolnai's position at Sárospatak was becoming untenable with opposition growing on all sides. By the end of 1642 Tolnai was forced to resign, with threats from students to move to Jesuit schools, complaints from neighbouring schools, and the withdrawal of support from his erstwhile princely patron, I.György Rákóczi.³⁴

The disturbance caused by Tolnai to the school at Sárospatak and to the Zemplén church, was investigated at the national synod of the Hungarian and Transylvanian church which met at Szatmár in 1646. The synod recommended that teachers should instruct their charges in 'pure' theology, true piety, fine Latin from Classical authors and a temperate philosophy, whilst school directors were ordered to stay within the bounds of their authority.³⁵ New canons, compiled by Geleji following the national synod of 1646, were published in 1649 with provisions for a national network of vernacular schools, in which women

³⁴ ZEP/1629-1645, MOL box no.1907, pp.384-385, 398-399 and 424-426; Zoványi, TT 7 (1906), pp.389-396. S.Szilágyi, 'Miskolczi István és Görgei János eszerek levelei I.Rákóczi Györgyhez' in EPK 1875, pp.267-269.

³⁵ A.Kiss, Egyházi kánonok- Geleji Katona István 1649, és a Szatmárnémetiben 1646 évben tartott nemzeti zsinat végzése (Kecskemét, 1875), conclusions nos.26 and 27 of the 1646 synod.

might be able to learn to read, and perhaps also to write. Whilst Latin remained the predominant language of education, the role of Hungarian did increase in Protestant education during this period. The 1649 canons also stipulated that "school teachers should not teach any new opinions or ceremonies in schools, especially concerning religion", further warning that;

"those who try to bring in new opinions are causing the ruination of youth, and if they do not stop after repeated warnings from their superiors, then their membership of the body of the church will end, and they will be thrown out of the church".³⁶

Despite this opposition from the Reformed church hierarchy, János Tolnai Dali continued to enjoy the support of I. György Rákóczi's widow, Zsuzsanna Lórántffy, and was able to return to teach at Sárospatak from 1649. In 1650 Tolnai was joined there by Jan Comenius, who acted at Sárospatak, as Alsted and Bisterfeld had done at Gyulafehérvár to establish a better ordering of the learning process, and with extensive expectations of the benefits which would accrue from such a reordering for the church and the region. Initially Comenius had come to northern Hungary only to visit refugee Moravian Brethren in May 1650, but also visited Sárospatak, and wrote a draft programme of potential reforms for the school there. In a letter requesting Comenius to come to Hungary, Zsuzsanna Lórántffy had stressed that whilst János Tolnai Dali had made some improvements to methods of teaching at

³⁶ István Geleji Katona, Magyar Grammatikatska (Gyulafehérvár, 1636); Kiss, Egyházi kánonok, 1649 canons nos. 94-97. The 'Approbatae Constitutiones' of 1653 recognised the need for more and better-run schools, and appointed an inspector answerable to the prince for the Gyulafehérvár academy; D. Márkus et al. (ed.), Magyar Törvénytár. 1540-1848 évi erdélyi törvények (Budapest, 1900), no. 1/10/3.

the school, it was hoped that Comenius would push on further with this work. Tolnai also wrote to Comenius, and offered the prospect that Comenius' pansophic educational ambitions could be realised at Sárospatak. After Comenius had managed to gain the approval of his patron and the permission of his church to leave Poland, he returned to Hungary in November 1650, accompanied by his son-in-law Petrus Figulus, who had previously worked as a secretary to John Dury.³⁷

In the opening speech which Comenius gave to the assembled college at Sárospatak in November 1650, he outlined his plans for the renewal of society through a thoroughgoing reformation of schools and teaching methods. Comenius offered a vision of the potential of education, to enable man to perceive correctly the world around him, to develop God-given gifts, and to avoid falling into evil. Comenius also specifically addressed the plight of Hungary, backward and stagnating, but not, Comenius believed, for a lack of schools, teachers or willing pupils. However the fact that Hungarian culture remained at an intermediate stage, according to Comenius, reflected the poor quality of Latin teaching, and the lack of training in the law, medicine, philosophy and theology in schools.

³⁷ M.Blekastad, Comenius. Versuch eines Umrisses von Leben, Werk, und Schicksal des Jan Amos Komensky (Oslo, 1969), pp.467-525; E.Földes, I.Mészáros(eds.), Comenius and Hungary (Budapest, 1973); L.Rácz, Comenius Sárospatakon (Budapest, 1931); E.Kovács, Comenius magyarországon- Comenius sárospatakon írt műveiből (Budapest, 1970); C.Csorba, F.Földy and J.Ködöböcz(eds.), Comenius és Magyarország (Sárospatak, 1990); M.Spinka, John Amos Comenius. That Incomparable Moravian (Chicago, 1943); G.Szinyei, 'A sárospataki főiskola Comenius előtt és Comenius idejében' in Sárospataki Lapok 1898, pp.294-297, 325-327, 359-363, 385-388 and 454-460; A.R.Várkonyi, 'Comenius éjszakái' in Liget 1993, pp.46-57; I.Bán, 'Comenius és a magyar szellemi élet' in Pedagógiai Szemle 8 (1958), pp.928-936.

"If you, my Huns, will be able to make use of your spiritual possibilities, then you will not stand behind any people in Europe for culture", "and there is not only gold in your mines, but your souls are also deep in wisdom. If there remains any remnant of your Scythian past, then wipe it out completely, so that you may shine in your full splendour".³⁸

Immediately from his arrival Jan Comenius made a positive impact on his Rákóczi patrons, and on Zsigmond Rákóczi in particular. Zsigmond wrote to his elder brother the prince, of Comenius' impeccable behaviour at Sárospatak, and forwarded to György the programme of reforms which Comenius had submitted. In early December 1650 Zsigmond also wrote to András Klobusiczky, who along with János Tolnai Dali and Ferenc Veréczki supervised Comenius' work at Sárospatak, of his pleasure at Comenius' skill in leading his students.³⁹ In 1651 Comenius responded to this support and addressed Zsigmond in a 'Sermo secretus Nathanis ad Davidem' which proposed that Hungary would save central Europe from the twin Antichrists, the Habsburgs and Turks. Comenius suggested that Zsigmond would lead Hungary out of the 'labyrinth of confusion' in politics, religion and education, by first supporting the systematic ordering of universal knowledge at the

³⁸ 'De cultura ingeniorum' later published in 1652 as Primitiae Scholae Scholasticorum; L.Stromp, 'Comenius sárospataki beköszöntője' in Protestáns Szemle 12 (1900), pp.560-583. The original copy of this speech is in the 'Zsoldos Benő-féle időrendes sorozat' at the Tiszáninnyi református egyházkerületi levéltár (Sárospatak), A/II/105.1. For all Comenius' writings during his Sárospatak years see Opera Didactica Omnia (3 vols.) vol.2, book 3, (Prague, 1957).

³⁹ S.Szilágyi, 'Herczeg Rákóczy Zsigmond levelezése' in TT 1890; clxxiii and clxxix, pp.603-4 and 612-613. Comenius officiated at Zsigmond's wedding, and was responsible for creating Zsigmond's interest in acquiring a telescope from a Danzig astrologer, Johannes Hevelius; see Rácz, Comenius Sárospatakon, pp.106-107.

college at Sárospatak.⁴⁰

In his Schola Pansophica delineatio of 1651, dedicated to Zsigmond Rákóczi, Comenius laid out the ordering of his ideal seven class pansophic school, with the required text-books, and teaching methods. Comenius also laid out specific plans to develop the school at Sárospatak in Illustris Patakinæ Scholæ Idea adapting this seven class model, with the first three classes dedicated to learning Latin as an 'entrance', 'doorway' and 'hall' to the study of the higher sciences of philosophy, logic, politics and theology. In February 1651 the first of these Latin classes opened with over one hundred pupils, and in March 1651 János Tolnai Dali was able to report to Samuel Hartlib on Comenius' early success in building up classes at Sárospatak, and in developing 'pansophic studies'.⁴¹

In 1652 Comenius outlined the remaining obstacles which he perceived were blocking the establishment of a new order at the Sárospatak college, including the lack of permanent teachers, and use of students as class teachers. Comenius was nevertheless by 1652 able to have text-books published for the first three Latin classes, as well as supervise provision for a proceeding vernacular Hungarian class, with assistance from János Tolnai

⁴⁰ 'Sermo secretus Nathanis ad Davidem' in J.V.Kvacsala, 'Comenius irata Rákóczi Zsigmondhoz' in MPEA 4 (1905), pp.128-143; J.Polišenský, 'Comenius, magyarország és az európai politika a xvii. században' in Magyar Pedagógia 72 (1972), pp.179-184.

⁴¹ Hartl. 49/43, f.1; Tolnai wrote to Hartlib with warm regards for Hartlib and Dury. See also Henry Langley to Hartlib, June 1651, Hartl. 15/3, f.5a; "I read over with great delight mr Tolnay his letter, and am glad to understand that the learned Comenius hath resolved speedily to devote him self studijs Pansophicis".

Dali, János Szőlősi and István Szilágyi Benjamin.⁴² Comenius wrote of his wish to expose students to practice in reading and writing Latin, and to encourage the use of practical explanations of grammar, so that students could express themselves realistically and not just according to linguistic models. Comenius also enthusiastically supported the use of visual images and drama as aids to memory and learning, with his Latin school-books intended to be accompanied by pictures from an 'Encyclopaedia Sensualium', completed in 1653, but only able to be published in 1658 in Germany as Orbis Pictus.⁴³ Comenius also oversaw the production of educational plays to accompany the second year Latin course at Sárospatak from Schola Ludus, a "living encyclopedia".⁴⁴

Comenius also devoted himself to questions of student discipline at Sárospatak, outlining examples of correct behaviour in great detail. Students in Comenius' opinion should aim to be

⁴² Eruditionis scholasticae Pars Prima, Vestibulum ; ...Pars Secunda, Janua; ...Pars Tertia, Atrium (Sárospatak, 1652) RMK 2/770-2; there were other Hungarian editions of the Vestibulum and Janua at Nagyvárad in 1634, Bártfa in 1643 and at Lőcse in 1649, and other Latin/German versions of the same works. Primitiae laborum Scholasticorum in illustri Patakino gymnasio (Sárospatak, 1652) RMK 2/773, contains 'De cultura ingeniorum oratio', 'De primario ingenia colendi instrumento, solerter versando, libris', 'Scholae latinae delineatio ad Sigismund Rakoci' and 'Laborum scholasticorum in illustri Patakino gymnasio continuatio'; I.Mészáros, 'Comenius és a sárospataki kollégium anyanyelvi osztálya' in Magyar Pedagógia 72 (1972), pp.185-197; J.Bakos, 'Comenius az anyanyelvről és az anyanyelvi oktatás jelentőségéről' in Pedagógiai Szemle 20 (1970), pp.998-1007.

⁴³ G.H.Turnbull, 'An incomplete Orbis Pictus of Comenius printed in 1653' in Acta Comeniana 16 (1957), pp.35-40.

⁴⁴ Jan Comenius, Schola Ludus, seu Encyclopaedia vive...janua linguarum praxis comica (Sárospatak, 1656) RMK 2/860; I.Komor, 'Schola ludus' in Pedagógiai Szemle 8 (1958), pp.975-990.

honest, humble and ready to take correction, and he stressed the need for students to get up early in the morning, use their time wisely and avoid afternoon naps.⁴⁵ Comenius also published an advice book on how teachers, students and those in charge of schools could best go about their work, and wrote that his experiences of seeing unskilful teaching at Sárospatak, had helped him to understand the true connection between a teacher and a student. Comenius believed that some teachers at Sárospatak measured their authority in how little their pupils spoke, and were too critical of students when they failed in some exercises.⁴⁶ Despite the practical achievements of his years at Sárospatak, Comenius became frustrated by continuing problems at the school, and some local opposition to his plans, and eventually departed for Poland in 1654. In a final speech given on his departure Comenius tried to rouse II.György Rákóczi to action, to tackle the moral weaknesses of his nation, and its neglect of higher studies. Comenius detailed the defects, causes and remedies of Hungary's political, economic and moral problems, and in the field of education highlighted the need to overcome the lack of vernacular schools, and the dearth of teaching of

⁴⁵ Jan Comenius, Praecepta Morum in usum juventutis collecta (Nagyvárad, 1658) published for use in the Nagyvárad school; I.Komor, 'Comenius a pataki ifjúság iskolánkívüli neveléséről' in Pedagógiai Szemle 10 (1960), pp.888-898.

⁴⁶ Jan Comenius, Fortius Redivivus (Sárospatak, 1652) was a version of the work also published in Sárospatak by the educationalist Joachimus Fortius Ringelbergius, De ratione studii liber vere aureus (Sárospatak, 1652). Another version of the same work was published by János Apáczai Csere, Tanács, mellyet Joachymus Fortius ad Apáczai János által egy tanulásba élesüggedt ifjúnak (Gyulafehérvár, 1654) RMK 1/883.

liberal arts, philosophy and medicine.⁴⁷

Only Comenius' belief in the prophetic skills of his countryman Mikuláš Drabík, about the future apocalyptic role for Transylvania and the Rákóczi princes, had ensured that he remained in Sárospatak during 1653. Controversy however over Drabík's reliability as a prophet caused a rift between Comenius and Bisterfeld, and with Zsigmond, who was told that his failure to act on the prophecies led to the premature death of his wife. Comenius reported to Samuel Hartlib in 1654 of his relief at being "freed" from Hungary, mixed with disappointment at the stubbornness of the Rákóczi family to listen to Drabík, despite the Zsigmond's "heroism" before his death in 1652.⁴⁸ Comenius' disappointment at the lukewarm reception given to Drabík was also reflected in comments of the late 1660s on his years in Hungary; "Ad Hungaros. To them too, it is necessary...that I went to them (anno 1650) as Paul went to Rome, for the same goal (Rom.I, 11), but although the devil has not prevented [my] coming, he prevented any success of it,...with you [Hungarians] God awakened the gift of prophecy (although not through one of yourselves, but one of those to whom God deemed to be your guests), but nevertheless there was no success in it".⁴⁹

⁴⁷ J.V.Kvacsala, 'Comenius irata II.Rákóczi Györgyhöz' in MPEA 4 (1905), pp.144-168; L.Makkai, 'Gentis Felicitas' in Pedagógiai Szemle 8 (1958), pp.964-972. Contacts between Hungarians and Comenius continued; W.Rood, Comenius and the Low Countries (Prague, 1970); J.Herepei, 'Az öreg Comenius néhány magyar híve' in Adattár 3, pp.394-418.

⁴⁸ Hartl. 7/72; "verifaci in me, quod D.Bisterfeldius dicere solet: Eniditor, vel Artífices in Hungariam vocatos ad perpetuor vocari carceres". Figulus also wrote to Hartlib of his pleasure that Comenius had left Hungary in Kvacsala, Korrespondence Jana Amosa Komenského, cxlii, p.187; J.Kvacsala, 'Comenius és a Rákóczyak' in Budapesti Szemle 1889, pp.113-151.

⁴⁹ Rom I:11 "I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong"; quoted from an unfinished work, 'Clamores Eliae', f.125, in J.V.Polišenský, 'Comenius, Hungary, and European Politics in the Seventeenth Century' in Földes, Mészáros, Comenius and Hungary, p.19.

The clearest response in Transylvania to Comenius' proposals and agenda for school reform came during the 1650s in the career of János Apáczai Csere.⁵⁰ The goal of Apáczai's endeavours was to "raise the flag of the freedom of truth" before his fellow countrymen, by devising an Encyclopaedia in the Hungarian language;

"on the basis of famous authors, those things which are the most necessary and useful for a man to know", "so that for students there will be at least one book in our mother tongue, from which they can unravel the threads of the fabric of all civilization".

Apáczai's Encyclopaedia was compiled from translations of the writings of Alsted, Henri le Roy (Regius), Ramus, Ames, and Descartes. Apáczai, when a student at Gyulafehérvár, had copied out large sections of Alsted's Encyclopaedia, and then at university in Holland had encountered the teaching of Regius at Utrecht, and Cartesian ideas, which neatly served Apáczai's aim of widening the range of subjects studied in Transylvania's schools.⁵¹

Drabík's prophecies were published in 1657 in Lux e Tenebris. J.Kvacsala, 'Egy álpróféta a xvii-ik században' in Századok 23 (1889), pp.745-766; J.Kvacsala, 'A xvii. századbéli chiliasmus történetéhez' in Protestáns Szemle 2 (1890), pp.428-450; N.Mout, 'Chiliastic Prophecy and Revolt in the Habsburg Monarchy during the Seventeenth Century' in M.Wilks(ed.), Prophecy and Eschatology. Studies in Church History (Oxford, 1994), pp.93-109; K.Péter, 'Drabik Miklós, a lehoktai próféta' in Világosság 18 (1977), pp.36-41.

⁵⁰ I.Bán, Apáczai Csere János (Budapest, 1958); C.Fekete, L.Király et al(eds.), Apáczai Csere János 1625-1659 (Budapest, 1975); I.Komor, 'Comenius in Sárospatak-Apáczai in Gyulafehérvár' in Acta Litteraria Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae 1960, pp.191-204; I.Schneller, 'Comenius és Apáczai' in Protestáns Szemle 30 (1918), pp.27-39.

⁵¹ János Apáczai Csere, Magyar Encyclopaedia; az az, minden igaz es hasznos böltségnék szep rendbe foglalása és magyar nyelven világra botsátása (Utrecht, 1653) RMK 1/876, and dedicated amongst others to Johannes Bisterfeld. For the forward to Magyar Enciklopedia see L.Orosz(ed.), Apáczai Csere János

Apáczai consistently promoted ideas on school reform in Transylvania, most notably in a speech given when he took over the director's post at Gyulafehérvár in November 1653. Apáczai argued that poor methods of teaching were causing Hungary's backwardness, and cited the success of reform elsewhere at Sárospatak under János Tolnai Dali, and at schools in Nagyváradi, and at Nagybánya. Apáczai wanted the academy at Gyulafehérvár to follow such examples, and proposed that reading and writing be first taught in the vernacular, then to teach Latin, Greek and Hebrew, to be followed by study of a wide range of subjects such as history, logic, mathematics, astronomy, music, medicine, theology and law. Apáczai professed himself shocked at the deficiencies in Hungarians' methods of learning, and in 1654 published in Hungarian a version of Ramus' work on logic in an attempt to improve matters.⁵²

Apáczai was however soon forced to leave the academy at Gyulafehérvár, after public disgrace in a debate held before

válogatott pedagógiai művei (Budapest, 1956), pp.59-88; I.Bán, 'Apáczai Csere János magyar enciklopediája' in Irodalomtörténet 35 (1953), pp.146-166; I.Bán(ed.), Apáczai Csere János. Magyar encyclopaedia (Budapest, 1959). Apáczai's encyclopedia covered philosophy, logic, mathematics, natural science, astronomy, physics, medicine, history, ethics, politics and theology, and Apáczai used for his sources; Descartes on philosophy and science (*Principia Philosophiae*), Ames and Ramus on logic, Ramus on mathematics, Alsted on astronomy, Alsted and Regius on physics and medicine, Alsted on history and pedagogy, Althusius on politics and Ames(*Medulla*) on ethics and theology. The most original section of the Encyclopaedia dealt with 'res rustica', a compilation of traditional beliefs on health and the weather; V.Laurentzy, 'Apáczai Csere János calendarium perpetuum' in Debreceni Szemle 7 (1933), pp.257-266.

⁵² János Apáczai Csere, Magyar Logikácska (Gyulafehérvár, 1654) RMK 1/883; 'Oratio de studio sapientiae' in Orosz, Apáczai Csere János válogatott pedagógiai művei, pp.102-147; I.Bán, Apáczai Csere János beszéde 'a bölcsesség tanulásáról' (Debrecen, 1955).

II. György Rákóczi in September 1655 with the recently-arrived Isaac Basire, over Apáczai's support for presbyterial church government. An attempt by Zsuzsanna Lórántffy to appoint Apáczai at Sárospatak was also blocked, and so in 1656 he ended up at the smaller school in Kolozsvár, still recovering from a fire in 1655. Seemingly undeterred by this opposition, Apáczai returned to the theme of barbarism in Hungary, and the need for a renewal in education in his opening speech at Kolozsvár in November 1656, 'de summa scholarum necessitate'. Apáczai stressed the need for a better standard of teaching at vernacular village schools to allow students to proceed on to study at larger Latin schools. Apáczai complained that schools were dominated by townsmen, to the exclusion of freemen and nobles, and that students were not committed to education with many using it only as an escape from feudal service. Apáczai also complained of the lack in Transylvania of a centre capable of adequately completing a student's education, and that colleges were only teaching theology and Latin, not the natural sciences, mathematics, or many of the other subjects Apáczai had included in his Encyclopaedia. This meant that Hungarians had to revert to foreign universities and academies, and Apáczai's experiences led him to think that Hungarians were held as ignorant when they went abroad.

This lack of a true academy in Transylvania in Apáczai's eyes was having disastrous consequences for the church and state; "it is certainly not to be wondered at, that Hungary and Dacia, are so full of the denial of God, injustice, intemperance, and inconstancy". Apáczai compared Hungary with the Dutch Republic,

which he argued had gained its freedom and strength from its colleges and academies. In Hungary by comparison there were cruel lords, faithless servants, corrupt judges, unfair tax officers, and devastated farms, houses and towns all because there was nowhere to properly learn the sciences, philosophy and morality. Patrons, teachers and students needed to be roused to further efforts, since Apáczai believed even the natives of the Dutch East Indies had already overtaken Hungary;

"It is time then to awake, you sleepy, drunken, dim Hungarian people! Finally, finally wake up from your dreams, awaken and found village schools".⁵³

New regulations for Transylvanian schools were published only three days after Apáczai's speech at Kolozsvár in November 1656, and marked a determined effort by Isaac Basire, supported by II.György Rákóczi, to limit Apáczai's scope to change the syllabus at Kolozsvár, and to stifle any challenge to the dominance of the academy at Gyulafehérvár. These regulations aimed in particular to prevent an apparent drift of students away from Gyulafehérvár to follow Apáczai to Kolozsvár.⁵⁴ Despite such legal restrictions, Apáczai still tried to expand on the efforts of András Porcsalmi at the Kolozsvár school with a revised six class system, and Miklós Bethlen recorded that Apáczai taught him from works by Ames, Descartes and Regius, and

⁵³ 'De Summa Scholarum Necessitate' in Orosz, Apáczai Csere János válogatott pedagógiai művei, pp.167-191. There are strong links to Comenius' speech 'De Cultura Ingeniorum', and to Alsted's 'Oratio de causis Corruptarum Scholarum' in his Encyclopaedia, pp.1544-1549.

⁵⁴ p.Török, 'II.Rákóczi György ismeretlen iskolatörvénye' in Erdélyi Irodalmi Szemle 4 (1927), pp.118-124; L.Orosz, 'Apáczai kolozsvári helyezése és az 1656-i erdélyi iskolatörvény' in Pedagógiai Szemle 10 (1960), pp.162-169.

"in privata" from Ramus.⁵⁵

The 1656 regulations were also the culmination of Isaac Basire's own proposals for school reform, and referred to Gyulafehérvár as a school-university, at a time when Apáczai denied there was even a decent college in Transylvania. Basire offered suggestions to put the buildings at Gyulafehérvár to better use, set tougher conditions for entry to the academy, and also made efforts to find better qualified teachers. Basire was also not immune to Apáczai's demands to widen the syllabus, for example suggesting a more open course for noble students at Gyulafehérvár.⁵⁶ In 1657 another reform plan for the Gyulafehérvár academy was formulated by Basire, 'Schema primum generale sive forma studiorum Albensium', based on the 1630 regulations written by Alsted and his colleagues, and which contained a detailed description of the daily routine of classes and worship for students at Gyulafehérvár. A revised timetable was set out, with only one subject to be studied each day, so that it could be examined in sufficient depth. Basire also stressed the need for teachers to fully explain the Bible, and that students should be trained to debate with each other.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Bethlen Miklós önéletírásai, Windisch, p.552; Török, A kolozsvári ev. ref. collégium története.

⁵⁶ A damaged copy of this proposal is in the library at Durham Cathedral, MSS. Hunter 10/33. C.Brennen, 'The Life and Times of Isaac Basire' (Durham University Ph.D, 1987); L.Kropf, 'Basirius Izsák életrajzához' in TT 1889, pp.491-502; D.N.Griffiths, 'Isaac Basire, 1607-1676' in Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of London 17 (1986), pp.303-316.

⁵⁷ Isaac Basire, Schema primum generale sive forma studiorum Albensium (Gyulafehérvár, 1657) RMK 2/877a. Basire suggested Wollebius writings as the basis of theological instruction, and included metaphysics in his syllabus. This volume also contained a speech of Basire to the academy in January 1657, and an

The fall of II.György Rákóczi following his disastrous invasion of Poland in 1657, freed Apáczai from previous controls, and in a letter to the new and more sympathetic prince Ákos Barcsai, Apáczai claimed that inappropriate teaching at the Kolozsvár school had made it a source of ridicule. Apáczai asked for more money to be given to appoint better teachers in order to prevent Reformed children moving to Catholic schools.⁵⁸ Apáczai also wrote of previous mistakes made at the Gyulafehérvár academy through the slavish overpaying of foreign teachers, money which could be better distributed amongst local teachers. Apáczai thought "that since two theology professors are needed, one should be Hungarian and the other Scot, or from some other nation that would come for little money".⁵⁹ Apáczai further recalled advice Gisbert Voetius had given him at Utrecht, that a foreigner should only work in Transylvania alongside a native, so that Hungarians might learn from this co-operation. Embittered by his treatment under Basire, Apáczai compared this approach to that of the Rákóczi regime, where foreigners taught the higher sciences, and Hungarians were left with only grammar, rhetoric,

'exhortatio Philippi Melanchthonis' to the students. I.Domján, 'A gyulafehérvári akadémia 1657 tanrendje' in Erdélyi Múzeum 13 (1896), pp.481-484; Vargha, A gyulafehérvári főiskola 1657-iki szabályzata.

⁵⁸ G.Herepei, 'Apáczai Jánosnak egy eddig ismeretlen levele Barcsai Ákos fejedelemhez' in EPK 1879, pp.492-493.

⁵⁹ In 1651 when Apáczai was at Utrecht, a Scots Puritan Samuel Rutherford was invited to take a vacant post at Utrecht. Apáczai later claimed to have been offered the post himself, once Rutherford had refused it. Ö.Miklós, 'Apáczai Cseri János utrechtbe történt meghívásáról' in Dunántúli Protestáns Lap 1917, pp.178-181 and 186-189.

and poetry.⁶⁰ Apáczai presented formal plans to Barcsai in 1658 for a new academic complex including a college, library, printing-press, and "academic garden" with rare plants for use in medicine, to provide a "true crown" for Protestant education in Transylvania. However Barcsai and successors in the 1660s proved more concerned to defend the weakened position of Reformed schools in Hungary and Transylvania from Ottoman advances and Jesuit encroachment, than realise Apáczai's grandiose schemes.

During the early seventeenth century a group of foreigners led by Johann Alsted, Johann Bisterfeld and Jan Comenius shared extensive influence over the development of Reformed schools in Hungary and Transylvania, and over patterns of teaching throughout the region. The influence of these 'three foreigners' in leading Reformed schools, combined with the impact of student ministers returning from western universities to shape the curricula and methods used in Hungarian Reformed education. Proposals for reform in this period included the re-organisation of classes, expanding the number of subjects taught, and using a simplified logic to clarify the essential unity seen between all academic disciplines. Alsted, Bisterfeld and Comenius were amongst those in the Protestant intellectual world who, from the 1620s looked for advances to be made in education as the basis for the renewal of churches and societies, with ideas on educational reform often coupled with eschatological and irenical expectations. The increased direct contacts which János Tolnai

⁶⁰ 'A magyar nemzetben immár elvégtére egy academia felállításának módja és formája' in Orosz, Apáczai Csere János válogatott pedagógiai művei, pp.198-211.

Dali and other Hungarian ministers made from the 1630s with anti-hierarchical educational reformers, particularly in England, linked supporters of ongoing school reform in Hungary and Transylvania with a challenge to the hierarchical government of the Hungarian Reformed church. The triumph of consolidators in 1640s debates over church government and school administration, led to critical concerns being voiced by Jan Comenius and János Apáczai Csere in the 1650s over the failure of school reforms to make satisfactory progress in Hungary and Transylvania. Apáczai also vociferously expressed anxiety over the role given to foreigners at the Gyulafehérvár academy, highlighting a tension between the aim of educational self-sufficiency for Transylvania, and continuing trans-national Protestant co-operation. However a principled commitment endured during the early seventeenth century to international contacts between Calvinist academies, teachers and students which left open broad channels of contact and mutual influence for both reformers and consolidators between the Reformed church of Hungary and Transylvania and sister churches in the rest of Europe.

THE REFORMED CHURCH AND ITS RIVALS; BETWEEN
CONFESSIONAL ABSOLUTISM AND TOLERATION

(i) International Enemies; Catholicism
and anti-Trinitarianism

Relations between the churches of Hungary and Transylvania in the early seventeenth century formed a distinctive balance between acceptance of confessional differences, and religious intolerance. From 1568 the Transylvanian constitution allowed the Reformed, Lutheran, Catholic and anti-Trinitarian churches legal status, and offered the Eastern Orthodox church 'toleration' by princely privilege. In addition Bohemian Brethren were received as refugees after 1620 in northern Hungary, and Anabaptists and Jews were settled by Gábor Bethlen in Transylvania in 1622 and 1623.¹ The existence of such a range of churches in Transylvania saw general acceptance of mixed marriages and family members in different confessions, whilst individuals simultaneously exhibited fierce loyalty to their own denominations.² In Habsburg Hungary meanwhile, the hard-won freedoms and privileges

¹ Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek vol.8, pp.103-4; E.Jakab, 'Erdély és az anabaptisták a xvii.-xviii. században' in Keresztény Magvető 11 (1876), pp.1-14.

² As an example of how mixed marriages affected religious adherence, one early seventeenth century anti-Trinitarian chronicler followed the religion of his brothers and father, whilst his mother and sisters were Catholics, and an uncle was Calvinist; 'Petrityvity-Horváth Kozma önéletírása, 1634-1660' in G.Daniel(pub.), Történelmi kalászkok, 1603-1711 (Pest, 1862), p.5.

of the Lutheran and Reformed churches were slowly being eroded during this period under pressure from a re-catholicising nobility, and reviving Catholic institutions.

As we have seen, in Transylvania and eastern Hungary the Reformed church had acquired a preeminent position by the early seventeenth century, supported by the patronage of a series of Calvinist princes. The pious plea of Gábor Bethlen in his will for the churches in Transylvania not to argue with each other, nor persecute one another, reflected the principality's constitutional traditions, but Bethlen and his successors also consistently acted to promote the interests of their Reformed church.³ Two distinct confessional blocs were therefore emerging in Hungary during this period, with the development of rival Hungarian noble identities, the one Catholic and Habsburg, the other Reformed and focused on Transylvania's princes. The path between confessional absolutism and toleration followed by Reformed eastern Hungary and Transylvania, reflected the region's multiple religious and ethnic divisions, but also enabled Hungarian Protestants to represent their appeal to the Hungarian nobility under the banner of 'Christian freedom', in opposition to the portrayed impositions of Catholic tyranny.

In this chapter I shall argue that increased contact with international Calvinism during the early seventeenth century acted to strengthen the resolve of the Hungarian Reformed church to combat its confessional opponents with increasing energy. Hungarian student ministers at western universities were trained

³ The will of Gábor Bethlen in J.Barcza, 'A vallási türelem elvi alapjai a xvii. század magyar protestáns teológiájában' in Theológiai Szemle 21 (1978), pp.282-291.

in Reformed dogmatics and polemic theology, and Calvinist orthodoxy was bolstered by catechisms and theological works becoming more readily available in Hungary and Transylvania, a process examined in greater detail in chapter 5. I shall also examine how closer connections with co-religionists abroad encouraged a perception to grow amongst Hungarian Calvinists of the Catholic church not only as a domestic opponent, but also as an international, demonic enemy. I shall then highlight the changing relationship during this period between the Reformed church and anti-Trinitarianism in east-central Europe. The distinctive character of Hungarian Reformed religion was viewed in the rest of Calvinist Europe partly in being strategically positioned between the Habsburgs and Turks, but partly through its proximity to anti-Trinitarians, or so-called Unitarians. Closer connections with western Protestants brought a noticeable hardening of attitudes towards anti-Trinitarianism, with the existence of Unitarians at home something of an embarrassment internationally. Meanwhile a more complicated relationship developed between the Reformed and Lutheran churches in this region, with irenic appeals made towards Lutherans for Protestant unity, alongside continuing inter-confessional rivalry and doctrinal disputes. Whilst contact with foreign Calvinists contributed to the hardening of confessional boundaries in Hungary and Transylvania, it also encouraged consideration of a pan-Protestant, anti-Papal front. Hungarian Lutherans were sought as reticent partners in this struggle, or derided as luke-warm Protestants if their assistance was less obviously helpful, or not forthcoming. I shall complete this analysis of inter-

confessional relations in the region by assessing the contact between Transylvanian Calvinism and Eastern Orthodoxy, with missionary efforts by the Reformed clergy to improve standards amongst the Orthodox priesthood, and to sponsor reform of some Orthodox ceremony and liturgy.

Turning first to the position of Catholicism in Hungary, in 1644 Ferdinand III received a report from György Lippai, the Catholic archbishop of Esztergom, of the number of churches held by Catholics and Protestants. Whilst his report somewhat underestimated Catholic strength, it suggested that Catholics held a majority of churches in only one Hungarian county, and over the thirty Hungarian counties Lippai listed 743 Catholic churches, against 4,402 Lutheran and Calvinist held churches. Lippai claimed that Catholics did not have a significant presence in most Hungarian towns, and that whilst in the west there was some balance between the confessions, in the counties of eastern Hungary the Catholic church was practically non-existent.⁴ In Transylvania, the practice of Catholicism was the most disturbed of any of the four received confessions, with Jesuits excluded from the principality, and Catholic worship surviving only on the lands of sympathetic nobles. The Catholic church was the only denomination in Transylvania without a bishop throughout this period, with the Papacy and Habsburgs failing to agree on a candidate, and internal Transylvanian opposition over the return

⁴ K.Révész, 'Egy érdekes okmány a xvii. század közepéről' in PEIL 39 (1896).

of expropriated episcopal lands.⁵

Catholics were at their strongest in Transylvania in the eastern Szekler region, but even here local arrangements favoured the Reformed church. For example the church in the market town of Székelyudvarhely was used jointly by Protestants and Catholics until 1612, when the Reformed church took possession of it. From 1614 neither priests nor monks were allowed in the town, and Catholics had to travel to a neighbouring village to worship until 1630, when permission to build a new Catholic church in Székelyudvarhely was finally given. However by an agreement of 1633, once the new church had been built by local Catholics it was to be handed over to the Reformed congregation, and the Catholics forced to move to the vacated old church.⁶ In 1640 Transylvania's Catholics made a formal appeal to the prince for redress of their many grievances, asking for restrictions on rights of church visitation to be removed, and for full freedom of practice in those areas where Catholics were in a minority. The appeal argued that whilst "the Catholic church as a received religion, has no bishop, nor any leader with full authority to inspect the church, even the Romanians have a bishop, who is able to visit and correct the churches under his control".⁷

From the 1560s the Pope had been represented in Hungarian

⁵ V.Biró, Bethlen Gábor és az erdélyi katolicizmus, (Kolozsvár, 1929); A.Jakab, 'Az erdélyi római katolikus püspöki szék betöltésének vitája a xvii. században' in Erdélyi Múzeum 49 (1944), pp.5-20.

⁶ F.Zayzon, A székelyudvarhelyi ev. ref. egyházközség története (Székelyudvarhely, 1893), p.15.

⁷ 17 May 1640, Gyulafehérvár; 'Collectia Mike Sándor', no.762 from the Cluj State Archives.

Reformed church canons as the Antichrist. At the 1629 Nagyváradi synod of the eastern Tisza region, arguments for a Papal Antichrist were rehearsed, with references in the debate to the seven hills of Rome, and Papal opposition to the 'true church'.⁸ Disputes over the adoption of the Gregorian calendar from the late sixteenth century reflected such intense opposition towards Catholic institutions, with the acceptance of the Pope's idea of time a source of great controversy for Reformed communities in Hungary. Congregations where the old calendar still prevailed had to be compelled to receive ministers from parishes where the new calendar had been accepted. Some sort of uniformity was only established when the Hungarian diet intervened, with threats of punishment for non-compliance in 1599. In January 1600 a northern Tisza synod at Tállya finally accepted the new calendar but made it clear that they were acting on the expressed wishes of their temporal lords, and in no way thereby accepting any Papal claims of authority over them.⁹

From the beginning of the seventeenth century the political and religious issues at stake between the Reformed and Catholic churches in Hungary and Transylvania were inextricably linked. In 1606 an Apology on behalf of István Bocskai supporting his revolt against the Habsburgs, set out the case for Protestant Hungary and Transylvania before an international audience. This pamphlet aimed to counter Catholic propaganda that Bocskai was an Arian, highlighting the adoption of the Helvetic confession

⁸ 'Tiszántul püspöki jegyzőkönyvek 1629-', MOL box no.1883, pp.9-42.

⁹ Tállya synod results; Ferenc Pápai Páriz, 'Romlott fal felépítése' (Rudus Redivivum) in MPEA 5 (1905), pp.163-4.

as evidence of Hungarian Protestant orthodoxy. The Apology also called on all other true followers of Christ in Europe to recognise "that we, although indeed bodily distant from one another, are one together in Christ".¹⁰ Gábor Bethlen's first foray into the Thirty Years War, with his military advance in 1619 against Habsburg Hungary, again acted to join together political divisions between the two competing Hungarian states with the competing claims of their confessions. Bethlen's chaplain and advisor, Péter Alvinczi, placed the insidious influence of the Catholic clergy, idolatry and offences against freedom of religion, at the root of all Hungary's problems.¹¹ Péter Pázmány, from 1616 Catholic archbishop of Esztergom, responded by asserting that what Protestants in Transylvania meant by Christian freedom was the expulsion of Jesuits, and denial of places for Catholics to worship.¹²

The war of words between Alvinczi and Pázmány, the two titans of early seventeenth century Hungarian polemic theology, went to the heart of the conflict between the two solidifying religious traditions in Hungary and Transylvania. In 1613 Pázmány, a child convert to Catholicism, published a work of Catholic dogmatics as "a guide to lead to the truth of God". Pázmány attacked the "new faiths" in Hungary as devilishly

¹⁰ K.Révész, 'Bocskay István apologiája' in Protestáns Szemle 18 (1906), pp.304-312.

¹¹ Péter Alvinczi, Querela Hungariae (?, 1620) RMK 2/413; Machiavellizatio (Kassa, 1621) RMK 2/399.

¹² Péter Pázmány, Falsae originis motuum Hungaricorum succincta refutatio (Wien, 1620) RMK 1/506; Thomas Balásfi, Castigatio libelli Calvinistici, cui titulus est: Machiavellizatio (Wien, 1620) RMK 3/1280.

inspired heresies, claiming that Calvin had made God the author of sin.¹³ Alvinczi responded to Pázmány's charge of Calvinist novelty in 1616, aiming to prove the existence of an unseen church of those holding similar opinions to Luther and Calvin from the Apostles onwards, and included in his list Alfred the Great, and a series of medieval Oxford academics. Alvinczi also asserted that the Pope was an enemy of Christ, and presented the Protestant churches as a united front.¹⁴

Pázmány responded scornfully in 1620 to Alvinczi's claimed Protestant antecedents, and ridiculed the notion of a joint Protestant heritage, since he argued that Lutherans and Calvinists could not agree amongst themselves; "Perhaps Calvinist preachers, who row in Calvin's boat, often lie about what they believe, for friendship's sake". Pázmány also wrote that Luther had thought all those who viewed communion as a mere sacrament were damned, and that the Lutheran Augsburg confession differed from the Roman church's doctrine only in its claimed reform of

¹³ E.Zsilinszky, Polemikus irodalmunk a xvi. és xvii.-ik században (Budapest, 1891); S.Sík, Pázmány, az ember és az író (Budapest, 1939); I.Bitskey, Pázmány Péter (Budapest, 1986); Péter Pázmány, Isteni igazságra vezérlő kalaúz (Pozsony, 1613) RMK 1/443; Az mostani támadt új tudományok hamisságának tíz nyilvánvaló bizonyosága és rövid intés a török birodalomról és vallásról (Graz, 1605) RMK 1/398, pp.29-63; Az nagy Calvinus Jánosnak hiszek-egy-istene (Nagyszombat, 1609) RMK 1/415; Alvinczi Péternek sok tétovázó kerengésekkel és cégeres gyalázatokkal felhalmozott feleletinek rövid és keresztyéni szelídséggel való megrostálása (Pozsony, 1609) RMK 1/417; Az kálvinista prédikátorok igyenes erkölcsű tekéletességének tüköre (Wien, 1614) RMK 1/446; see M.Tarnoc(ed.), Pázmány Péter művei (Budapest, 1983).

¹⁴ Péter Alvinczi, Itinerarium catholicam, azaz: Nevezetes vetélkedés (?, 1616) RMK 1/462, pp.91-95, 98-122.

Catholic abuses.¹⁵ István Melotai, the eastern Tisza Reformed superintendent, also entered the polemic battle with his examination of Catholic "errors". Meanwhile János Kecskeméti, the Reformed minister at Ungvár, attempted to refute Pázmány's work on Catholic dogma, by concentrating on perceived Catholic abuses such as the worship of Mary, and the value given to saints as intercessors. Kecskeméti also translated William Perkins' work Catholicus Reformatus into Hungarian, which identified Rome as Babylon, and challenged Catholic doctrine particularly over purgatory and transubstantiation.¹⁶ In the early 1620s Gábor Bethlen gave financial support to a Jesuit called György Káldi to translate the Bible into Hungarian, as a reward for his services as an envoy to the Habsburg court. However even this gesture did not suspend hostilities between the confessions. Káldi warned his readers of the errors and dangers of the 1590 Bible translation by Gáspár Károlyi, which he dubbed a "Calvinist Bible", prompting an immediate defence of Károlyi's translation

¹⁵ Péter Pázmány, Rövid felelet két kálvinista könyvecskére (Pozsony, 1620) RMK 1/673, especially pp.436 and 451; Egy keresztien predikator tul...Alvinczi Peter uramhoz iratot eot szep level (Pozsony, 1609) RMK 1/416; a now unknown response by Péter Alvinczi, ...öt levelekre rend szerint való felelet (Debrecen, 1609).

¹⁶ István Melotai Nyilas, A mennyei tudomány szerint való irtovány, melyből az veszedelmes tevelygeseknek, es hamis velekedeseknek kárhozatos, tövisszes bokrai (Debrecen, 1617) RMK 1/474; János Kecskeméti, Catholicus Reformatus (Debrecen, 1620) RMK 1/499; Pázmány Peter kalauzzának, tizenharmadik könyvére való felelet (Bártfa, 1622) RMK 1/518; Fides Jesu et Jesuitarum (Bártfa, 1619) RMK 1/484, p.323; Az papistak között es mi közöttünk, vetelkedesre vettetet, három fő articulusokról (Bártfa, 1622) RMK 1/519.

by Péter Dengelegi.¹⁷

In this charged atmosphere the conversion to Catholicism of Mihály Veresmárti, a Reformed minister in western Hungary, caused a predictable storm of argument and debate. Veresmárti's colleagues at Komját tried to combat his doubts about the Reformed church, and in 1609 Veresmárti's objections were sent to Heidelberg for answers. Veresmárti however remained unconvinced and converted to Catholicism in 1611, stressing that his decision was prompted by the attractions of the history and universality of the Catholic church, against the views of "schismatics", and followers of "new religions".¹⁸ In the 1640s, one Reformed writer still contended with Veresmárti on the question of 'Christian freedom', arguing that if Catholic arguments were so compelling, why was the weight of civil authority and violence needed to back up those arguments in making forced conversions in Hungary?¹⁹

During the early seventeenth century periods of study at Calvinist academies and universities in Germany and the Dutch Republic offered many Hungarian student ministers the opportunity

¹⁷ György Káldi, Szent Biblia (Wien, 1626) RMK 1/551; Péter Dengelegi Biró, Rövid Anatómia (Gyulafehérvár, 1630) RMK 1/592, p.231; I.Bitskey, 'Bethlen, Pázmány és a Káldi-Biblia' in Századok 115 (1981), pp.737-743.

¹⁸ Mihály Veresmárti, 'Megtérése históriája' in Magyar Emlékirók 16.-18. század (Budapest, 1982), pp.123-184; A.Ipolyi, Veresmárti Mihály (Budapest, 1875); Mihály Veresmárti, Intő s tanító levél (Pozsony, 1639), RMK 1/697; Mihály Veresmárti(tr.), Lessius Lénárd, Tanácskozás, melyiket kelljen az különböző vallások közül választani (Pozsony, 1611) RMK 1/431; Mihály Veresmárti, Az eretnekeknek adott hitnek megtartásáról (Pozsony, 1641) RMK 1/721.

¹⁹ Anon., Pápisták méltatlan üldözése a vallásért (?, 1643) RMK 1/753.

to encounter such anti-Catholic arguments and to test their polemic skills in public disputations. As we have seen, many of these disputations were published as defences of Reformed theological positions, or attacks on the doctrine of other confessions. Student ministers abroad also frequently translated recent Calvinist works by western authors, which were thought useful for the church at home. From the 1630s an increasing number of works on Reformed dogma and homiletics, along with Calvinist catechisms, statements of faith, devotional tracts, and works for children were translated and published in Transylvania and eastern Hungary from English, Swiss, French and Dutch sources. Notably Albert Szenczi Molnár translated Calvin's Institutes in 1624, which he dedicated to Gábor Bethlen, whilst Pál Medgyesi, chaplain to I. György Rákóczi, translated a work on Augustine from English, to show the connection between Protestant churches and the early church, as well as a work by William Cowper, bishop of Galloway, on the history of the Reformed church in Scotland.²⁰

Reformed polemic attacks against Catholicism continued unabated throughout this period and István Geleji Katona, the

²⁰ Albert Szenczi Molnár, A keresztyéni religióra és igaz hitre való tanítás (Hanau, 1624) RMK 1/540; Pál Medgyesi(tr.), Szent Agoston vallasa (Debrecen, 1632) RMK 1/608; and Het napoki edgyüt beszélgetések, ket öszvetalalkozott embereknek tudnia-illik edgy Keresztyen es mas edgy papista Catholicusnak (Debrecen, 1637) RMK 1/668. Other important translations include Benedek Nagybíró(tr.), Orthodoxus Christianus azaz: Igaz vallásu keresztyén (Nagyvárad, 1651) RMK 1/855; László Gyöngyösi(tr.), A ker. vallásnak fundamentomi (Utrecht, 1657) RMK 1/925; Heinrich Diest, Praxeos sacrae specimen, quo continentur selecta aliquot conciones... (Nagyvárad, 1653) RMK 2/798; Péter Szenczi Csene, Confessio Helvetica, az az, Az Keresztyeni igaz hitről való vallás-tétel (Oppenheim, 1616) RMK 1/466, reprinted at Sárospatak in 1654 as Confessio et Expositio Fidei Christianae, RMK 1/891.

Transylvanian superintendent, juxtaposed the doctrine of his "orthodox faith" against that of confessional rivals. Geleji placed the Hungarian Reformed church squarely "between the poles of Anabaptism and Catholicism", claiming that the Reformed church practised its ceremonies with "Christian freedom" and without superstition, whilst Catholics remained idolatrous. Pál Medgyesi also published an anti-Catholic tract examining the role of the Pope, the saints and images in Catholic doctrine, whilst another Protestant writer enjoined his readers to remain constant in their Reformed faith, and not to follow "the lies of the world".²¹

This continuing battle between Reformed dominated eastern Hungary and Transylvania, and Catholic dominated western Hungary was typified by polemic exchanges over the religion of the ruling Rákóczi family. In 1640 Mátyás Hajnal, Catholic chaplain to Miklós Eszterházy, published a critique of the religious education given to the Rákóczi princes by Pál Keresztúri. Hajnal asserted that Keresztúri's teaching on communion had prepared the princes not for salvation, but for damnation. Keresztúri responded immediately by attacking Hajnal's "devilish medicine", and restated the Reformed view on communion, and his opposition

²¹ János Laskai(tr.), Hittül-szakadasnak tellyes meg orvoslasa (Nagyvárad, 1644); István Geleji Katona, Praeconium Evangelicum (Gyulafehérvár, 1638/1640), RMK 2/521, and 552; for example on consubstantiation in volume 2, pp.878-879, or on the Pope, p.895; István Geleji Katona, Váltság-Titka (3 vols.), (Nagyvárad, 1645-1649), RMK 1/779, 799, and 826, volume 3, pp.825-1586 on communion; Pál Medgyesi, Egő szövétnek (Gyulafehérvár, 1645) RMK 1/774; Anon., Mennyország kinyitott egyetlenegy szoros kapuja (Nagyvárad, 1656) RMK 1/915.

to transubstantiation.²² In another such confrontation in December 1638 a Jesuit called Dániel Vásárhelyi debated theological issues with Pál Medgyesi at a dinner at Kolozsvár arranged by the Transylvanian princess, Zsuzsanna Lórántffy. One Catholic noble who sat near Vásárhelyi was reported by Medgyesi as promising to convert to the Reformed church by Christmas, if Vásárhelyi did not improve his arguments. Following this debate a tract was published in 1640 detailing Vásárhelyi's arguments on the nature of Christ, together with a response from Medgyesi. This episode also probably provided Lórántffy with the impulse to publish a series of connected Bible quotations, with Medgyesi's assistance. Lórántffy's work however drew sarcastic criticism from an unknown Catholic author in Pozsony, stirring I.György Rákóczi to defend his wife, and demand that the author be punished by Ferdinand III. Rákóczi in fact did not gain any satisfactory response from Ferdinand, and later mentioned this grievance amongst his reasons for attacking Habsburg Hungary in his military campaign of 1644.²³

In the early seventeenth century Reformed attitudes also hardened

²² Pál Keresztúri, Csecsemő Keresztyén (Gyulafehérvár, 1638) RMK 1/678; Mátyás Hajnal, Kitett cégér... (Pozsony, 1640) RMK 1/704; Pál Keresztúri, Felserdült keresztyén (Nagyvárad, 1641), RMK 1/722.

²³ Pál Medgyesi, Szent Atyák öröme az az: ...Daniel Vasarhellyi Jesuita Professius Paternek tzikkelyinek meg tzikkelyezesere (Gyulafehérvár, 1640) RMK 1/701, pp.11-12, and 28-47. The argument turned on whether Jacob fought with an angel or Christ. Vásárhelyi argued for an angel, and Medgyesi thereby accused him of Samosatenianism. Zsuzsanna Lórántffy, Moses és a próphéták (Gyulafehérvár, 1641) RMK 1/716; Anon., Jesuita páterek titkai, a magok írásiból kiszedegettetek (Nagyvárad, 1657) RMK 1/926, p.7.

against the anti-Trinitarian church in Transylvania. As we have seen, many of the disputations by student ministers at Dutch universities detailed arguments against Socinian theological ideas. Such ministers encouraged the anti-Trinitarian church's constitutional status in Transylvania to be brought under scrutiny in this period, with decreasing respect for the protected position of anti-Trinitarians. The first salvo in this campaign was delivered by István Melotai Nyilas, who dedicated to Gábor Bethlen a 1622 attack on the anti-Trinitarian theologian György Enyedi. Praising Bethlen as a destroyer of idolatry, Melotai called on him to act against Sabbatarianism, a radical and judaising wing of Transylvanian anti-Trinitarianism which had emerged during the late sixteenth century. Melotai also reminded Bethlen of a theological colloquium held at the Transylvanian court in 1618 about the role of Christ in salvation, when the prince had been outraged by anti-Trinitarian opinions, but unable to give such statements their "true reward". Melotai, referring to Unitarians using the labels of ancient Arian and Samosatene heresies, claimed that only political weakness during interregna had let anti-Trinitarians slip into a recognised constitutional position, whilst the rest of the Christian world condemned them as atheists.²⁴

Meanwhile on the ground the anti-Trinitarian church remained strongest in the Szekler areas of eastern Transylvania, and in some towns such as Torda and Kolozsvár. Indeed the Reformed and Unitarian churches in the isolated and mountainous Háromszék

²⁴ István Melotai Nyilas, Speculum Trinitatis (Debrecen, 1622) RMK 1/521, pp.6, 38 and passim.

region of south-eastern Transylvania were joined in an administrative union from 1614, although the clergy remained dependent on their separate hierarchies. In 1619 however the Transylvanian superintendent János Keserői Dajka made use of this arrangement to investigate supposedly Reformed Háromszék churches, and in this process expelled about 60 anti-Trinitarian ministers from those parishes. Anti-Trinitarian ministers were henceforth denied access to Reformed parishes in Háromszék, whilst Calvinist clergy could still move to anti-Trinitarian parishes. In 1631 the Reformed clergy complained to the prince that Unitarian ministers in Háromszék should henceforth come under the authority of Reformed superiors, and indeed from 1647 the Unitarian clergy of this dark corner of the principality were forced to recognise the Transylvanian Reformed bishop in matters of discipline and morality, depending on their own anti-Trinitarian bishop only on doctrinal matters.²⁵

In 1631 the Reformed synod asked the Transylvanian prince to intervene against the Unitarian church in the Háromszék market town of Székelykeresztur. The Reformed clergy charged that local anti-Trinitarians had occupied their church, and had not provided another building for Reformed worship. At first the Reformed church's plea went unheeded, with I.György Rákóczi suggesting shared use of the church, but by 1646 the Reformed minister had regained control of the main church in Székelykeresztur with the active support of János Bethlen, a major Reformed landowner in

²⁵ I.Juhász, A székelyföldi református egyházmegyék (Kolozsvár, 1947), p.49; M.Péter, A rikánbelőli közösség ismertetése és rövid története (Sepsiszentgyörgy, 1909).

the area.²⁶ In fact the intervention of the Transylvanian prince and Reformed nobles, as patrons and promoters of the Reformed church, upset the delicate inter-confessional balance in various localities across the principality with assaults on the interests of rival confessions. In the 1630s for example I.György Rákóczi targeted financial support to develop the small Reformed church and school in the Unitarian citadel at Kolozsvár. The local Reformed community first tried to gain possession of the central church, and by 1638 had managed to gain a foothold on the Kolozsvár council. Continuing princely backing during this period ensured that the Reformed community in Kolozsvár steadily acquired more church property, and with a growing congregation, was also able to increase its representation on the town council from one quarter to a half.²⁷

The Reformed clergy hierarchy also complained to the prince in the 1630s about the spread of Sabbatarianism in Szekler areas, especially on the estates of Gábor Bethlen's former chancellor, Simon Péchi. The Reformed synod suggested that commissioners of inquisition be sent to the area, to investigate accusations of Jewish style religious celebrations held on Fridays, and deal

²⁶ From Reformed church records in Székelyudvarhely, box no. xxxviii, and reproduced by J.Koncz, 'Az erdélyi ev. ref. egyház vallássérelmei 1631-ben, beterjesztve I.Rákóczi György fejedelemhez orvoslás végett' in EPK 1882, pp.380-381, 396 and 422-423; I.Juhász, A székelyföldi református egyházmegyék (Kolozsvár, 1947), p.39.

²⁷ For details of the situation in Kolozsvár see 'Segesvári Bálint krónikája, 1606-1654' in ETA 4, (Kolozsvár, 1862), pp.157-218. Anti-trinitarian catechisms were published at Kolozsvár in 1632, 1636, 1644 and 1654 (RMK 1/620, 624, 659, 760 and 889), along with confessional verses in 1634, Az háromságnak oltalmazására gondolt legfővebb okoskodásnak meg vizsgálása and in 1643 (RMK 1/637 and 742).

with this "condemned and proscribed sect" which the prince "was not bound to tolerate".²⁸ Sabbatarians were widely reported to outwardly declare themselves to be Unitarians, and the Reformed church could therefore claim that the law preventing any doctrinal innovation amongst received religions had been broken by the Unitarian church. A session of the Transylvanian diet in April 1638 therefore demanded a confessional statement from Dániel Beke, the Unitarian superintendent, to prove that the church's doctrine had not in fact changed. In July 1638 the diet was called again, this time at Dés, to investigate the spread of Sabbatarianism, and impose an anti-Trinitarian confession which accepted the adoration of Christ as God. The diet also asked for a new adorantist catechism to be drawn up under the supervision of the Reformed bishop, and imposed restrictions on the future publication of anti-Trinitarian works.²⁹

The Dés diet then changed into a prosecuting court against individuals who would not accept adorantist anti-Trinitarianism. One death penalty was enforced with the stoning of János Toroczkaí, the son of an anti-Trinitarian superintendent, executed by five gypsies for saying that "if Jesus would come to earth, I would send him to work in a vineyard". Others questioned by the court suffered loss of property, and Simon Péchi and his supporters were imprisoned after evidence was heard about their Easter celebrations using unleavened bread, and special white

²⁸ Koncz, EPK 1882, pp.380-381, 396 and 422-423.

²⁹ 7 July 1638, 'Collectia Gr. Kemény József', Cluj State Archives; S.Szilágyi, B.Orbán, 'Az unitáriusok 1638-diki üldöztetéseinek s a deési complanatióinak történetéhez' in Keresztény Magvető 9 (1874), pp.150-162.

clothing worn by women on Péchi's estates. Release for those imprisoned was on the condition of submission to articles of Reformed faith. Pál Medgyesi made 55 new converts on one day alone, including Simon Péchi's chaplain, who was remarkably later ordained as a Reformed minister. These forced conversions also allowed the Reformed church to gain control of congregations and local church property in some Szekler villages where anti-Trinitarianism had previously been at its strongest.³⁰

In 1644 I.György Rákóczi's eldest son investigated the response amongst Szeklers of his father's call to arms against the Habsburgs, and in the process discovered Sabbatarianism again spreading in eastern Transylvania.³¹ Such a finding was a call to arms for Transylvanian Reformed polemicists, and János Laskai published a work to persuade Sabbatarians of their errors, offering proofs that the Messiah had already come and that Old Testament prophecy had found complete fulfilment in Jesus.³² In 1645 István Geleji Katona lent his weight to the campaign against Unitarianism, with a defence of the "heavenly secret knowledge of the Trinity". Geleji also attacked the "dangerous sect" of Sabbatarians, and dismissed Transylvanian anti-Trinitarianism as finding its "perfectly complete" form in atheism and judaising.

³⁰ István Geleji Katona, Titkok Titka (Gyulafehérvár, 1645) RMK 1/772; S.Kohn, A szombatosok: történetük, dogmathikájuk és irodalmuk (Budapest, 1890). The text of the 1579 confession used after 1638 in Péter Bod, Historia Hungarorum Ecclesiastica (3 vols.), (Leiden, 1888-1889), book 3, chapter 11, pp.303-304; 'Segesvári Bálint krónikája, 1606-1654' in ETA 4, pp.157-218 on punishments following the Dés diet.

³¹ S.Szilágyi, 'Az unitáriusok egyháztörténelméhez a xvii.-ik században' in Keresztény Magvető 11 (1876), pp.62-64.

³² János Laskai, Jézus Királysága (Nagyvárad, 1644) RMK 1/765.

Geleji also argued that use of the name Unitarian was by definition at odds with an adorantist religion, and therefore could not fall within the bounds of the anti-Trinitarian religion which had been given constitutional status at Torda in 1568. Reformed ministers at universities in the Dutch Republic continued to be encouraged by theologians such as Gisbert Voetius, to deny that anti-Trinitarian religion could be tolerated in a Christian country. The position of Unitarianism in Transylvania was significantly weakened during the early seventeenth century, but despite such challenges from the Reformed clergy, the constitutional freedom of Unitarian religious practice remained intact throughout this period.³³

(ii) Internal Allies?; Lutherans and Eastern Orthodoxy

During the seventeenth century the Reformed and Saxon Lutheran churches in Transylvania managed to co-exist in largely discrete areas without serious dispute. The attendance of Saxon ministers at Wittenberg in the sixteenth century had encouraged support for an intermediate Melanchthonian theology, and in 1601 the Saxon superintendent Matthias Schiffbaumer even sought some form of concord with the Transylvanian Reformed church. However during the early seventeenth century student ministers were exposed to a more doctrinaire Lutheranism in Saxony, and returned to Transylvania committed to strict Lutheran orthodoxy. In 1615 for

³³ Geleji, Titkok Titka, especially the introduction; "ha igaz Unitariusok, a' Christust ne imádják, és az okon nem recepto religion vagynak, sem liberum exercitiumjok jure nem lehet".

example the Lutheran minister at Segesvár in central Transylvania, Simon Paulinus, stopped using the Heidelberg catechism and works by David Pareus in his local school. Paulinus also supported the doctrine of the real presence of Christ in the communion service, but was accused of theological innovation by some of his colleagues. Hungarian-speaking Lutherans in southwestern Transylvania around Szászváros were particularly enraged by Paulinus and his supporters and protested to the Saxon superintendent. Gábor Bethlen was also drawn into the dispute, and demanded that the superintendent block any attempt to introduce doctrinal innovations. However by the 1650s it was traditionalists over communion theology in the Saxon Lutheran church who were out of step with the majority, who had by then accepted the real presence in the sacrament.³⁴

In western Hungary separate Reformed and Lutheran churches were slow to emerge, with communion theology the major cause of their eventual division. In 1610 a synod at Zsolna led to the organisation of Lutheran church districts in Hungary, the appointment of superintendents, and the adoption of a strictly Lutheran confession. Henceforth ministers and teachers could be asked to swear to uphold this confession, if their loyalty to Lutheran doctrine was doubted, and from 1615 Ferenc Nádasdy refused to accept any Protestant minister on his extensive estates who would not subscribe to the Augsburg confession.³⁵ In other areas of Hungary, patterns of Protestant coexistence

³⁴ Bod, Historia, book 3, chapter 10, pp.286-301.

³⁵ B.Ila, 'A Thurzó levéltár protestáns egyháztörténeti iratai' in MPEA 15 (1934), pp.44-5 and 144.

even continued into the seventeenth century. In the northern county of Zemplén a Protestant administrative union existed from 1597, with a small number of mostly Slav Lutheran congregations accepting visitation and correction from the local Reformed church hierarchy.³⁶

In the first decades of the seventeenth century many leading Reformed ministers in western Hungary travelled to study at Heidelberg, and were greatly influenced by its leading professor David Pareus. As we have already seen, Pareus was also in direct contact with the Reformed church in Hungary and Transylvania, and wrote to Gábor Bethlen about his irenic plans for Protestant union. The effects of Pareus' teaching were certainly felt amongst Hungarian student ministers returning from the Palatinate, with efforts by former Heidelberg students such as Péter Alvinczi, János Samarjai and Imre Pécseli Király to promote ideas about Protestant union in Hungary. Some returning ministers for example proved unhappy about being classified as Calvinists, with Pécseli arguing against dividing the unseen church by such labels as Lutheran and Calvinist. Pécseli indeed quoted Pareus' arguments that the names of Lutheran and Calvinist jointly distinguished orthodox Christians from heretics.³⁷

³⁶ L.Hegedüs, 'A zempléni helv. hitv. egyházmegye jegyzőkönyvéből' in Sárospataki Füzetek 1 (1857/8), pp.756-760.

³⁷ Imre Pécseli Király, Consilium Ecclesiae Catholicae Doctorum super ista Quaestione: An homo Christianus possit et debeat se cognominare Lutheranum vel Calvinistam ad Religionem puram ab impura recte discernendam? (Kassa, 1621) RMK 2/416; for a negative Lutheran response see György Zvonarics, Rövid felelet, melyben Pécseli Imrének...tanácsa meghamisittatik...e kérdés felől: a keresztyén embernek kellessék-e lutheránusnak avagy kálvinistának neveztetni (Csepreg, 1626) RMK 1/554; J.Heltai, 'Irenikus eszmék és vonások Pécseli Király Imre műveiben' in B.Varjas(ed.), Irodalom és ideológia a 16-17. században. Memoria

In June 1615 ministers from the upper Danubian Reformed and Lutheran churches met to review their theological differences, with Reformed representatives including former Heidelberg students Samarjai, Pécseli and Pál Czeglédi. Meanwhile discussions were also held in September 1615 at Komját between western Danubian Protestant superintendents and clergy in an effort to reach a unifying doctrinal position on the thorny communion question. A form of words on Christ's body and blood in the sacrament, contrary to the doctrine of physical ubiquity, was accepted for further discussion by both sides but full agreement was never reached. Debates and correspondence however followed this meeting between István Pathai, the Reformed superintendent, and Mihály Zvonarics, a Lutheran minister from Sárovar. In 1616 and 1617 Pathai invited Zvonarics to the Reformed synod, where he questioned his ubiquitarian opinions, whilst Zvonarics stuck by his claims that Calvinists were heretics because of their views on the sacraments.³⁸

In Transylvania, and even more so in Hungary, the anti-Catholic cold war would have been much aided in Reformed eyes if Lutherans could have been persuaded to drop perceived Catholic survivals in their worship, and abandon the doctrine of the real presence in communion. The experience of ministers who had studied at Heidelberg under Pareus reinforced this general impression into a firm tack towards irenic inter-Protestant

Saeculorum Hungariae vol.5 (Budapest, 1987), pp.209-230.

³⁸ "Quod corpus et sanguis Christi in legitima coenae ubicunque administratur, adsint vere, non tamen locali, neque physico, sed sacramentaliter modo"; E.Thury, 'Adatok a dunántul és felsődunamellék kerületekről' in MPEA 7 (1908), pp.154-156, 189-192 and 196-197.

cooperation, a policy directed primarily against a commonly identified Antichrist enemy. I have already examined how this trend was evident in the discussions held between the Reformed and Lutheran churches in western Hungary, and I will now turn to address unionistic theological works by Hungarian Reformed ministers, and the conciliatory path towards Lutherans adopted by Péter Alvinczi at Kassa in northern Hungary.

In 1628 János Samarjai, superintendent of the Upper Danubian church district of north-western Hungary, published a work under the title Magyar Harmonia to attempt to show that the Helvetic and Augsburg confessions were fully reconcilable, an argument supported by quotation from Pareus' Irenicum. Samarjai stressed that neither Calvin nor Luther was the origin of Protestant faith, which was in Christ and the Apostles, and emphasised that communion was not a mere memorial, but a necessity for salvation with the spiritual presence of Christ in the elements. Samarjai however stood by the need for communion in both kinds, and repeated a claim of Pareus, that Lutherans themselves did not really subscribe to the Augsburg confession on the doctrine of the real presence.³⁹

Hungarian Lutherans responded to these approaches with great scepticism, not least since where the Reformed church was in a clear majority, polemic attacks tended to outnumber friendly advances. A suspicious Hungarian Lutheran was not long in rejecting Samarjai's proposals, with István Lethenyei detailing

³⁹ János Samarjai, Magyar Harmónia; azaz Augustana es az Helvetica Confessio Articulusainac eggyező értelme... (Pápa, 1628) RMK 1/573, pp.47-55, p.229 and passim; G.Kathona, Samarjai János gyakorlati theológiája (Debrecen, 1939).

differences across many branches of faith which he saw between the two Protestant confessions, especially concerning communion theology and the ubiquity of Christ. Lethenyei argued that Calvinism was a "dangerous science", with "damnable errors", and suggested that many Calvinists were either Arians or Muslims.⁴⁰ János Samarjai however was undaunted by this reaction and produced an Agenda, or service order-book, for his church district in 1636 which made no mention of the Helvetic catechism, and even included sections of Catholic inspiration. Samarjai suggested that details of sacramental ceremony and liturgy were open to different interpretations under "Christian freedom", and argued that it was of little importance whether a communicant should stand or kneel, or whether the elements should be received in the hands or in the mouth, at an altar or on a table. Samarjai did assume that wafers would not be used in the sacrament, but described the bread as more than "mere" bread, secretly united for the believer with Christ's body in the sacrament.⁴¹ Imre Pécseli Király supported Samarjai's stance, and in a children's catechism he too stressed that the elements were the seals of the covenant of grace, and by faith became Christ's body and blood.⁴²

Péter Alvinczi was the minister of the 'Hungarian' church in the

⁴⁰ István Lethenyei, Az Calvinistac magyar harmonianac. Azaz: az Augustana es Helvetica Confessioc Articulusinac...öszvehasomlétásanac meghamisétása (Csepreg, 1633) RMK 1/626.

⁴¹ János Samarjai, Agenda. Az helvetiai vallason levő ecclesiaknak egyházi ceremoniajokrol es rend tartasokrol valo könyetske (Lőcse, 1636) RMK 1/662.

⁴² Imre Pécseli Király, Catechismus (Lőcse, 1635) RMK 1/653.

predominantly German town of Kassa in northern Hungary. Kassa's council was fiercely defensive of its imperial privilege which allowed the free practice of Lutheranism, and extremely unwilling to allow any overtly Catholic or Calvinist worship in the town.⁴³ Alvinczi, ordained a Reformed minister, thus came under pressure from the town authorities not to attend Reformed church synods, nor accept Reformed discipline, and to sign the Augsburg confession.⁴⁴ Although Alvinczi cleared his 'Hungarian' church of all images and of the organ, and did not wear Lutheran vestments during services, he did use wafers instead of bread and wine during communion. Alvinczi's use of the wafer outraged Reformed opinion elsewhere since it seemed to signal acceptance of the real presence, but Alvinczi argued in a work dedicated to Gábor Bethlen that the use of wafers was permissible where the community was not yet ready to accept the change to using bread and wine. According to Alvinczi, allowing such variety of sacramental ceremony was not essential to the function of the communion service, so long as it was free from all superstition. On the doctrine of the real presence, Alvinczi carefully reasoned that although the bread remained bread, nevertheless the

⁴³ S.Imre, Alvinczi Péter (Marosvásárhely, 1898); O.Paulinyi, 'Iratok Kassa sz. kir. város 1603-1604-ben megkisérelt rekatalizálásának történetéhez' in MPEA 14 (1930), pp.57-61; G.Ráth, 'A felsőmagyarországi kryptokálvinisták hitvitázó irodalmáról' in ITK 2 (1892), pp.310-324.

⁴⁴ István Miskolczi Csulyak wrote to David Pareus in 1607 with news of 'ubiquitarians' forbidding Alvinczi to visit his Reformed archdeacon; L.Décsi, Szenczi Molnár Albert naplója, levelezése és irományai (Budapest, 1898), p.213.

communicant partook through it of Christ's body and blood.⁴⁵

Alvinczi's lightness of theological touch on some of the complicated issues surrounding communion theology, enabled him to outmanoeuvre suspicious German ministers at Kassa, who repeatedly tried to have him barred from preaching on the grounds that he was a Calvinist. In 1623 Alvinczi reported to the Kassa council that Buseus, the German minister, was refusing to speak to him, and had described those attending Alvinczi's communion service as having the reverence of pigs. In June 1625 Alvinczi told the council that he intended to leave Kassa due to Buseus' continuing insults. Alvinczi flatly rejected the label Calvinist as a term of abuse, telling the council that, "I am certainly not a Calvinist, neither am I a Lutheran, but a true Christian named after Jesus Christ". Alvinczi was at length persuaded not to leave Kassa on the understanding that he would receive no more insults from his German colleague. Buseus nevertheless persisted with his attacks on the town's Hungarian congregation as Calvinist heretics, and Alvinczi appeared again before the council to refute the charge of Calvinism, proclaiming that as "God is my witness, ...I have held to every point of the Augsburg confession".⁴⁶

Following this second dispute, the Kassa council asked Buseus to leave the town to prevent further conflict, but

⁴⁵ Péter Alvinczi, Az Urnak Szent wacsoraiarol valo reovid intes az Szent Pal Apostol tanitasa szerint (Kassa, 1622) RMK 1/522.

⁴⁶ Records of the Kassa town council in L.Kemény, 'Alvinczy Péter életéhez' in ITK 14 (1904), p.240 and pp.112-9, 234-246, 364-367 and 490-500; ITK 17 (1907), pp.243-248; ITK 20 (1910), pp.102-106; and ITK 21 (1911), pp.366-369.

controversy flared up again in 1627, when an assistant Hungarian minister used bread in a communion service. Alvinczi appealed to the council to support Protestant concord, and warned them that further argument would give the Catholic church an excuse to press for entry into Kassa as well, if Calvinists were already acknowledged to be present. Alvinczi also had to explain his delicate position at Kassa to a somewhat suspicious György Rákóczi in 1629, and claimed support from Calvin for his stance on communion, stressing the connections between what Calvin and Luther had written on the role of the sacraments.⁴⁷ Alvinczi's balancing act at Kassa however became increasingly difficult, with his assistant minister forced to leave, and Hungarian residents appearing before the council for having travelled outside the town to receive communion in both kinds, a mark of their commitment to explicitly Reformed sacramental theology.⁴⁸

David Pareus was not the only prominent foreign divine to advance the cause of Protestant union in Hungary and Transylvania during this period. John Dury worked throughout his career to reconcile the various wings of Protestantism across Europe in opposition to Papal and Imperial forces;

"If then I may parallel the universal state of Protestancie, as it is opposite to Poperie, unto a Kingdome; and the Nationall churches thereof, unto so many cities; and the severall

⁴⁷ S.Szilágyi, 'Rákóczyak levéltárából, 1611-1630' in TT 1895, clxiv, 11 May 1629, pp.140-141.

⁴⁸ In 1644 an unashamedly Reformed church was set up by I.György Rákóczi during his military campaign of 1644, and the Pozsony diet of 1649 confirmed rights for both Calvinists and Catholics to worship in Kassa; K.Révész, Százéves küzdelem a kassai református egyház megalakulásáért, 1550-1650 (Budapest, 1894).

congregations of each city, unto so many houses; and in all these, if I reflect upon the breaches which are apparent unto all; first between the Lutherans and the Reformed churches, which have brought them both from a flourishing, to a desolate condition, in Germany: Secondly between each of these within themselves, by their sub-divisions and crosse parties, which have weakened all their strength, and multiplied scandals amongst them: I must needs confesse, that Christ's sentence is verified upon them; and that the judgement which of old was denounced and executed against Israel, is now come to passe in part upon the Protestant churches, and may be accomplished over them all, if the causes thereof be not taken away by true repentance.⁴⁹

In 1634 Dury made a direct approach to the Transylvanian church with a written address to the Reformed synod on the need for a conference to sort out key problems between Lutheran and Reformed theologians, and Dury emphasised the work of Catholics, particularly the Jesuits, in keeping divisions between Protestants alive. Dury reported that this approach "moved them to take the matter into serious consideration and make a decree".⁵⁰ Indeed a detailed and supportive response was sent back to Dury in February 1634, signed by the Transylvanian superintendent István Geleji Katona, Johann Alsted, Johann Bisterfeld, Ludwig Piscator and all the archdeacons of the Transylvanian church. Alsted had himself studied under Pareus in 1608, and shared with Dury the expectation that rifts between the Protestant churches would be healed as the awaited millennium

⁴⁹ From the preface of John Dury, A Model of Church-Government or, the Grounds of the Spirituall Frame and Government of the House of God (London, 1647).

⁵⁰ John Dury, Motives to Induce the Protestant Princes to mind the Worke of Peace Ecclesiasticall amongst themselves (London, 1641); A Summary Discourse concerning the Work of Peace Ecclesiasticall, how it may Concurr with the Aim of a Civill Confederation amongst Protestants (Cambridge, 1641); A Brief Relation of that which hath been Lately Attempted to Procure Ecclesiasticall Peace amongst Protestants (London, 1641).

approached.⁵¹ In the Transylvanian synod's response of 1634 István Geleji Katona, another former Heidelberg student, reassured Dury that their aim was to find unity and church peace, in order to better combat the Antichrist. Geleji stressed that in Transylvania they were neighbours with barbarians, and had to put up with Arians, Anabaptists, Jews, Atheists and the Orthodox church, so that they had every reason to seek unity with their Saxon Lutheran colleagues. Geleji also expressed a desire to communicate with others in Britain on such matters, and indeed a letter was sent to George Abbot, the Archbishop of Canterbury, with questions on the possibility of union with Lutherans.⁵²

Throughout this period Dury worked to promote his unionistic plans and as we shall see in chapter 9, there was renewed interest in Transylvania's role in the Protestant world amongst Dury and his friends in the 1650s. Indeed Dury wrote in October 1654 that the Transylvanian synod's statement was going to be printed in England, "the rather because the Prince of Transylvania is in a readiness[sic] to come upon the stage for a Common Protestant interest." Dury reported to Samuel Hartlib

⁵¹ Alsted expressed his personal support for Protestant church unity in a letter to Simon Albelius in February 1634; J.Gross, 'Drei Briefe an Simon Albelius in Kronstadt' in Korrespondenzblatt des Vereins für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde 8 (1885), pp.1-3 and 13-15.

⁵² 'István Geleji Katona to George Abbot, the Archbishop of Canterbury, referring to John Durie's mission for the pacification of Protestant churches', House of Lords Record Office, MSS. Braye 1, f.102. Also a transcribed version of the reply to Dury, 'Reply of István Geleji Katona with regard to the problem of obtaining ecclesiastical peace among Protestant churches' MSS. Braye 1, ff.104-114; also 'letter of pastors and professors of Transylvania, 7 Feb. Anno 1634', in Hartl. 59/10 f.151a; M.Révész, 'Protestáns unió és az erdélyi reformátusok' in MPEF 9 (1887), pp.167-186.

that, "I sent you the iudgment[sic] of Transylvania a whole Copie at once; so that at severall times you have received now three copies of that judgment." Hartlib in response cited the "mutuall safety" and "edification" from "a further type of Religious Communion betwixt the British and their Neighbour Protestants beyond the seas".⁵³ The want of such a conjunction, Hartlib believed, gave an advantage to those who wished to impose absolute temporal and spiritual power on the continental church. Indeed Hartlib had written of the Papacy;

"nor is it possible to accomplish his[the Pope's] overthrow, except the fault be mended, but by some nearer correspondencie of Protestants among themselves, for their mutuall preservation against his enterprises".⁵⁴

However, many Reformed writers in Transylvania and eastern Hungary were in fact only too anxious to identify clear water between their theology, and that of Lutherans. István Melotai Nyilas, superintendent of the eastern Tisza church, published a service-order book in marked contrast to the Agenda of János Samarjai which we examined earlier. Melotai emphasised communion as a spiritual memorial, and concentrated heavily on the importance of striving for accuracy to the details of the original Last Supper. Melotai therefore argued that, "the wafer is the bread of the Antichrist in communion", and "infects Christian knowledge", and he accused Lutherans of being

⁵³ "The use which wish may bee made of this iudgment of Transylvania is that it may bee imparted to those of our men[!] to whom his Highness shall think fitte to recommend the thoughts of a concurrence with forreign churches in religious matters", from Hartl. 4/3, f.46, 49a and 50a.

⁵⁴ Samuel Hartlib, The Necessity of some nearer Conjunction and Correspondency amongst Evangelical Protestants (London, 1644), pp.6-7.

indistinguishable from Papists. Melotai illustrated his point by referring to a story he had heard whilst a student in Germany, of a minister in a town near Heidelberg who had wanted to use wafers in communion, but the wafers flew out of the plate as he prepared for the service.⁵⁵ István Geleji Katona, although he had signed the positive response to Dury's irenic appeal in 1634, also attacked Lutheran opinions in his enormous homiletic works. Geleji argued that ubiquitarianism denied the humanity of Christ as an intercessor, and remarked that Lutherans did not worship God in the way which He would want them to. Geleji concluded that the Lutherans were "half-Papists", and "neutralists", suggesting that whilst the Transylvanian superintendent saw the benefits of supporting Protestant union in an international context, he remained dedicated to denouncing Lutheran competitors at home.⁵⁶

Turning now to the standing of Eastern Orthodoxy in Transylvania, Romanians were not represented in the Transylvanian diet and the freedom of practice of their Orthodox church was therefore only available as a privilege from Transylvania's princes. This privilege was nevertheless consistently renewed during the early seventeenth century, and in 1609 Gábor Báthori also released Orthodox priests from serfdom, and they became free to move from

⁵⁵ István Melotai Nyilás, Agenda, az az Anya szent egyház beli szolgálat (Gyulafehérvár, 1621) RMK 1/515.

⁵⁶ István Geleji Katona, Váltság-Titka, ...és a' tévelygőnek, ugy-mint Sidoknak, Socinianusoknak, Blandristáknak, Pápistáknak, Lutheranus atyafiaknak, és egyebeknek ellenkező vélekedésik meg-czáfoltatnak... (3 vols.), (Nagyvárad, 1645) RMK 1/779, intro. to volume 1.

village to village. Transylvanian Protestants, both Lutheran and Reformed, had long aimed to reform the Romanian Orthodox church, and Gábor Bethlen wrote to Cyril Lukaris, the patriarch of Constantinople, hoping to gain his approval for a wholesale reformation of Romanian Orthodoxy. In September 1629 a response from Cyril, himself suspected of having Protestant sympathies, claimed that the relationship between the Romanian church in Transylvania and the Orthodox churches in Moldavia and Wallachia was a stumbling-block to any proposed unification of the Orthodox and Reformed churches in Transylvania.⁵⁷

The attitudes which Transylvanian Reformed ministers expressed about Orthodox church theology were not marked by the unrelenting criticism which was directed on the whole towards the other constitutional denominations. István Geleji Katona wrote that the only major differences between Orthodox and Reformed theology came in the respect shown to saints and icons, and on position of the Holy Spirit in the Trinity. Geleji however also considered Orthodox ceremonies and liturgy to be full of superstition, and believed that the Reformed church would be called to account for any neglect in efforts to assist reform of these abuses.⁵⁸ Rather than follow Bethlen's earlier ambition of a full Orthodox reformation, from the 1630s more piecemeal

⁵⁷ I.Juhász, A reformáció az erdélyi románok között (Kolozsvár, 1940); I.Révész, A reformáció az erdélyi oláhok között (Budapest, 1938); A.Bitay, Az erdélyi románok a protestáns fejedelmek alatt (Dicsőszentmárton, 1925); L.Binder, 'Grundlagen und Formen der Toleranz in Siebenbürgen bis zur Mitte des 17. Jahrhunderts' in Siebenbürgisches Archiv (3rd. series) vol.11, 1976, p.123.

⁵⁸ A.Ötvös, 'Geleji Katona István élete és levelei I.Rákóczi Györgyhez' in Új Magyar Múzeum 10 (1859), pp.204 and 215.

efforts were made to encourage the revision of some Orthodox practices, as well as continuing to encourage Romanians to convert to the Reformed church.

These policies met with some success, and one Orthodox minister sadly reported in 1655 that the church in his village had been given to Reformed converts by II.György Rákóczi, and that he consequently had nowhere to worship. Romanian Reformed ministers were occasionally ordained in the eastern Tisza church district, and small schools were set up to service Romanian Reformed communities in the Hátszeg and Karánsebes regions of south-western Transylvania.⁵⁹ The Reformed church hierarchy and the Transylvanian princes also supported the publication in Romanian of the New Testament, the Psalter and Protestant catechisms.⁶⁰ However such efforts to stimulate reform from within met with stiff resistance led by Varlaam, the Orthodox metropolitan of Moldavia. In 1644 Varlaam presided over a joint synod of the Moldavian and Wallachian churches, to formulate a response to the new Protestant catechisms and assist in defending traditional Orthodox theology and practices in the Transylvanian church.⁶¹ Orthodox metropolitans in Transylvania meanwhile were

⁵⁹ K.Zach, Orthodoxe Kirche und Rumänisches Volksbewusstsein im 15. bis 18. Jahrhundert (Wiesbaden, 1977), p.178.

⁶⁰ Protestant catechisms were published in Romanian in 1642, 1648, and 1656, a Psalter in 1651, and a New Testament in 1648, RMK 2/683, 684 and 752; A.Mózes, 'A xvi.-xvii.századbeli protestáns román káték' in Református Szemle 1936, pp.340-345; P.Hunfalvy, 'Az oláh káté' in Századok 20 (1886), pp.475-490; V.Ecsedy Judit, 'Dobre mester erdélyi nyomdaja, 1640-1642' in Magyar Könyvszemle 109 (1993), pp.146-166.

⁶¹ Varlaam's Raspunsuri were published in 1645; A.Mózes(tr.) J.Lupás, 'Varlaam, Moldova mitropolitája (1632-1653)' in Református Szemle 1935, pp.217-225 and 348-356.

recognised by the secular authorities, but owed obedience to the Reformed church superintendent, who laid conditions down for each new appointment. Efforts by the Transylvanian Reformed leadership to foster reform in the Orthodox church needed pliant metropolitans, to encourage use of the new publications in Romanian, and agree to enforce other reforming measures. Conditions imposed on new metropolitans included introducing the Romanian language into services, and changing the use of icons and crosses in worship. In 1640 István Geleji Katona also wanted a new metropolitan to agree to found Romanian schools, provide seating in churches and only give communion to adults. Geleji also tried without success to link the implementation of measures to counter perceived superstition with Romanian priests retaining their non-serf status.⁶²

There were attempts to monitor the implementation of such reforms amongst Orthodox priests, and in 1647 twenty villages in the Fogaras region of southern Transylvania were investigated by the Reformed authorities. The local priests' knowledge of Romanian and of basic Christian tenets was questioned, with mixed results on their ability to read Romanian, but all the Orthodox priests proved capable of repeating the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments and Apostle's Creed.⁶³ Zsuzsanna Lórántffy organised a further visitation of Romanian churches around Fogaras in 1658, again aiming to discover whether Orthodox

⁶² István Geleji Katona, Praeconium Evangelicum (Pars hyemalis ac vernalis) (Gyulafehérvár, 1638), intro.

⁶³ D.Prodan(ed.), Urbariile Tarii Fagarasului (Bucharest, 1970), vol.1, pp.831-884, and reproduced by P.Binder, 'Rákóczi György román bibliája' in A.Miskolczy(ed.), Europa Balcanica-Danubiana- Carpathica 2 (Budapest, 1994), pp.194-197.

priests conducted their services in Romanian, and whether they had a copy of the New Testament, the Psalter and the catechisms published by the Reformed church. A school for Romanians was also set up at Fogaras by Lórántffy in the late 1650s to prepare candidates for the priesthood, with Romanian teachers instructing pupils in the vernacular and a common doorway established to an adjoining Hungarian school.⁶⁴

Interest in the Orthodox world was also strengthened amongst the leadership of the Transylvanian Reformed church in the 1650s with the arrival of Isaac Basire in the principality. From 1655 Basire taught at the Gyulafehérvár academy, and along with the Transylvanian superintendent, György Csulai, had a leading role in church affairs generally. Basire had a long-standing interest in dialogue between Orthodoxy and Protestantism, and between 1650 and 1653 he had travelled around the Near East, attempting to spread knowledge of the Anglican church in the Orthodox world, with a vision of Anglicanism having a unique role to reunite a divided Christendom. Basire had an Anglican catechism translated into Greek, and claimed success in "spreading amongst the Greeks the Catholic doctrine of our faith". Basire travelled to Messina, Smyrna and Morea, where the metropolitan of Achaia allowed him to preach at a meeting of bishops and clergy. Basire also met the Greek patriarch at Jerusalem who apparently expressed the desire "of communion with our old church of England", and Basire planned further travels to meet with the patriarch of Alexandria, and to have the Anglican catechism translated into Turkish and sent to

⁶⁴ I. Juhász, 'Az erdélyi egyházak 17. századi együttélésének kérdései a fogarasi vártartományban' in Ráday Gyűjteménye Evkönyve 4-5 (1984/5), pp. 9-27.

the bishops of Armenia.⁶⁵

By 1653 Basire was ministering to the French Protestant community near Constantinople, and was in correspondence with Antoine Leger at Geneva. Leger, formerly a chaplain to the Dutch embassy at the Porte, had been responsible for the translation of Cyril Lukaris' supposed Protestant catechism, The Confessions of the Lord Cyril, Patriarch of Constantinople. Basire informed Leger of the positive reception which he claimed Orthodox patriarchs had given his Anglican catechism, and Leger offered to send him Greek versions of the New Testament and Protestant catechisms.⁶⁶ Basire's interest in dialogue with Orthodox church leaders continued after his arrival in Transylvania, and may indeed have been an added incentive in his decision to move to Transylvania. Basire for example when addressing the Gyulafehérvár academy in January 1657 proclaimed that Transylvanians whether Szekler, Hungarian, Saxon or 'Wallach', whether noble or peasant, were all united together in Christ.⁶⁷ He later wrote that;

"I am not a stranger to the Muscovites strangeness in point of religion, having observed it, when their ambassadeurs were entertained by Racozy[sic], whilst I lived at his court: The summe is, none more zealous, even to violence, to make proselytes...The Greekes (whose religion they pretend to follow) are far more moderate, because more docile, as are found in Achaia, when I having removed their stumbling block about the Holy Ghost...they readily gave me the right hand of fellowship

⁶⁵ W.N.Darnell(ed.), The Correspondence of Isaac Basire (London, 1831), pp.115-120.

⁶⁶ Letters from Leger at Geneva to Basire at Constantinople in October 1653 and 1654, 'Cosin Letter Book' 1A, no.59, Durham University Library; Darnell, The Correspondence of Isaac Basire, pp.121-127.

⁶⁷ Isaac Basire, Schema primum generale sive forma studiorum Albensium (Gyulafehérvár, 1657), p.21.

in these points that God may unite...all chains of all persuasions whatsoever, into our fold."⁶⁸

There were therefore three early seventeenth century foreign divines committed to inter-confessional dialogue between Transylvania's confessions. Isaac Basire found a stage at Gyulafehérvár to continue his efforts to improve relations between Protestantism and Eastern Orthodoxy, whilst first David Pareus and then John Dury hoped for a rapprochement between Lutherans and Calvinists in east-central Europe.

The early seventeenth century identity of the Reformed church in Hungary and Transylvania was shaped by a series of local inter-church disputes, with growing polemic conflict between ministers of the region's competing confessions. The Hungarian Reformed church was seen as distinctive abroad partly because of its proximity to anti-Trinitarianism, and also noted for being sandwiched between Habsburg Catholicism and Islamic Ottomans, with the Reformed church having to adapt and survive under and near areas of Turkish control. Hungarian Reformed writers were aware of Islamic theology, and included basic information about it in catechisms and children's guides to religion. Reformed canons prevented marriages with Muslims, but allowed for the baptism of converting Muslim children. Some indeed considered steps towards achieving such converts, often within a wider eschatological perspective as we shall see in chapter 9. In 1609 for example Johann Alsted encouraged Albert

⁶⁸ Letter of December 1662 from Durham, Tanner MSS. 48, f.76, Bodleian Library, Oxford. For Basire on the Anglican church see De antiqua Ecclesiae Britannicae (Bruges, 1656), and an unpublished tract of 1648, 'An introduction to ye orthodox principles of ye church of England', MSS. Hunter 84, Durham Cathedral Library.

Szenci Molnár to learn Turkish, and in the 1650s Comenius wanted Zsuzsanna Lórántffy to sponsor the translation of the Bible into Turkish.⁶⁹ István Geleji Katona also wrote of the possibility in the 1640s of beginning a mission to the Turks, Tartars, Jews and Persians, but no concrete action was ever undertaken.⁷⁰

Through the solidifying of administrative structures, consistent adherence to Calvinist catechisms, extensive contact with fellow Calvinists and through polemic disputes, the Hungarian Reformed tradition emerged as solidly placed between the Catholic church and Protestant sectarians. Reformed supporters in Hungary and Transylvania were engaged during this period in the entrenched warfare of bitter confessional conflict which was mirrored across the continent, with dogmatic positions firmly defended by all sides. In Transylvania however, despite this hardening of a Reformed identity, and frequent and ongoing religious conflict over church doctrine and practices, religious diversity persisted. Opposition to toleration of anti-Trinitarianism was one element of the programme of further reformation which Reformed ministers sought to impose in Transylvania. However, not even the most determined of confessional absolutists in the Transylvanian Reformed church hierarchy could hope to overturn the constitutional freedoms of the four received religions during the early seventeenth century, nor wipe away completely the local results across the

⁶⁹ Dézsi, Szenczi Molnár Albert, pp.332-334, Alsted's letter of Dec. 1609; A.Földváry, A magyar református egyház és a török uralom (Budapest, 1940); G.Kathona, Fejezetek a török hódoltsági reformáció történetéből (Budapest, 1974), pp.58-70.

⁷⁰ István Geleji Katona as a child had been redeemed from Turkish captivity; Váltság Titka, vol.3, p.420.

Transylvanian principality of generations of divided religious authority.

INTERNATIONAL CALVINISM AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF
DOCTRINE AND WORSHIP IN THE HUNGARIAN
REFORMED CHURCH

(i) Practical Theology and Personal Piety

Following a late and incomplete sixteenth century reformation, the Hungarian Reformed church slowly became committed to Calvinist doctrine. In this chapter I shall reflect on how increased contact with international Calvinism in the early seventeenth century buttressed doctrinal orthodoxy in Hungary and Transylvania, with Hungarian student ministers returning from western universities responsible for the more widespread dispersal of explanations of Reformed theology. The attention of many Hungarian ministers soon turned away from furnishing the church at home with basic Reformed texts, and from the 1630s works of a more practical nature began to appear, aiming to develop personal religiosity and strengthen individual morality amongst Hungarian congregations. The early seventeenth century was a period of consolidation for Calvinist churches across Europe, and in the Hungarian Reformed church there were attempts to settle uniform standards of ceremony and liturgy in church services. In this chapter I shall also survey the disagreements which arose between those who viewed further reforms to patterns of worship as essential to church purity, and those who feared any unsettling of the established church order. Supporters of

practical theology and a religion of personal conscience in Hungary, were often amongst advocates of further ceremonial and liturgical change in disputes over the conduct of sacraments, over styles of preaching and the content of sermons, over the repetition of the Lord's Prayer, and the proper form of church music.

The distinctiveness of Hungarian Reformed church teaching had originally been grounded in Trinitarianism, and in Calvinist sacramental theology. The securement by 'sacramentarians', as Calvinists in Hungary were initially described, of an expression of doctrine around which their fledgling church could unite, was realised by an adaptation of the Heidelberg catechism accepted by a synod at Debrecen in 1567. The recognition of such Reformed statements of faith by regional synods across Hungary and in Transylvania was accompanied by the endorsement of doctrinal changes, particularly on the sacraments, along with approval given for alterations to be made to church buildings, to church services, and to patterns of collective and individual religious life. The publication of basic religious texts in the vernacular, and ministers' preaching, presented and explained a Reformed understanding of the Bible to local congregations. Indeed gradual improvements to clergy education made Reformed ministers more effective vehicles to broaden consent for changes to traditional church practices. In the late sixteenth century the spread of Reformed opinions through books was sporadic, with infrequent publications of collected sermons, worship order-books and catechisms by such leading reformers as Péter Meliusz, Péter Bornemisza, Gáspár Heltai and János Siderius. Initially only

parts of the Bible were translated into Hungarian by János Sylvester and Gáspár Heltai amongst others, with New Testaments published in Hungarian by Péter Meliusz in the 1560s, and by Tamás Félegyházi in the 1580s. A Hungarian Bible was only finally published by Gáspár Károlyi as late as 1590, with revisions and reprints of his translation appearing in the early seventeenth century.¹

In the aftermath of the Fifteen Years War the process of rebuilding the Reformed church in Transylvania was led by superintendent Mihály Tasnádi Ruber. Ruber concluded a major revision of the church's canons in 1606, which emphasised the importance of Reformed books and required every minister to obtain a copy of the Bible, and other theological works.² The first decades of the seventeenth century indeed saw Hungarian Bible translations, Calvinist confessions and catechisms becoming more widely available in Hungary and Transylvania. Péter Szenczi Csene for example published a translation of the Helvetic confession in 1616, and Johann Wollebius' Compendium of Christian Theology was published both in Latin and in Hungarian several times during this period.³ Albert Szenczi Molnár meanwhile

¹ Gáspár Károlyi, Szent Biblia (Vizsoly, 1590) RMK 1/236, republished at Hanau by Albert Szenczi Molnár in 1608 (RMK 1/411), at Oppenheim in 1612 (RMK 1/434), also at Amsterdam in 1645 (RMK 1/766), at Nagyvárad/Kolozsvár in 1660/1 (RMK 1/970-1), and a New Testament at Amsterdam in 1646 (RMK 1/783); János Siderius, Catechismus (Nagyszeben, 1646) RMK 1/786f, and Kisdéd Gyermeknek való Catechismus (Nagyvárad, 1642) RMK 1/733; B.Sörös, A magyar liturgia története (Budapest, 1904).

² I.Szilágyi, 'Az erdélyi h.h. anyaszentegyház közzsínatainak végzései...kivonatban' in MPEIF 3 (1872), pp.1-9.

³ Péter Szenczi Csene, Confessio Helvetica (Oppenheim, 1616) RMK 1/466, republished at Sárospatak in 1654 RMK 1/891; Johann Wollebius, Christiana Theologiae Compendium (Debrecen, 1634) RMK

published a Hungarian-Latin dictionary in 1604, a Hungarian Psalter in 1606, a shorter children's catechism in 1607, a revised edition of Károlyi's Bible in 1608 and a translation of Calvin's Institutes in 1624.⁴

The career of Albert Szenczi Molnár showed the significance of links with foreign Calvinists towards strengthening the Reformed character of the Hungarian church. In the 1590s Molnár had studied at Wittenberg, Heidelberg and Strasbourg, then travelling to Italy and Switzerland where he met Beza, whom Molnár later referred to as his father in Christ. After 1600, Molnár returned to Germany and worked in Heidelberg, Herborn, Altdorf and Marburg, becoming a well-known figure in Reformed German academic circles, and with connections to Reformed courts. Molnár corresponded with Johann Alsted, Bartholomaeus Keckermann and David Pareus amongst others, and was in contact with both Maurice of Hesse, and Friedrich of the Palatinate. Molnár even went on a boat trip with Maurice, and in 1607 wrote to a former teacher at Basel of Maurice's efforts to learn Hungarian.⁵

2/484, and (Gyulafehérvár, 1656) RMK 2/852, and György Komáromi Csipkes(tr.), Az keresztyén isteni tudománynak...rövid summája (Utrecht, 1653) RMK 1/877; László Gyöngyösi(tr.), A keresztyéni vallásnak fundamentumi (Utrecht, 1657) RMK 1/925; Pál Medgyesi, Lelki A-Be-Ce (Gyulafehérvár, 1645) RMK 1/775; Anon., Az keresztyéni vallásnak rövid tudománya (Kolozsvár, 1632) RMK 1/622; Imre Péczeli Király, Catechismus (Lőcse, 1635) RMK 1/653.

⁴ Albert Szenczi Molnár, Kis Katekizmus (Herborn, 1607) RMK 1/408; L.Dézsai, Szenczi Molnár Albert (Budapest, 1897); J.Vásárhelyi, G.Tolnai(eds.), Szenci Molnár Albert válogatott művei (Budapest, 1976).

⁵ Vásárhelyi, Szenci Molnár...művei, pp.575-578; for Molnár's letters and diary until 1617 see L.Dézsai, Szenczi Molnár Albert naplója, levelezése és irományai (Budapest, 1898); B.Varga, Szenci Molnár Albert. A magyar zsolztárénekszerző élete és írói működése (Budapest, 1932), p.37 for Molnár's 1616 adaptation of a verse by Beza which eulogised the European

Molnár also had extensive links with French and Flemish refugee Protestant communities living in Germany. In 1602 Molnár recorded in his diary that he was received at Frankfurt by the minister of the "French community of true faith", Clemens Dubois, who offered Molnár the use of his library to work in. Molnár remained in contact with Dubois, and in 1607 a letter from István Miskolczi Csulyak was addressed to Molnár at Dubois' house. Molnár was also warmly received by Isaac Genius, the Flemish minister at Frankfurt, and in return for Genius' help, Molnár offered him a collection of apocalyptic passages from the Old Testament.⁶ Molnár was also in touch with a French minister at Heidelberg, Jean Boilblanc, who later wrote to Molnár from Sedan with news of affairs in France, and wishing Molnár well. In 1607 Molnár received a letter from another contact at Sedan, Jean Combillon, who sought news through Molnár of Clemens Dubois.⁷

The empathy between Molnár, a wandering Hungarian student, and exiled Protestant communities in Germany was further shown by the financial support which Molnár received from such refugee congregations. In 1600 Molnár translated a prayer-book by Daniel

Calvinist community;

"Anglusok és Belgác, és Francia, Scotia népe
S az Renus mellett minden igaz Nemetec
Czeh, Mág'ar és Leng'él, soc Dánus, Suecia nemzet
Ezek után az erős híres Helvetiusok
Mind eretnek népec. Mert azt ítélte magában
Őt vag' hat ostoba rab, Mysniabéli bitang
Mond megis ennec ökét: Szájokkal régni tagadq'ák
Christus testét: mert tiszta hitöckel eszic
Oh szent tevölgés! az mellyel hog' ha ki vétend
Öllye bár azt ember. De Istene véle vag'on."

⁶ Vásárhelyi, Szenci Molnár...művei, pp.205-213 and 469-551, especially p.511.

⁷ Vásárhelyi, Szenci Molnár...művei, pp.216-217 and 224-226.

Toussaint, a minister from Orleans who had been forced out of France to Heidelberg after the St.Bartholomew's day massacre.⁸ Molnár's 1608 revised publication of Károlyi's Hungarian Bible was assisted by a donation from the widow of an exiled mathematician from Gent, and Molnár dedicated a later work about Hungarian Protestants living under Turkish occupation to the ministers and congregations of French and Flemish Protestants at Hanau and Frankfurt, writing that;

"our Bibles, which through the support and efforts of your people, have been published in the past years...and which have been sent to Hungary in great numbers, show the providential results of the afflictions and exile of the French and Flemish".⁹

The introduction to Molnár's translation of Calvin's Institutes in 1624 also remembered assistance given to him by our "French and Flemish twin churches", especially mentioning again the help of the ministers at Hanau and at Frankfurt.¹⁰

The generation of Reformed student ministers that followed Molnár's example, forging personal contacts with western Calvinist ministers and communities, encountered efforts at Dutch universities and amongst English divines to develop a more

⁸ Imádságos könyvecske (Heidelberg, 1621) in J.Vásárhelyi, Szenci Molnár...művei, pp.331-368.

⁹ Pál Thuri, Idea Christianorum Ungarorum sub tyrannide Turcica (Oppenheim, 1616) in J.Vásárhelyi, Szenci Molnár...művei, p.288, and pp.285-288; Szent Biblia, (ed.)Albert Szenci Molnár (Hanau, 1608) RMK 1/411.

¹⁰ Albert Szenczi Molnár, A keresztyéni religióra és igaz hitre való tanítás (Hanau, 1624) RMK 1/540. Albert Szenczi Molnár included a sermon by Pierre du Moulin, son of a French emigre in Germany in Consecratio Templi Novi (Kassa, 1625) RMK 1/547; J.Vásárhelyi, Eszmei áramlatok és politika Szenci Molnár Albert életművében (Budapest, 1985), pp.1-20.

practical Calvinist theology. This aimed to direct the personal religious development of Calvinists, and to offer advice on questions of conscience for individual believers. As a result, many translations began to appear in Hungary and Transylvania of practical theological works such as conduct books and piety tracts, beginning with the enormously successful translation of Lewis Bayly's The Practice of Piety by Pál Medgyesi. Medgyesi's translation made an immediate impact in Hungary, with Reformed ministers anxious to obtain the new work. Menyhárt Fodorik, the minister at Debrecen where Praxis Pietatis was first published, for example received requests from his archdeacon and other local ministers to quickly send them copies of Bayly's book.¹¹

Praxis Pietatis was primarily aimed to assist Bible readers, and gave examples of prayers for all occasions such as on going to bed, eating, taking medicine and on going to church. Medgyesi wanted to encourage understanding of the Bible amongst those of "our cold nation" who were actually bothered to read it, and thereby to stimulate personal religiosity;

"content not thy selfe with that formall religion, which unregenerated men have framed to themselves. Thinke not that thou art a Christian good enough, because thou doest as the most".¹²

Theological works by William Perkins and William Ames highlighting the importance of personal conscience, individual piety and morality, were also to make a significant impact in

¹¹ 'Vegyes iratok, 1605-1879', in the Dunántuli református egyházkerület nagykönyvtárának kéziratár (Pápa), sign. 0.1092, nos. 80.4, 80.6, 80.7, and 80.8r. Letters from ministers Mihály Szilágyi, János Harsányi, and István Harsányi in 1637 all requesting Praxis Pietatis.

¹² From the introduction of Pál Medgyesi(tr.), Praxis Pietatis (Debrecen, 1636) RMK 1/657 reprinted in 1638, 1640, 1641 and 1643.

Hungary and Transylvania. In 1637 János Iratosi translated Perkins' work on how to behave as a true Christian, and in 1648 a collection of Perkins' tracts was translated into Hungarian from the original title, A case of conscience: how a man may know whether he be the child of God, or no.¹³ Hungarians were similarly exposed to a range of Ames' books and opinions, with Ames also directly influential as a teacher of Hungarian students at Franeker.¹⁴

Perkins and Ames believed that pure doctrine and practical divinity were inseparable, and claimed to make theology, as doctrina bene vivendi, more applicable to everyday life. Both writers focused on the problem of personal knowledge of salvation, arguing that a covenant of grace existed between God and each individual, with a believer's conscience offering certainty of pardon from sins. The elect, by this covenant of grace, could only be known to themselves and to God, although the effects of election were reflected in a believer's actions and

¹³ János Kecskeméti(tr.), Catholicus Reformatus (Debrecen, 1620) RMK 1/499; János Iratosi(tr.), Az ember életének boldogul való igazgatásának modgyáról- Patika szerszámos bolt (Lőcse, 1637) RMK 1/670-671, and reprinted in 1641 (RMK 1/718); Mihály Tsepregi Turkovitz(tr.), A lelkiismeretnek akadémikáról (Amsterdam, 1648) RMK 1/800.

¹⁴ István Telkibányai(tr.), Angliai Puritanismus (Utrecht, 1654) RMK 1/894, and retranslated in 1662 (RMK 1/988); Peter Ramus, Dialecticae libri duo (Nagyvárad, 1653) RMK 2/799, including theses by Ames on logic, theology and metaphysics (Technometria, pp.98-137, and Disputatio Theologica adversus metaphysicam, pp.205-219); György Martonfalvi, Ars Concianandi Amesiana (Debrecen, 1666); K.Koltay, 'Two Hundred Years of English Puritan Books in Hungary' in Angol Filológiai Tanulmányok 20 (1989), pp.53-64; K.Koltay, 'Perkins és Ames recepciója magyarországon 1660-ig' in A.Tamás, I.Bitskey(eds.), Studia Litteraria. Tanulmányok a xvi.-xvii. századi magyar irodalomból 1991, pp.99-109; M.Hazagh, 'Amesius és a magyar puritanizmus' in Angol Filológiai Tanulmányok 4 (1942), pp.94-112.

life. Practical theological works by Perkins and Ames therefore concentrated on attaining personal godliness, and on improving standards of individual conduct. The concept of a spiritual elite, confident of their own election, acted to divide sharply supporters of practical theology from their opponents. Meanwhile the concentration amongst practical theologians on the covenant of grace also affected sacramental theology, reducing the sacraments in Perkins' words to "a proppe and stay for faith to lean on".¹⁵

Translations of practical theological tracts by student ministers continued to be published throughout this period both in the Dutch Republic, and in Hungary and Transylvania. At Utrecht in 1648 four translated piety tracts were published by János Mikolai Hegedüs, some of the many works which Mikolai wrote would have been useful for him to translate into Hungarian. Mikolai's teacher at Utrecht university, Gisbert Voetius, directly supported his efforts to stimulate private prayer and overcome coldness in the practice of religion in Hungary. The first of the tracts which Mikolai translated was a selection of Bible verses on the fundamentals of Protestant faith, whilst the second stressed the importance of the Bible in building up faith. The third summarised the chief points of religion for heads of

¹⁵ The Work of William Perkins (ed.) I. Breward, (Abingdon, 1970); R.A. Muller, 'Perkins' A Golden Chaine: Predestinarian system or schematized ordo salutis?' in The Sixteenth Century Journal 9 (1978), pp.69-82; J.G. Moller, 'The Beginnings of Puritan Covenant Theology' in the Journal of Ecclesiastical History 14 (1963), pp.46-67; William Ames, The Marrow of Divinity (London, 1642); K.L. Sprunger, 'Ames, Ramus and the method of Puritan theology' in The Harvard Theological Review 1966, pp.133-152; K.L. Sprunger, 'Technometria: A Prologue to Puritan Theology' in the Journal of the History of Ideas 29 (1968), pp.115-122; K.L. Sprunger, The Learned Doctor William Ames (Chicago, 1972).

households, so that they could teach others around them, and the last detailed daily steps in the search for holiness in Christian life, through private devotions and in struggles for personal sanctification.¹⁶

The useful help of practical theology in daily life was stressed time and again by its advocates, with János Bökényi Filep for example wanting to attract the attention of his readers to the heavenly light which brought comfort and peace, and which would stimulate improvements in believers' lives.¹⁷ Practical moralism also featured in the interests of Hungarian student ministers, with in 1649 Mátyás Bónis Diószegi translating a work from English on the evils of excessive drinking. Drinking alcohol for any other reason than thirst, according to Diószegi, was a sure and certain path to immorality.¹⁸ The metaphor of a road, or path to represent an individual's Christian life recurred frequently in the practical theological literature of this

¹⁶ János Mikolai Hegedüs(tr.), Az mennyei igazságnak tüzes oszlopa, Biblia tanui, Az istenes cselédeknek lelki praebendájók, and Szentek napi száma (Utrecht, 1648) RMK 1/812, 813, 814 and 815, quote from the third tract, p.44; also Kristóf Darholcz, Novissima Tuba azaz ítleltre serkentő utolsó trombitaszó (Kassa, 1639), (ed.) J.Jankovics (Budapest, 1986).

¹⁷ Britain was presented as a source of guides to heavenly light in a verse written in the introduction by "Apatzai János" form János Bökényi Filep(tr.), Mennyei Lámpás (Utrecht, 1652) RMK 1/862;

"Nagy Britannianak így azért tés Mennyei Lámpást
A ki minap gyujtál, mutatád meg az emberi nemnek
E siralom völgyén mi légyen kalauzza, világja
A' maradandonak, s dühös ördögnek fene nyilát.
Im e' drága arany lámpás most a magyarokkal
Közletik, Aldot légy kegyes Isten! Kérlek oh ember!
Íárj nála, s-meg ládd, az életnek is iszonyu terhes
Meg könnyíti, mutat végén mennyei világot"

¹⁸ Mátyás Diószegi Bónis(tr.), Az részegesnek gyűlölséges, utálatos és rettenetes állapota (Leiden, 1649) RMK 1/820, from English.

period. Imre Pápai Páriz for example translated The Narrow Way with its abiding image of a wide road leading down to hell, and a narrow path up to heaven. János Somosi Petkó presented a "true and perfect path" leading to happiness, in a book of questions and answers about true faith. Somosi wrote that when sitting in a church in London, he had noticed that someone in his pew was reading a book before the service. Somosi asked to borrow it, and later decided it would be of use for a Hungarian audience, "since which Christian nation has more need for such translations into its own language? Not one nation more than our own."¹⁹ Mihály Felsőbányai also translated a work on the costs of the Christian path, with a translation of Biblical quotations from English as an A to Z of practical things for a believer to remember.²⁰

This concentration on practical theological themes was far from universally acclaimed amongst Hungarian Reformed church ministers. The value of books on personal piety was indeed questioned by István Geleji Katona, the Transylvanian superintendent. Geleji stressed that a balance was needed between head knowledge and heart knowledge, with theoretical theology required as well as practical theology. Geleji believed that teaching available in the Hungarian Reformed church already had a sensible mixture of these two elements, and that placing a new emphasis on the practice of religious life would therefore prove detrimental. Some advocates of higher standards of personal piety

¹⁹ Imre Pápai Páriz(tr.), Keskény ut (Gyulafehérvár, 1657), RMK 1/920; János Somosi Petkó(tr.), Igaz és tökéletes boldogságra vezérő ut (Sárospatak, 1656-1658) RMK 1/913.

²⁰ Mihály Felsőbányai(tr.), A léleknek uti költsége (Utrecht, 1651) RMK 1/850, from English.

in the early seventeenth century Hungarian church, were in fact seen to be tarnished by their contacts with English and Dutch advocates of practical theology, and came to be described in Hungary and Transylvania as Puritans.²¹

**(ii) Liturgy and Ceremony; the Sacraments, Prayer,
Sermons and Church Music**

The Reformed church hierarchy in Hungary and Transylvania gradually succeeded in establishing a more uniform conduct of church services, with canons and the decisions of regional synods establishing how ministers should lead worship in their congregations. New editions of service order-books were also published during this period for each district of the Hungarian church, culminating in 1644 with the decision of the Transylvanian synod to ask for an order-book to be written, so that a standard pattern of ceremony could be definitively established.²² In 1649 a further revision of church canons by István Geleji Katona laid out in detail the responsibilities of the Transylvanian clergy in teaching, preaching, catechising both boys and girls each week, celebrating festivals, administering the sacraments, conducting marriages and visiting members of their congregation. The canons also warned ministers to avoid

²¹ István Geleji Katona, Váltság-Titka (3 vols.), (Nagyvárad, 1645) RMK 1/779, introduction to volume one.

²² István Melotai Nyilas, Agenda (Kolozsvár, 1621) RMK 1/515, republished in 1622, 1634, and in 1653; János Samarjai, Agenda (Lőcse, 1636) RMK 1/662.

arguments about doctrine which would weaken faith. Indeed any alteration to basic ceremonies or the administration of the sacraments was forbidden, and anyone who wished to raise matters concerning doctrine or liturgy could only do so through archdeacons and synods, or face suspension from office. Private opinions were however allowed on minor issues as long as this caused no disturbance to the wider church.²³

A high-profile battle was waged by the Reformed church hierarchy during the early seventeenth century to prevent ministers deviating from orthodox beliefs, from their canonical responsibilities, or from engaging in disapproved of activities. In 1634 for example the Transylvanian synod acted to prevent any superstitious rituals taking place around church buildings, or during funerals. In 1640 the synod demanded that ministers should take home the bread and wine left over after communion, and consume it themselves to avoid public scandals. Night services were also condemned as a Papal custom and were forbidden either at Christmas or at Easter. Changes to church liturgy or ceremony were nevertheless sometimes permitted by the authorities, such as the 1642 sanctioning by the Transylvania synod "from the custom of other Reformed nations", for a Bible passage to be read during week-day services, from the Old Testament at morning worship, and from the New Testament in the evening.²⁴

During the early seventeenth century serious divisions emerged amongst the Hungarian clergy between those whose

²³ A.Kiss, Egyházi kánonok- Geleji Katona István 1649, és a Szatmárnémetiben 1646 évben tartott nemzeti zsinat végzései (Kecskemét, 1875) 1649 canons nos 34 and 85.

²⁴ Szilágyi, MPEIF 3 (1872), pp.1-9, 77-84 and 473-479.

experience, both at home and abroad, committed them to uphold traditional church authority and customs, and those who wished to carry forward religious reformation by advancing changes to church liturgy and ceremony. Such arguments centred in particular on the conduct of the sacraments, as well as over the role of prayer, sermons and music in church services. I shall examine each one of these areas in turn, illuminating the issues at stake, and highlighting how they were connected to international contacts between the Hungarian Reformed clergy and foreign Calvinist churches. The conduct of baptism proved to be controversial within the Hungarian Reformed church, and was a great source of controversy between reform-minded and traditionalist ministers in the early seventeenth century. Standard practice was established by canons from the northern Hungarian Reformed church in 1595 and by the Transylvanian canons of 1649 which both insisted that baptism should normally be conducted in a public place, and in the presence of the local congregation. It was however recognised that if a child was seriously ill then baptism could be held outside the church, but only by an ordained minister.²⁵ Despite this firm requirement, many nobles refused to present their children for baptism in churches, instead requiring the minister to perform the sacrament in their own homes. The Reformed clergy largely cooperated with such demands of noble patrons to perform baptisms outside churches, and in 1642 the Transylvanian synod caved in to Szekler

²⁵ Upper Hungarian church articles of 1595 in A.Kiss, A xvi. században tartott magyar református zsinatok végzései (Budapest, 1881), pp.709-722, no.12; Kiss, Egyházi kánonok, 1649 canons nos 54-58.

threats to have children baptised by Catholic priests rather than abide by Reformed church rules. The synod agreed that Szekler church patrons could have their children baptised at home if they did not wish to bring them to church, although the synod added with a show of defiance that "in Christ there is no difference between servants and lords".²⁶

This convention of allowing sick children and the children of nobles to be baptised at home was challenged by a group of Reformed ministers during the 1640s. In March 1645 the northern Tisza synod at Tállya heard reports that János Tolnai Dali, then Abaújszabolcs archdeacon, only conducted baptisms inside church buildings immediately after the Sunday service in the presence of the whole congregation. Tolnai argued that since baptism marked the entry of a child into the body of the visible church, the congregation needed to be present. Tolnai's denial that baptism had any significance for the status of the child involved, and claims that Tolnai believed teaching was needed before baptism could take place, raised suspicions that his opinions were infected by Anabaptism. Tolnai was accused by some of his colleagues of making no allowance for cases of extreme necessity, when the parents of a sick child might want a baptism to be carried out at once in their own home. Tolnai was also charged with failing to seek the proper authority to bring in such an innovation from traditional practices. The northern Tisza synod was also anxious because of reports that parents in Abaújszabolcs were taking their children to Lutheran ministers for

²⁶ I. Juhász, A székelyföldi református egyházmegye (Kolozsvár, 1947), p.100.

baptism, rather than wait for the next Reformed church service.²⁷

News of this dispute in the northern Hungarian church soon spread, and the eastern Tisza superintendent, Mihály Szánthai, wrote to István Bethlen in 1646 explaining that Tolnai refused to recognise emergency cases for baptism, and that many children were dying unbaptised, or their parents were going to Lutheran and Catholic priests.²⁸ Pál Medgyesi meanwhile argued that the notion of extreme necessity was a Catholic superstition about the nature of baptism which the Reformed church should not have retained. Medgyesi quoted support from Bisterfeld that everywhere else in the Reformed world baptism was only conducted in public. Medgyesi nevertheless censured Tolnai for acting without first gaining agreement for change, but argued that the hysterical reaction of the northern Tisza church to Tolnai's actions had made it a laughing-stock.²⁹

The northern Hungarian church decided to hold an investigation to ascertain exactly what changes Tolnai had made to the conduct of baptisms in Abaújvár. In February 1646 a council at Táillya heard witnesses relate Tolnai's instructions to Abaújvár ministers that baptism must only be held before the

²⁷ István Szilágyi Benjámin, 'Acta Synodi Nationalis Hungaricae...1646', SNK vol.21, ff.55v-56v.

²⁸ A.Kiss, 'Szánthay Mihály superintendens levele gróf Bethlen István főispánhoz, a puritánus Tholnay ügyében' in PEIL 4 (1845), pp.1141-1143.

²⁹ I.Révész, 'Adalék a magyar puritánok történetéhez' in Sárospataki Füzetek 2 (1858/9), pp.717-725; MPEA 10 (1911), p.21. At Medgyesi's ordination in 1634, he was marked out as 'ambitiosus'; 'Tiszántul ref. egyh. kerületi jegyzőkönyvek', vol.1, MOL box no.1883, p.67; K.Császár, Medgyesi Pál élete és működése (Budapest, 1911).

assembled congregation. Tolnai was quoted as replying to objections against this "new and untried thing" that, "if it has not been so up to now, then the old decisions of the church wish it to be done thus, and other Christian countries live by this practice". The minister at Göncruszka claimed that he had tried to defend traditional customs, but that Tolnai responded by proclaiming, "That's fine! If my father was blind, should I too be blind so that I could follow him".³⁰ The results of the Táallya investigation were put before the area synod at Tokaj in February 1646, prompted to firm action by a letter from I. György Rákóczi on his concern at rumours reaching Transylvania of events in Abaújvár. The Tokaj synod accused Tolnai of causing a great scandal and tumult in the church, and of the violent imposition of his innovatory rules on baptism in his church district. The synod suspended Tolnai from his post as archdeacon until the national church synod to be held in June 1646 at Szatmár in eastern Hungary.³¹

At the synod of Szatmár the delegation from Abaújvár was split between Tolnai and his supporters, and defenders of traditional church practices led by János Ványai. Ványai put the case to the synod that Tolnai had introduced novel restrictions on the conduct of baptism in his district. Tolnai in response argued that the local congregation as the visible church needed to be present at baptism services, whether on Sundays or during

³⁰ 'Attestationes, Thállyai tanács' of Feb. 1646, in ZEP/1638-1645, MOL box no.1907, pp.108-115 and 129-133; MPEA 10 (1911), pp.13, 16 and 19-20.

³¹ Szilágyi Benjámín, 'Acta Synodi Nationalis', ff.62v-67r and 102v-104r.

a mid-week service. Tolnai denied that he had done anything uncanonical, nor brought scandal to the church, and claimed that he had sufficient authority as an archdeacon to introduce changes to religious ceremony in his region. Tolnai and his supporters were also accused of attempting to change customary religious holidays. Mihály Szánthai reported that Tolnai wanted to abandon celebrations which were not on Sundays at Christmas, Easter and Pentecost. Tolnai was again defended on this issue by Pál Medgyesi amongst others who argued that the Genevan, French and Scottish churches also only held religious celebrations on Sundays.³² The national synod however resolved that Tolnai had disturbed the peace of the Hungarian church, and he was deprived of his church offices. The synod declared its support for the continued celebration of all Christian festivals, and declared that infant baptism was to continue to be normally conducted in public, with exceptions to be allowed for sick children, and respect to be shown for the prerogatives of the nobility.³³

Conflict also arose in Hungary and Transylvania during this period over the sacrament of communion, with arguments between the confessions over communion theology matched by disputes between Reformed ministers over the liturgy of the communion service. Transylvanian canons ordered communion to be held with "holiness but no superstition" six times a year at Advent,

³² Szilágyi Benjámin, 'Acta Synodi Nationalis', ff.151v; Kiss, PEIL 4 (1845), pp.1141-1143.

³³ Szilágyi Benjámin, 'Acta Synodi Nationalis', ff.114v-118r, 122v-124r, 137r-138v, 155r-156r and 160v; Pál Debreceni Ember, Historia Ecclesiae Reformatae, in Hungaria et Transylvania (Utrecht, 1728), p.409.

Christmas, on Ash Wednesday, at Easter, Pentecost and on Ascension day. The sacrament was only to be administered outside the confines of the church only to those who were seriously ill, and had to be announced by the minister eight days in advance to give communicants time to prepare and examine themselves, with those unable to judge their own worthiness prohibited from taking part.³⁴

A major debate emerged between Reformed ministers during the 1650s over one liturgical detail of the communion service, whether the elements of bread and wine should be raised once or twice in front of the congregation before their distribution. The first raising of the elements was contested by reform-minded ministers because it was thought to have overtones of transubstantiation and Catholic superstition. Sámuel Lippai, one of the ministers at Sárospatak in northern Hungary, argued that the first elevation of the elements was totally unnecessary, idolatrous, and not in line with Christ's example at the Last Supper. Lippai only accepted a second elevation of the bread and wine because this took place during the process of distributing the elements to the congregation. One of Lippai's colleagues at Sárospatak, András Váczi, accused him of doctrinal innovation, of disturbing church peace, and of Puritanism. An unapologetic Lippai responded that "if I am a puritan, then Christ and Calvin have made me a puritan", and that "puritans are the true Calvinists, and disciples of the Helvetic confession".³⁵

³⁴ Kiss, Egyházi kánonok, 1649 canons nos 59-64.

³⁵ Sámuel Lippai, Brevis dissertatio de quaestione an prior elevatio Panis at vini in Sacra Coena, in quibusdam Ecclesiis usitate legitime, observatur? (Sárospatak, 1654); Sámuel Lippai,

The visitation of the church at Sárospatak by the Zemplén authorities in 1655 revealed just how serious the divisions between the ministers there had become. Two of the three clergy were committed to reforming the communion service, with István Keresszeghi and Sámuel Lippai rejecting any ceremony during the distribution of the communion elements which lacked direct Biblical precedent. When questioned by the Zemplén archdeacon, Keresszeghi revealed that he would resign rather than celebrate communion according to existing church customs. The Zemplén archdeacon then asked Keresszeghi and Lippai why they took part in communion services if they objected so strongly to the liturgy, to which Lippai responded that even if wafers had been served, they could have received them in true faith, since it was the celebrant who was at fault, not the communicants.³⁶

The two leading clergymen of the 1650s were also divided on the communion issue with György Csulai, the Transylvanian superintendent, defending traditional ceremony against the criticisms of Pál Medgyesi, chaplain to the dowager princess Zsuzsanna Lórántffy. In March 1654 Csulai wrote to II.György Rákóczi on the differences which had arisen over communion ceremony, condemning Medgyesi for preaching against conventional Hungarian liturgy, and for introducing a new communion service on his own authority. Csulai wrote that if everyone copied Medgyesi's example, then there would be as many opinions as people in the Hungarian church. Csulai also considered that

Desperata causa prioris elevationis Panis et Vini in Sacra Coena (Sárospatak, 1655) RMK 2/836, pp.82 and 87.

³⁶ ZEP/1653-1672, MOL box no.1908, pp.53-56.

Medgyesi had failed in his duties by ignoring the boundary between public and private opinions on such difficult theological questions. Csulai recalled his experience at Heidelberg where Pareus, Scultetus and Heinrich Alting had received communion with the elements being raised, and also quoted support from Bisterfeld that communion thus observed was not against the institutions of Christ. Four days later II.György Rákóczi forwarded Csulai's opinion to his mother, Zsuzsanna Lórántffy, to attempt to counter Medgyesi's disapproval of the conventional administration of communion.³⁷

Opposition to traditional communion liturgy in the Hungarian church nevertheless continued, and in May 1655 Pál Medgyesi, János Tolnai Dáli, Sámuel Lippai and István Keresszeghi were all suspended from their posts by a joint synod of the northern and eastern Tisza church districts at Debrecen, on charges of doctrinal and liturgical innovation and for disturbing church peace. Whilst they were all however soon reinstated at the Gálszécs synod of 1656, thanks to the intervention of their patroness Zsuzsanna Lórántffy, concern was spreading throughout the church about differences in the conduct of communion services. In 1656 the eastern Tisza synod meeting at Szatmár was forced to consent to some local modifications of traditional sacramental ceremonies, albeit only with the consent of the

³⁷ S.Szilágyi, 'Levelek és okiratok II.Rákóczy György fejedelem diplomáciai összeköttetései történetéhez' in TT 1889, 19 March 1654, György Csulai to II.György Rákóczi, pp.350-352; S.Szilágyi(ed.), A két Rákóczy György fejedelem családi levelezése (Budapest, 1875) II.György Rákóczi to Zsuzsanna Lórántffy, dxlviii, p.483.

proper authorities.³⁸ In February 1656 Medgyesi wrote to II.György Rákóczi, defending his conduct against renewed accusations of disturbing church peace. Medgyesi claimed that he had been consistent in his attitudes towards raising the communion elements, and had never previously been contradicted for his practice of communion either by Geleji or Csulai. Medgyesi also claimed that Csulai himself administered communion without "the useless first raising" of the bread and wine. Medgyesi appealed to the prince to suffer liturgical differences with charity, and assured him that such differences did not reflect an effort on his part to construct a dissident church according to separate rites.³⁹

In 1658 Medgyesi produced an order-book for church services in the northern Tisza region. Medgyesi aimed to establish a uniform communion ceremony, whilst expressing the desire not to bind all ministers to one imposed form of liturgy. Medgyesi presented a new pattern for the communion service shorn of all possible superstitious overtones, and including prayers of confession drawn from the Scottish and Palatinate churches, and prayers of thanksgiving used by churches in Scotland, Geneva, the Dutch Republic and the Palatinate. Medgyesi's order of service made no mention of the need to elevate the bread and wine, instead describing how the celebrant would simply go to the communion table, uncover the bread, fill the chalice, call the

³⁸ ZEP/1653-1672, p.133; 'Tiszántul egyházkerület levéltára kerületi jegyzőkönyvek (püspöki)', vol.1 (1629-), MOL box no.1883, p.93.

³⁹ A letter of February 1656 to II.György Rákóczi in S.Szilágyi, 'Medgyesi Pál levelei' in EPK 1877, pp.3-4, 17-18 and 29-30.

communicants to stand around the table and distribute the elements.⁴⁰ The northern Tisza synod met at Sárospatak in 1658 to discuss communion liturgy in the light of Medgyesi's ideas, and admonished Medgyesi for abandoning conventional liturgy. The synod also concluded that congregations should be allowed to abide by their own customary arrangements.⁴¹ However in some congregations ministers and patrons were unable to reach agreement, and disputes continued over communion liturgy. At Bodrogkeresztur for example, the town's ministers were split over the conduct of communion. Márton Dobriczi complained that his colleague Mihály Rápóti consecrated the communion elements before their distribution, instead of only saying that the elements were a memorial of Christ's death. Dobriczi reported Rápóti to the church's patroness, Zsuzsanna Lórántffy, for failing to adopt Medgyesi's new communion liturgy, and Rapoti was subsequently forced to leave the town.⁴² At Bereczk on the other hand the local noble refused to accept communion offered by a reform-minded minister István Pataki, after he proposed changes to the

⁴⁰ Pál Medgyesi, Liturgia sacra coenae, azaz: Urvacsora kiosztásában való rend... (Sárospatak, 1658) RMK 1/933.

⁴¹ Synod at Sárospatak in April 1658, ZEP/1653-1672, pp.177-8.

⁴² Rápóti had also been a minister at Tarczal before János Tolnai Dalí managed to have him moved on for failing to support liturgical changes, ZEP/1653-1672, p.213; Mihály Rapoti's diary, L.Varga, 'Nánási emlékirat' in Sárospataki Füzetek 2 (1858/9), pp.165-175, 689-698 and 785-800, this episode on pp.689-690; from 'Önéletrajz és lelkeszi napló Hajdúnánás, 1627-89' in the Tiszántul egyházkerület nagykönyvtár kéziratára (Debrecen), sign. R.540.

communion service.⁴³

Sermons were the main focus of Reformed church services, and in the early seventeenth century leading Hungarian ministers such as Péter Alvinczi and István Geleji Katona published collections of their sermons as examples for other ministers to follow.⁴⁴ Indeed the rare glimpses available of the quality of preaching during this period, tend to confirm that such action aiming to improve standards was badly needed. During visitations, congregations often complained of the lack of sermons, of poor and infrequent preaching, and even of ministers preaching whilst drunk.⁴⁵ There were however repeated disputes between leading ministers during this period over the most appropriate style, structure and content for sermons. The combatants in these arguments were broadly divided into two camps, with conservatives and traditionalists led by István Geleji Katona pitched against innovators and reformers led by Pál Medgyesi.

Geleji set out his views on homiletics in several mammoth collections of his own sermons, and in the canons which he compiled for the Transylvanian church. Geleji described the aim of preaching as trying to resolve problems of faith, as well as

⁴³ ZEP/1653-1672, pp.197-200 and 305-307. The visitation at Sárospatak in 1660 encountered opposition to the communion liturgy as being too long.

⁴⁴ Albert Szenczi Molnár(tr.), Postilla Scultetica (Oppenheim, 1617) in Vásárhelyi, Szenci Molnár...művei, pp.293-307; Péter Alvinczi, Postilla (2 vols.), (Kassa, 1633-1634), RMK 1/628, and 1/634; István Selyei Balog, Utitárs (Nagyvárad, 1657) RMK 1/928.

⁴⁵ J.Zoványi, 'Miskolczi Csulyak István zempléni ref. esperes egyházlátogatási jegyzőkönyvei' in TT 7 (1906), pp.375-376 and 380-381.

to comfort and improve congregations. Sermons, according to Geleji, should be brief, not longer than one hour in length, and held four times weekly on both Sunday services and during services on Wednesdays and Fridays.⁴⁶ Geleji urged the Reformed clergy in Transylvania to follow a weekly round of set Bible texts provided by the church district, and to preach on those texts. Geleji offered a plan for ministers to follow when composing sermons, beginning with an introduction, followed by a summary of the main argument, a presentation of the Bible passage, cross analysis with other texts, an examination of the uses of the passage to learn more about God and a conclusion. Geleji stressed the need for a balance in preaching between on the one hand a presentation of orthodox doctrine, its uses in combatting confessional opponents and in correcting faults, and on the other hand the applications of doctrine for believers to put into practice in their daily lives.⁴⁷ Geleji was concerned by the unbalanced stress which he perceived in Medgyesi's preaching on individual piety, and Geleji thought that Medgyesi concentrated too much on matters of conscience and neglected other branches of faith, leading to doubt amongst weaker members of his congregation. Geleji presented Medgyesi as a pharisee, seeking perfection amongst his people, and making salvation seem impossible for many. Geleji suggested that sermons on morality and the practicalities of personal religion, without any

⁴⁶ Kiss, Egyházi kánonok, 1649 canons nos 39-42.

⁴⁷ István Geleji Katona, Praeconium Evangelicum (Gyulafehérvár, 1638) RMK 2/521, intro. to volume one; L. Ravasz, 'A magyar protestáns igehirdetés a xvii. században' in Theológiai Szaklap 1913, pp.262-284; Geleji Katona, Váltság-Titka, beginning of vol.3.

examination of true doctrine, could lead congregations to Papism or atheism. Geleji admitted to preaching himself in a moralistic way to his sophisticated court audience a few times a year, but was determined that sermons about conscience and piety would prove too subtle for most peasant audiences.⁴⁸

Medgyesi meanwhile wrote in his own work on homiletics that knowledge gained through sermons was useless, without the ability to apply that knowledge. Medgyesi argued that ministers should not be forced to follow set weekly readings as the basis for their sermons, with the "testimony" of any sermon determined by the circumstances and needs of each congregation. Medgyesi described preaching as the presentation, explanation and revelation of the practical uses of God's word. He also identified six major problem areas with the current style of preaching employed by many Hungarian ministers. According to Medgyesi, ministers generally preached for too long, failed to introduce their sermons, explained many areas of faith badly or not at all, did not examine cases of personal conscience, and did not use stories and examples to aid listeners' understanding. Medgyesi argued in favour of practical preaching about individual piety and the moral life of believers, with ministers reflecting in their deeds the words which they spoke from the pulpit. Medgyesi also defended himself against Geleji's charges that he constantly nagged his congregation, and concentrating on pricking

⁴⁸ Geleji Katona, Váltság-Titka, forward and intro. to vol.1; "I have never studied English, which could have been helpful with the practical theology, and well-prepared sermons written there."; D.Borbáth, 'Medgyesi Pál homiletikája és Geleji Katona Istvánnal folytatott homiletikai vitája' in Református Szemle 1961, pp.282-293; L.Gál, Geleji Katona István igehirdetése (Debrecen, 1939), pp.211-217.

his listeners' consciences. Medgyesi wrote that he could not understand how his preaching style could be thought by Geleji to lead to a relapse into Catholicism, since at the same time he was being accused of Puritanism in trying to rid the church of all Catholic survivals in liturgy and ceremony.⁴⁹

Disagreements also emerged within the Hungarian Reformed clergy over the role of prayer in church services. According to Transylvanian canons, services of prayers were to be conducted in each congregation twice daily, at six in the morning and again at two in the afternoon.⁵⁰ Amongst prayer-books in Hungarian which were available for ministers to use at these services was a 1621 translation by Albert Szenczi Molnár of sections of the Zurich church prayer-book, including prayers written by Calvin and Bullinger. There was also a new emphasis in the Hungarian church during this period on personal prayer in private worship, and translated practical theological works offered advice about the role of prayer as part of an individual's daily practice of piety.⁵¹ Pál Medgyesi for example translated prayers by English authors including William Ames, providing examples and rules for

⁴⁹ Pál Medgyesi, Doce nos Orare et Praedicare (Bártfa, 1650) MK 1/832. Medgyesi used Perkins, Casus conscientiae; Ames, Medulla; John Clark, Sacra Oratori; and 1644 The English Directory of public worship; I. Bartók, 'Medgyesi Pál: Doce praedicare' in ITK 85 (1981), pp.1-16.

⁵⁰ Kiss, Egyházi kánonok, 1649 canons no.46.

⁵¹ Albert Szenczi Molnár, Imádságos könyvecske... az igaz eligión való tanítóknak és mártíroknak az szentírás szerint szerzett új és ó könyveikből szedettek (Heidelberg, 1621) in ásárhelyi, Szenci Molnár...művei, pp.331-368; G. Incze, A magyar református imádság a xvi. és xvii. században (Debrecen, 1931), p.42-56 and 144-158.

prayer by individuals and in congregations. János Mihályko meanwhile compiled a collection of prayers to encourage fear of God, which he wrote believers could use in all conceivable circumstances in their daily lives. István Szokolyai also translated a collection of prayers from Dutch, again intended to assist the everyday needs of individual believers.⁵²

Pál Medgyesi discussed the place of prayer in church services in a work published under the title Doce nos orare, concentrating especially on the place of the Lord's Prayer in public worship. Medgyesi suggested that the details and various requests of the Lord's Prayer should be completely understood by a congregation before they were permitted to recite the words during a church service. Medgyesi and other Hungarian ministers expressed some concern about the dangers of repeating a formula of words, which then might be seen by church-goers as having some magical significance. István Komáromi Szvertán also published an examination of the purpose of saying the Lord's Prayer, translated from William Ames' Medulla, and which provoked a storm of debate on this issue during the 1650s.⁵³ András Váczi, minister at Sárospatak and then at Szepesi, published a ferocious attack in 1653 against Ames' opinions about the role of the

⁵² Medgyesi, Doce nos Orare et Praedicare; also Scala Coeli from Medgyesi, Praxis Pietatis, "buzgo imádságok, mellyek az kegyes életnek, Angliai nyelven irattatot Praxissabol, szedegettettek."; János Mihályko(tr.), Keresztyéni istenes és ájtatos imádságok (Bártfa, 1640) RMK 1/699; István Szokolyai(tr.), A szent Bibliának ótestamentumi könyveiből egybeszedegettetett...könyörgések and Sérelmes lelkeket gyógyító balzsamom (Leiden, 1648) RMK 1/806-807.

⁵³ István Komaromi Szvertán, Mikoron imádkoztok ezt mondgyatok az az: Az uri imadsagnak...magyarázattya (Nagyvárad, 1652) RMK 1/853.

Lord's Prayer, and against a generation of Hungarian pietists and Puritans seen by Váczi to be returning from Franeker and England. According to Váczi, Ames believed that the church was not bound to use the Lord's Prayer, and that too much attention was paid to its words rather than to their meaning. Váczi however demanded that the Reformed clergy in Hungary and Transylvania, whilst free to use other prayers in worship, should not abandon the customary recitation of the Lord's Prayer both before and after the sermon during church services. Váczi claimed that innovators in the Hungarian church already only allowed the Lord's Prayer to be said once after the sermon as a first step, Váczi believed, towards abandoning its public repetition altogether.⁵⁴

János Tolnai Dali responded to this attack on his former teacher Ames by arguing that Váczi had falsely presented Ames' opinions, and that Ames only opposed endlessly repeating the Lord's Prayer because of the grave danger of superstition. Tolnai also defended Hungarian ministers who wished to introduce reforms to patterns of church worship against Váczi's accusation of innovation, citing the northern Tisza archdeacons' 1652 resolution that innovation meant complete mutation and reformation of doctrine and liturgy and the introduction of an ecclesiastical regime or rite which was not to be found in other Christian countries, not any smaller changes which could be described as corrections.⁵⁵ Váczi replied to Tolnai in a bad

⁵⁴ András Váczi, A' Mi-atyanknak avagy minden-napi madsággal való élésnek állatása és meg-óltalmazása e' mostani döbéli tanetóknak ellenvetések ellen (Kassa, 1653) RMK 1/871.

⁵⁵ János Tolnai Dali, Daneus Rácai (Sárospatak, 1654) RMK /892, pp.1-120 and 122-123.

tempered and personal attack, angrily denouncing Tolnai as working to destroy the good order of the Reformed church in Hungary. Váczi insisted that whilst congregations were not limited to using the Lord's Prayer and could use a range of prayers, Tolnai and his supporters wanted totally to prevent the use of the Lord's Prayer. Váczi reported for example that Márton Táallyai, the minister at Beregszász, had told him that Tolnai never used the Lord's Prayer in his own home, and taught that it was a form of a prayer, not a real prayer in itself.⁵⁶

Divisions also arose during this period between ministers in Hungary and Transylvania over the form of church music appropriate for Reformed worship. In the sixteenth century the main source of church music had been hymns and songs, with Transylvanian canons from the 1560s requiring singing to be in the vernacular. All use of an organ or a violin in churches was steadily opposed, but support was given for women and children to be allowed to join in singing Hungarian hymns. So-called 'graduals' of antiphons, sacred songs and hymns were collected from Latin sources, and books of church music and praises were drawn together, the most successful of which was compiled by György Gönczi Kovács. Gönczi's collection was published at Debrecen towards the end of the sixteenth century, and reprinted eleven times before 1655.⁵⁷ In 1607 Albert Szenczi Molnár

⁵⁶ András Váczi, Replica, azaz: Tolnai Dali Janosnak csufos és vádos maga és mások mentésére való valasz-tétel (Kassa, 1654) RMK 1/888, pp.55-194, especially pp.55-6 and 85.

⁵⁷ György Gönczi Kovács, Keresztyéni énekek (Debrecen, 1592); also Imre Szilvásújfalvi Anderkó's funeral songs (RMK 1/648-651), and Imre Péczeli Király translations of German

translated the Psalms into Hungarian verses, and his Psalter was republished eight times before 1655. Molnár set the Psalms to tunes written by Clément Marot and Theodore Beza at Geneva, although he translated the verses from Lobwasser's German Psalter of the 1570s.⁵⁸ Whilst the success of Molnár's translation was enduring, the French tunes which he employed were initially poorly received. András Asztalos, a patron of Molnár's from Nagyszombat, wrote in 1608 that the tunes were too difficult for Hungarians to follow. Asztalos wrote again in 1609 that Hungarian ignorance of music was a block to the reception of the Psalter, and that it would have been better for Molnár to have used older and more familiar music.⁵⁹

In 1636 István Geleji Katona finished the work of János Keserői Dayka, his predecessor as Transylvanian superintendent, and completed an Old Gradual made up of Hungarian hymns and songs from Latin sources, more comprehensive than any previous compilation of traditional church music. Two hundred copies of the Old Gradual were printed and sent out to Transylvanian Reformed congregations, each signed by the prince himself. Geleji wrote that he had deliberately copied the best practices of foreign Reformed churches' congregational singing, and tried to eliminate Catholic survivals in his choices of musical praises.

religious songs. Kálmán Csomasz Tóth, A református gyülekezeti éneklés (Budapest, 1950), pp.127-154.

⁵⁸ Vásárhelyi, Szenci Molnár...művei, pp.49-154. Molnár's Psalter was first published at Herborn in 1607.

⁵⁹ Asztalos' letters to Szenczi in Dézsi, Szenczi Molnár Albert...levelezése, pp.297-299, February 1609, and pp.318-319, August 1609; Vásárhelyi, Szenci Molnár...művei, p.592, March 1608.

However the Old Gradual did not include Molnár's translation of the Psalms, instead using the prose from Gáspár Károlyi's Bible.⁶⁰ Geleji's Old Gradual was not warmly received in Transylvanian congregations, perhaps partly because of the cost for congregations to buy a copy. Meanwhile enthusiasm for Molnár's Psalter grew, and it came to rival the conventional church music of gradual collections. In 1643 an anxious Transylvanian synod restricted use of the Psalter to just once or twice during the week, and forbade its use on Sundays. In 1649 new Transylvanian canons drawn up by Geleji, dictated that graduals must form the basis of church music, and that the Psalter should only be used as a supplement.⁶¹

Singing the verses and French tunes of Molnár's Psalter also became associated with those who wished to reform traditional styles of worship and religious life. János Tolnai Dali used Molnár's Psalter extensively when director of the school at Sárospatak, and as archdeacon in Abaújhvár. Tolnai was indeed accused of compelling the use of the Psalms to French tunes, and the abandonment of traditional church music.⁶² András Váczi viewed this as yet another example of Tolnai's liturgical innovations. Váczi objected to Molnár's Psalter because it diverged from traditional singing, and used French tunes instead

⁶⁰ János Keserői Dajka- István Geleji Katona, A keresztyén hitnek igazságához intéztetett...öreg graduál (Gyulafehérvár, 1636) RMK 1/658.

⁶¹ Resolutions of the Transylvanian synods in Szilágyi, MPEIF 3 (1872), pp.1-9, 77-84 and 473-479; 1649 canons in Kiss, Egyházi kánonok, no.98.

⁶² Report from Pál Arдай at Liszka in Nov. 1645, in ZEP/1638-1651, MOL box no.1908, p.61.

of Hungarian ones. Váczi wrote that there was much prettier music for the Psalms than the Genevan tunes, and that local music was much easier for congregations to learn.⁶³ Complaints about church music were also raised during the 1660 visitation of Sárospatak, with one of the ministers, Péter Szathmári Baka, accused of not wanting to sing any other paraphrases of the Psalms except those translated by Molnár to French tunes. It would seem therefore that the sound of the Psalter to Genevan notes became a distinguishing badge for those who wished to declare their allegiance to the cause of further reform of the liturgy, ceremony and worship of the Reformed church in Hungary and Transylvania.⁶⁴

The pattern of Protestant doctrine and worship which had emerged from sixteenth century efforts to reform the practice of religion in Hungary and Transylvania was challenged by some ministers in the early seventeenth century who supported further reforms to doctrine and worship. Whilst wider and deeper attachment to international Calvinism bolstered support for Reformed orthodoxy in the Hungarian church, it also exposed Hungarian and Transylvanian student ministers to a diversity of Protestant church practices. Traditionalism and conservatism amongst many senior clergy was a response to the unsanctioned adoption of new styles of worship by so-called innovators. Dark suspicions were expressed about the wider ambitions of innovators and their supposed sectarian intentions. András Váczi for example saw

⁶³ Váczi, A' Mi-Atyank, pp.26-27; Váczi, Replica, p.114.

⁶⁴ ZEP/1638-1651, pp.305-307.

attempts by innovators to alter ceremony and liturgy by changing sacramental liturgy, disparaging the Lord's Prayer, massacring the Psalms with foreign tunes and abandoning festivals approved of by the Helvetic confession, as reflecting a desire for independence from church authority and linked to demands for presbyterial church government.⁶⁵ An anonymous tract published in Sárospatak in 1654 also accused innovators of being Puritans, Independents, Arians and Anabaptists acting with "pharisaical holiness", "under the pretext of the Helvetic confession". Innovators at Sárospatak, it was claimed, did not use traditional church music, nor the set Biblical texts and diocesan prayers, denounced festivals, refused to kneel if Christ was named, approved of adult baptism and called 'popish' the conventional conduct of the sacraments.⁶⁶

Meanwhile the arch-reformer János Tolnai Dali argued against the superstition which he saw in many Hungarian church practices, against traditionalism, and against what he saw as luke-warm religiosity. Tolnai placed himself within international Calvinist orthodoxy, against his conservative opponents who he claimed were defending Catholic survivals.⁶⁷ An agenda of promoting personal piety, and dedication to reforming the conduct of the sacraments and all aspects of church services from every possible vestige of their Catholic heritage, seemed however to Hungarian traditionalists to jeopardise the Reformed church's balanced

⁶⁵ Váczi, A' Mi-atyánk, p.100.

⁶⁶ February 1654 tract in S.Szilágyi, 'Levelek és okiratok II.Rákóczy György fejedelem diplomáciai összeköttetései történetéhez' in TT 1889, no.xxxvii, pp.475-479.

⁶⁷ Tolnai Dali, Daneus Rácai, passim.

position between the tyranny and idolatry of the Catholic church, and the anarchy of Protestant sectarianism. Party labels were loosely employed in these debates over doctrine and worship. Initially a connection had been perceived between supporters of liturgical and ceremonial innovation in Hungary, and Dutch Arminianism. Correspondence in August 1638 between the superintendent of the eastern Tisza region István Keresszeghi, and István Miskolczi Csulyak, archdeacon in Zemplén, planned measures to obstruct any infiltration of Arminian ideas through student ministers returning from study in the Dutch Republic.⁶⁸ Innovators in the Hungarian church were later strongly associated with English Puritanism. Pál Medgyesi however questioned those who used the term Puritan against reformers. He wrote that such men understand as Puritan "and as bad, those things which they have not learned and did not know, and as good, only those things which come from them." Medgyesi continued that, "puritanism is therefore a holy heresy".⁶⁹

In this chapter we have seen how divisions between Reformed ministers in Hungary and Transylvania over the interpretation of Reformed doctrine fostered disagreements over the presentation of doctrine to Reformed communities in the ceremonies of public worship. The difference between raising the elements during communion once or twice, or saying the Lord's Prayer once or

⁶⁸ ZEP/1638-1645, MOL box no.1907, pp.309-311, and the Debrecen synod of 1638 in 'Református egyh. levéltárak régebbi könyvanyaga', MOL box no.1907, pp.474-477; 'Tiszántul református egyh. levéltára kerületi jegyzőkönyve, 1629-', MOL box no.1883, pp.77-80.

⁶⁹ Medgyesi, Doce nos Orare et Praedicare, quote taken from the introduction.

twice during a service seem minor enough, but they marked out the territory between those who wished to consolidate the Reformed church's position and those who wanted to push forward with further reform. This debate became linked with differing views on the correct form of church government for a Reformed church, with doctrinal and liturgical innovators challenging the right of the hierarchical church authorities to act as arbiters in internal disputes. I shall therefore now turn to examine the Presbyterian challenge to traditional authority, and to consider what exactly was understood by Puritanism in the early seventeenth century Hungarian Reformed church.

THE INNOVATORY INFLUENCE OF INTERNATIONAL
CALVINISM; PURITANS, PRESBYTERIANS AND INDEPENDENTS

(i) János Tolnai Dali and Hungarian Puritanism

During the early seventeenth century the Reformed clergy of Hungary and Transylvania struggled with competing instincts of consolidation and further reformation. Ongoing purification of the Hungarian church was the overriding priority for some ministers who wished the best practices of sister Calvinist churches to be adopted in Hungary and Transylvania. Conservatives and traditionalists meanwhile wanted to silence internal debates over the future development of the Hungarian Reformed church, until the threat posed by confessional rivals was significantly reduced. Such unresolved tensions frequently boiled over with accusations between ministers at synods across the region of imported doctrinal and liturgical innovations, and of disturbances to church peace. Sharp conflicts arose particularly between university trained ministers and at leading Reformed schools, with uncertainty and paranoia about the intentions of opponents breeding a polemic language of party labelling.

Innovatory influences were seen to emerge from contact with foreign Calvinists, with constant reference made in Hungary to the problems and experiences of churches abroad, particularly in England. We have already seen in chapter 2 that contact between student ministers and Protestants in the Dutch Republic and

England brought an anxious and defensive reaction from the church hierarchy at home. There were attempts to restrict student ministers' access to innovatory opinions abroad, including Puritanism, and to limit and control connections with radical western Calvinists.¹ Some Reformed ministers in Hungary and Transylvania were accused of being Puritans, and in this chapter I shall examine the tag of Puritan amongst the Hungarian Reformed clergy, and its context as a term of abuse in arguments about reforms of doctrine, worship and church government in the early seventeenth century.

We have already seen in chapter 5 that advocates of a practical Calvinist theology which highlighted personal religiosity, and supporters of reforms to patterns of liturgy and ceremony in Hungarian church services were frequently dubbed as Puritans. I shall further argue in this chapter that the term Puritan was largely used as a scandalous name in the Hungarian Reformed church, although those labelled as Puritans came to adopt the term to indicate their sense of a superior commitment to religion. Despite widespread fears to the contrary, Puritanism in Hungary did not develop into an organised movement, nor into a schismatic clergy faction. Firm action was taken to squash dissident ministers, with severe punishments for those who challenged traditional authority, making reform-minded ministers ever more reliant on the protection of sympathetic patrons. I shall focus in particular in this chapter on the troubled career

¹ Results of the 1631 Nyirbátor synod in ZEP/1629-1645, p.313, MOL box nos.1907 and 1908, or SNK volumes 16-18; and of the 1638 Debrecen synod in 'Tiszántul ref. egyh. kerületi jegyzőkönyvek', vol.1, MOL box no.1883, pp.77 and 650.

in the northern Tisza church district of János Tolnai Dali, who was identified as a leading Puritan on his return to Hungary from England in 1638.

Central to internal Reformed disputes of this period were issues of church government, hierarchical authority and the obedience of ministers to clergy superiors and to synods. Supporters of the episcopal style of government in the Hungarian church which was outlined in chapter 1, clashed with Presbyterians over the scriptural basis for a clergy hierarchy. The Hungarian church hierarchy recognised a dangerous threat to the traditional order in a campaign led by Pál Medgyesi in the 1650s to supplant the regime of archdeacons and superintendents, with self-governing lay presbyteries in every congregation. Disputes over ecclesiastical authority in Hungary and Transylvania were not only contested by Reformed ministers, but also by divided members of the ruling princely family. All the Transylvanian princes, however, fiercely opposed any change to church government, motivated by fears of a English-style challenge by congregationalist Independents to their political authority.²

² This tension was paralleled not only in England, but also in the French Reformed church. In 1562 Jean Morély denounced the church's structure as dangerously oligarchic, and he argued in favour of a decentralised congregational-based system, with more power for ordinary lay church members. Meanwhile Charles du Moulin attacked the subversive influence of disruptive foreigners and Swiss democrats on the traditions of the French church. "If they[Morély and du Moulin] had pushed too far, the Church might well have split into congregational and presbyterian wings, as Puritan non-conformity did in England"; R.M.Kingdom, Geneva and the Consolidation of the French Protestant Movement, 1564-1572 (Geneva, 1967), p.148.

The 'League of Piety' signed in February 1638 by János Tolnai Dali and nine other Hungarian Reformed student ministers in London, committed its signatories to restore purity to the Hungarian church, and to get rid of all hierarchical authority amongst the clergy. When Tolnai returned from England in 1638 to teach at the school at Sárospatak, fears were immediately aroused that he would use the school as a "Trojan horse" for his reforming ideas. The Zemplén church authorities therefore demanded that Tolnai break up the London League, and subscribe to conditions agreed by a joint Tisza district synod at Debrecen in September 1638, promising only to teach the Helvetic confession and the Heidelberg catechism, and to recognise the authority of the Zemplén archdeacon, and the validity of traditional patterns of Hungarian church government.³

In November 1638 the Zemplén authorities led by István Tolnai, chaplain to I.György Rákóczi, and István Miskolczi Csulyak, the Zemplén archdeacon, sought Tolnai Dali's compliance with their demands for obedience. Miskolczi claimed that Tolnai Dali had been mixing with Protestant sects whilst living abroad in the Dutch Republic and England for seven years, and István Tolnai challenged János Tolnai Dali to agree that he was infected with Puritanism, and had denied that clergy superiors had any authority. Tolnai Dali responded that he was indeed a Puritan, but nevertheless recognised church superiors according to human, but not according to divine laws. János Tolnai Dali's behaviour

³ István Szilágyi Benjámin, 'Acta Synodi Nationalis Hungaricae...1646', SNK vol.21, f.28. J.Zoványi, 'Adatok a magyarországi puritánus mozgalmak történetéhez' in MPEA 10 (1911), pp.1-25.

was viewed by Miskolczi as hystrionic and disrespectful, and he accused Tolnai of being a pharasaic libertine. Miskolczi asserted that Tolnai would not be allowed to take up his teaching post until the London League was broken up, and until he showed himself willing to submit to the established authorities of the church.⁴ In December 1638 Miskolczi presented the church's concerns over Tolnai's appointment to the Zemplén noble assembly. However the Zemplén deputy sheriff, István Bátikai, argued that Tolnai Dali and Puritans only wanted to live cleaner lives and had dedicated themselves totally to God, whilst men like Miskolczi were caught up in worldly things. Miskolczi nevertheless eventually managed to persuade the assembly that Tolnai must be asked to adhere to the conditions laid out by the Zemplén church authorities.⁵

János Tolnai Dali finally accepted the conditions of the Zemplén authorities in April 1639, but according to Miskolczi began to break them the very next day, with an opening speech at the Sárospatak school attacking the standards of the Hungarian Reformed clergy. Tolnai's introduction of changes to the school syllabus, and his general conduct at Sárospatak led to renewed opposition to his appointment.⁶ István Geleji Katona wrote to I.György Rákóczi of his astonishment at the presumption of Hungarian students returning from England, with not one who "had not imbibed some singularity" in religion. According to Geleji

⁴ ZEP/1629-1645, pp.228-229 and 314-316; Sárospataki Füzetek 1 (1857/8), pp.335-349; Pál Debreceni Ember, Historia Ecclesiae Reformatae (Utrecht, 1728), pp.388-9.

⁵ Szilágyi Benjámin, 'Acta Synodi Nationalis', ff.28-47.

⁶ ZEP/1629-1645, pp.228-229, 313-318, 323-327 and 348.

those who had gone to England did not want to be dependent on church superiors, and he advised Rákóczi that Tolnai should be removed from the school at Sárospatak. Geleji further warned the prince that although Tolnai seemed at that time to be the greatest danger, there were probably others in the church watching for encouragement to attempt greater innovatory moves against the school and church order in Hungary and Transylvania.⁷

Miskolczi also wrote to I.György Rákóczi in 1640 appealing for Tolnai's dismissal, and in December 1640 I.György Rákóczi declared his support for the Zemplén church leadership, stating that unless Tolnai gave an indication that he would obey his superiors in future, then he would be dismissed by the end of the year.⁸ Tolnai managed to remain in his post at Sárospatak into 1641, but in November 1642 Miskolczi wrote again to I.György Rákóczi, asking for Tolnai's immediate discharge from the Sárospatak school, fearful of his "new and peculiar opinions".⁹ Tolnai was finally forced to resign in December 1642, but although he had lost the confidence of I.György Rákóczi, other members of the Rákóczi family continued to support him. In 1644 Tolnai was invited to act as camp chaplain to Zsigmond Rákóczi, and with Zsigmond's support Tolnai became a minister at Tokaj, and in 1645 was elevated to become archdeacon of the Abaújvár

⁷ 'Liber Reditum Ecclesiasticum Comitatus Zempleniensis 1623', MOL box no.1907, pp.466-470.

⁸ S.Szilágyi, 'I.Rákóczy György fejedelem levelezése Tolnai István sárospataki pappal' in PEIL 18 (1875), pp.1388-1390.

⁹ ZEP/1629-1645, pp.382-5, 388-9, 392-4, 397-399 and 424-426; S.Szilágyi, 'Miskolczi István és Görgei János esperesek levelei I.Rákóczy Györgyhez[sic]' in EPK 1875, pp.267-269.

district in northern Hungary.

Tolnai's activities as archdeacon, and the instructions which he gave to ministers in Abaújvár on the conduct of liturgy and church services led to disciplinary procedures against him that same year. Accusations of introducing ceremonial innovations, and of teaching that each minister was like a bishop in his own parish were made against Tolnai at the Gönc synod in January 1646, and further investigated by a council held at Tálya in February 1646. Tolnai claimed that he had not introduced reforms by the authority of the church hierarchy, but with the encouragement and "warming" of the Holy Spirit. Charges were however reported against Tolnai to a joint synod of the eastern and northern Tisza church districts held at Tokaj on 14 February 1646.¹⁰ At this synod János Ványai denounced Tolnai, his former colleague at Tokaj, for challenging the authority of clergy superiors, for showing contempt for his fellow ministers in unprovoked attacks, and for having suspicious and heterodox opinions after his contacts with Anabaptists, Puritans and Independents in England. Tolnai defended himself against the charge of having violated his position as archdeacon in Abaújvár, and argued that if he was doctrinally suspect because of contact with Puritans abroad, then the whole Hungarian ministry should be suspect. The Tokaj synod however decided that Tolnai had contravened church articles on baptism, offended his congregation, and Tolnai along with six other ministers was

¹⁰ ZEP/1638-1651, pp.61 and 108-115; MPEA 10 (1911), pp.13-20; Gönc synod results 'Zsoldos Benő féle időrendes sorozat' in the Tiszáninneneni egyházkerületi levéltár (Sárospatak), A/II/279/6, ff.2v-3r; Szilágyi Benjámin, 'Acta Synodi Nationalis', ff.394-398.

suspended from the Abaújvár ministry, pending a national synod of all the church districts in Hungary and Transylvania. The Tokaj synod also imposed an oath to be taken by all ministers, swearing innocence in recent plots to introduce innovatory doctrine or liturgy into the Hungarian church, and accepting that changes to the traditional practices of the church required the approval of the proper authorities. It was also resolved at Tokaj that henceforth no-one was allowed to use the scandalous name of Puritan against any another minister, since it implied support for unlawful religious innovation.¹¹

The national synod of the Reformed church in Hungary and Transylvania was held at Szatmár on 10 and 11 June 1646 in the presence of I.György Rákóczi. The prince was joined by representatives from western Hungary, 21 ministers from the northern Tisza district, 63 from eastern Tisza, and 24 ministers from Transylvania. The synod debated the need to uphold standards of theological orthodoxy and the need to continue with traditional church practices. It was decided that the authority of superintendents was crucial in maintaining church unity and in avoiding unnecessary innovation. The Szatmár synod demanded that all those who wished to change the government, liturgy or ceremony of the church had to do so through the accepted channels of clergy superiors and synods. All suspected innovators were to be thoroughly investigated, with attempts to introduce innovation

¹¹ Szilágyi Benjámin, 'Acta Synodi Nationalis', ff.62-104 and 398-400; ZEP/1638-1651, ff.129-133. Ferenc Veréczi wrote to Zsuzsanna Lórántffy after the Tokaj synod complaining that "the ancient and godly regulations of the church are certainly beginning to be disturbed by some restless spirited ministers"; S.Szilágyi, 'A Tolnai-per történetéhez' MPEIF 5 (1874), pp.35-42.

ultimately to result in a minister being suspended from office. The synod also roundly condemned what was described as a sinister affectation of piety and purity originating in England, and the name Puritan was deemed disgraceful, scandalous and hateful, and the synod ordered that it was not to be used in future within the Hungarian church without due reflection.¹²

János Tolnai Dali's suspension from the ministry was confirmed by the national synod until improvements were detected in his life and morality, and János Borsai Szepesi, a minister at Nagyvárad was also expelled from the ministry.¹³ In 1648 Tolnai was offered a post at Déva in Transylvania, on the condition that he sign a retraction of previously held opinions. Drawn up by Geleji and I.György Rákóczi, this retraction included a demand that Tolnai respect and obey the Transylvanian superintendent, and not introduce innovation to ceremonies or church services without the authority of the bishop and regional synod. Tolnai replied to this offer that he was ill, had already recanted once, and for reasons of conscience could not sign the retraction. This drew a furious response from Rákóczi, who accused Tolnai of Jesuitical equivocation, and of not truly giving up his plans to conspire with others to create "a dangerous sect". Rákóczi

¹² István Szilágyi Benjámin, 'Acta Synodi Nationalis', ff.105-160; A.Kiss, Egyházi kánonok a Szatmár-németiben 1646. évben tartott nemzeti zsinat végzése (Kecskemét, 1875); 'Debreceni ref. egyházmegye legrégibb jegyzőkönyvében' in I.Révész(pub.), 'A szatmár-németi zsinat végzése, eddig ösmeretlen eredeti szerkezetökben' in Sárospataki Füzetek 4 (1860), pp.244-247.

¹³ B.Csernák, A református egyház Nagyváradon, 1557-1660 (Nagyvárad, 1934), pp.125-263. Other ministers cited as trouble-makers at Szatmár included Jakab Harsányi, István Kereszturi, István Györi, János Porcsalmi, Márton Tolcsvai and Péter Kovásznai.

continued that if Tolnai broke any of the points of the Szatmár agreement on his lands, then the full force of the law would be brought against him.¹⁴

Puritans, as contemporaries would have identified them, were encountered by Hungarian students both in England, and in the Dutch Republic. Puritans have been described by one historian as "Protestants of the hotter sort", distinctive by the degree of their warmth, or commitment to religion. In England Puritans looked critically at the faults of the established church, and supported greater autonomy for congregations. Theirs was indeed a voluntary religion of conscience, practical divinity and personal piety. Although Puritanism in England was not inextricably linked with Presbyterianism, nor with strident anti-Papal attitudes, nor with those with more moral zeal than the norm, nor yet with those with the keenest apocalyptic vision, many Puritans were Presbyterians, ferociously anti-Catholic and millenarian moralists.¹⁵ Those described as Puritans knew each other as 'the godly', or 'professors of true religion'. The charge of Puritanism indicated division amongst early modern Protestants, with Puritans acting as a self-proclaimed religious

¹⁴ Szilágyi, MPEIF 5 (1874), pp.35-42, nos.7, 8 and 9.

¹⁵ P.Collinson, English Puritanism (Historical Association Pamphlets, no.106), (London, 1983); K.L.Parker, The English Sabbath (Cambridge, 1988); J.C.Brauer, 'Puritanism: A Panel' in Church History 23 (1954), pp.99-118; J.G.Moller, 'The beginnings of Puritan Covenant Theology' in The Journal of Ecclesiastical History 14 (1963), pp.46-67; K.L.Sprunger, Dutch Puritanism (Leiden, 1982); K.L.Sprunger, 'English and Dutch Sabbatarianism and the Development of Puritan Social Theology (1600-1660)' in Church History 51 (1982), pp.24-38; M.A.Breslow, A Mirror of England. English Puritan Views of Foreign Nations, 1618-1640 (Cambridge[MA], 1970).

elite, united by an internal sociability that fragmented them from the rest of society. Puritans had a common sense of their elect status which set them apart from the lukewarm in religion and from the reprobate. The effects of election were supposed to be noticeable in the daily lives of believers, and Puritans' intense assurance of election therefore needed to be validated by distinctive moral conduct and devotional activities. Puritans therefore adopted strict rules governing behaviour on the Sabbath, and proved determined opponents of excesses in public behaviour, particularly at festivals. The mocking of Puritans as sermon-gadders or excessive precisionists only acted to confirm their world-view.¹⁶

Practical theological works translated into Hungarian during this period complained that zeal in religion was frequently called Puritanism. The authors of such works distinguished Puritanism as the search for a true church, and marked out Puritans by their personal godliness, and complete trust in the authority of the Bible. The charge of Puritanism amongst the Reformed ministry of Hungary and Transylvania almost always emerged in the framework of demands for a renewal of public religion and morality, and for an end to clergy hierarchy

¹⁶ P.Lake, 'Puritan identities' in The Journal of Ecclesiastical History 35 (1984), pp.112-123; P.Lake, Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church (Cambridge, 1982) on Puritanism as a spiritual dynamic to externalise the believer's sense of his own election. P.Christianson, 'Reformers and the Church of England under Elizabeth I and the Early Stuarts', and P.Collinson, 'A Comment: Concerning the name Puritan' in The Journal of Ecclesiastical History 31 (1980), pp.463-482 and 483-488.

allowing individual ministers and congregations greater autonomy.¹⁷ István Telkibányai for example, in his translation of William Ames' English Puritanism, presented the great dangers of establishing a hierarchy in the church leading to the tyranny of Papal power, and denied that there was any New Testament justification for church leaders in authority over other ministers; "to summarise, either the order of bishops, filled with lies, has to be completely abolished, or the Pope must be brought back from hell."¹⁸

István Szilágyi Benjámin, an official of the Zemplén church, believed that Puritan innovators had been inspired to challenge hierarchy and orthodoxy in the Hungarian church by their exposure

¹⁷ Debreceni Ember, Historia Ecclesiae Reformatae, pp.383-385; 'De controversiis Reformatorum inter se et Lutheranorum' in Péter Bod, Historia Hungarorum Ecclesiastica (Leiden, 1888/9) book 3, chapter 10, pp.286-294. Jenő Zoványi offered the first more sympathetic treatment of Hungarian Puritans; J.Zoványi, Puritánus mozgalmak a magyar református egyházban (Budapest, 1911). All Hungarian historians have seen Puritanism as a movement of some sort, to reform the church or according to László Makkai also attacking the feudal order; L.Makkai, A magyar puritánusok harca a feudálizmus ellen (Budapest, 1952); L.Makkai, 'Tolnai Dali János harca a haladó magyar kultúráért' in ITK 57 (1953), pp.236-249; L.Makkai, 'The Hungarian Puritans and the English Revolution' in Acta Historica 5 (1958), pp.13-45; J.Bodonhelyi, A puritánizmus lelki élete és magyar hatásai (Debrecen, 1942); I.Révész, Társadalmi és politikai eszmék a magyar puritánizmusban (Budapest, 1948); L.Makkai, 'A magyar puritánok történetiszemlélete' in Theológiai Szemle 21 (1978), pp.342-345; I.Bán, 'The Literary and Cultural Significance of Seventeenth Century Hungarian Puritanism' in P.F.Barton, L.Makkai(eds.), Rebellion oder Religion? Debrecen Colloquium 1976 (Budapest, 1977); R.J.W.Evans, 'Calvinism in East-Central Europe' in M.Prestwich(ed.), International Calvinism, 1541-1715 (Oxford, 1985).

¹⁸ Pál Medgyesi(tr.), Praxis Pietatis (Debrecen, 1636) RMK 1/657; István Telkibányai(tr.), Angliai Puritanismus avagy kiválképpen való tudományok azoknak, kik Angliában a Puritánusok között (a mint közönségesen neveztetnek) legkeményebbeknek tartatnak (Utrecht, 1654) RMK 1/894 (from a Latin version by William Ames of William Bradshaw's original work), p.21.

to London churches, and through contact with foreign theologians such as William Ames at Franeker. Szilágyi also thought that such innovators were influenced by dangerous and fanciful notions of universal reformation supported in England by Independents and Seekers, as they had been previously in Germany by the "brothers of the rosy cross". Szilágyi, concluding that all such expectancy was nonsense, believed that those desiring innovation in Hungary had fallen in with such company, "promising themselves and others golden hills, and golden happiness".¹⁹ According to Gáspár Miskolczi Csulyak, Puritanism marked the liturgical and practical divisions caused by those desiring innovation and reforms of church government. In his 1654 work English Independency, Miskolczi wrote that Presbyterians and Independents in England came from "new Puritans" of the early seventeenth century. Miskolczi believed that the church in England had become deformed, with sectarian anarchy rampant, and he warned that innovation could quickly spread to the Transylvanian church since some Hungarian ministers thought that, "a bald crow, if it is foreign, is dearer than a home-bred fattened calf". Miskolczi blamed Independents for the downfall of the English bishops and the execution of Charles I., and argued that Independents equated the seven monarchies of Revelation to seven kings in Europe, and wanted to cut down the remaining six kings to follow the fall of the English throne. Under the cover of Christian freedom, Miskolczi believed that they introduced all sorts of poisons into

¹⁹ Szilágyi Benjámin, 'Acta Synodi Nationalis', ff.4 and 18-23; 'Tiszántul püspöki jegyzőkönyvek, 1629-', in the Tiszántul református egyházkerület levéltára (Debrecen), p.77 published in S.Tóth, Adalékok a tiszántuli reformált egyházkerület történetéhez (Debrecen, 1894), pp.33-4.

the church, and destroyed the authority of magistrates and church leaders, who alone could guard against their anarchy.²⁰

In the early seventeenth century Puritanism functioned as a term of abuse based on the ancient heresy of perfectionism. It was used to describe behaviour seen to be hypocritical, with double standards amongst Puritans between a show of outward piety, and a reality of hidden sin. Puritans were depicted by contemporaries in England as hair-splitting precisionists, excessive and immoderate in life and religion, and Puritan women were either shrews, or eager to be seduced.²¹ The accusations surrounding Puritanism in the Hungarian church suggest that its original usage in England was well understood. Those charged with Puritanism in Hungary were blamed for causing divisions in the church, with for example János Tolnai Dali denounced for separating out his students at Sárospatak as either 'pious' or

²⁰ Gáspár Miskolczi, Angliai Independentismus vagy az ecclésiiai fenyegetésekben, és a külső isteni tiszteletre tartozó jó rendtartásokban, minden reformata ecclesiákról különözö fejetlen lábság (Utrecht, 1654) RMK 1/893; introduction and pp.51, 92-97, 105 and 127. Amongst religious fanatics, Miskolczi wrote of a group in England waiting for John the Apostle to return either in Suffolk, or in Transylvania! At the end of the work is a verse by János Bereghi on anarchy, or "feet without a head" (fejetlen-lábság);

"Fejetlen lábnak veszett tudománya mi légyen
Ha kívánod látni, sok színű köntösében
Kinek itt nyilván, lám kezdetit és folyamattyát
Megláthadd igazán, sok-felé terjet agát.
Mi jöve Britonra? Romlás, szakadásnak igája,
Szüszomorító gyász, zürzavar, árto ragya
Tragus mint jára, ki vött vala két feleséget
Vent s-iffjat nyavalyás két kopaszito kezet."

²¹ W.P.Holden, Anti-Puritan Satire 1572-1642 (New Haven, 1954); P.Collinson, The Elizabethan Puritan Movement (London, 1967); P.Collinson, The Religion of Protestants. Church in English Society, 1559-1625 (Oxford, 1982), especially chapter 4; C.Hill, Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England (London, 1966); C.Hill, The World Turned Upside Down (London, 1972).

'impious'. Complaints were also made against Tolnai by some of his Tokaj congregation, that he was dismissive of those he thought were not godly enough, and that he had attacked them for not being proper Christians with not even "ten true hypocrites" amongst them.²² There were also accusations of misconduct by Hungarian ministers dubbed as Puritans, proof to opponents of their double standards and hypocrisy. On his return to Hungary in 1638, János Tolnai Dali had toured northern Hungary and disturbed many with his distinctive manners, dress, language and lengthy devotions. He was however also reported to his Zemplén superiors by Heinrich Alting for indiscretion with four women at Groningen, and was accused of having "blood on his hands". In 1647 János Simándi, the Zemplén archdeacon, heard gossip about impropriety between Tolnai and a woman at a Tokaj fair. To Simándi this was confirmation that Tolnai was a true Puritan, a hypocrite whose open passion for morality hid other secret passions, and that he was a "hideous infectious person".²³

The declaration of pious intent in the London League of 1638 was similarly seen by opponents as a false mask. István Miskolczi Csulyak in a 1639 letter to I.György Rákóczi described János Tolnai Dali as a "pharisee in behaviour", humble on the outside but self-willed on the inside. In 1653 András Váczi made comparable charges when he identified Tolnai as the leading innovator at Sárospatak;

²² ZEP/1638-1651, pp.108-115; J.Zoványi, 'Miskolczi Csulyak István zempléni ref. esperes (1625-1645) egyházlátogatási jegyzőkönyvei' in TT 7 (1906), pp.392-394.

²³ ZEP/1629-1645, pp.229-231 and ZEP/1638-1651, p.142; Szilágyi Benjámin, 'Acta Synodi Nationalis', ff.73v-74.

"But perhaps you have not picked up about whom I am speaking?...he speaks with holy simplicity, but his acts show him to be a proud Pharisee...Oh ambition, ambition, ambition,...he plays the priest over others with his pious life, storing however devilish, undying hatred and anger in his heart...it is János Tolnai who promises everything, but does nothing, with a holy mouth, but not a holy heart, and who rules on the necks of our youth, only with violence".²⁴

István Szilágyi Benjámín thought that Puritans with an "affectation of piety" were hiding heterodox opinions and sectarian ambitions, and "under the pretext of a purer Reformation, are introducing anarchy and English Independency into the Hungarian church". István Geleji Katona wrote in 1640 that Puritans caused disturbance to the church in Hungary and Transylvania under the "pretext of piety and humility". During a visitation at Sárospatak in 1642 a former colleague of János Tolnai, András Tarczali, claimed that "he certainly learnt no piety" from Tolnai, and reported that Tolnai conducted himself with great bad temper at the Sárospatak school.²⁵ Thus the charge of Puritanism marked out two competing views within the early seventeenth century Hungarian church clergy, with Puritans claiming they represented the vanguard of an ongoing godly reformation, and their detractors sceptical of their honest intent and mistrustful of their innovatory plans.

²⁴ András Váczi, A' Mi-Atyanknak avagy minden-napi imadsaggal való élésnek állatása és meg-óltalmazása (Kassa, 1653) RMK 1/871, pp.98-100.

²⁵ ZEP/1629-1645, pp.312 and 323; Szilágyi Benjámín, 'Acta Synodi Nationalis', ff.19, 24 and 58-59; István Geleji Katona, Praeconium Evangelicum (2 vols.), (Gyulafehérvár, 1640) RMK 2/552, vol.2, pp.496-498; Gáspár Miskolczi, Angliai Independentismus.

(ii) Presbyterians and Independents in the
Hungarian Reformed Church

Demands for changes to church government, and challenges to the hierarchy of the Reformed church in Hungary and Transylvania became associated with links to foreign Protestant radicals during the early seventeenth century. A series of Hungarian ministers, prominent in campaigns to limit the powers of superintendents were also known for having spent time abroad, especially in England. Imre Szilvásújfalvi Anderkó was one of the first Hungarian student ministers to travel to England in 1595, and returned home opposed to the clergy hierarchy of the eastern Tisza district under Lukács Hodászi. Under such criticism, superintendent Hodászi looked for international support for hierarchical church government, and sent a copy of the district's regulations to David Pareus at Heidelberg for his comments.²⁶ Initial support amongst ministers in eastern Hungary for some constraints on the civil powers of superintendents however faded, and an eastern Tisza synod held at Nagyvárad in 1610 described Szilvásújfalvi as a "pernicious schismatic". Szilvásújfalvi was forced to sign retractions, and to resign from his post as archdeacon in Bihar. In 1611 Szilvásújfalvi again accused Hodászi of being on the road to the tyrannical rule of the Papal

²⁶ Lukács Hodászi, De potestate ecclesiastica (Debrecen, 1611), (Teleki library, Marosvásárhely); Imre Katona Ujfalvi, Tractatus de Patrum, Conciliorum, Traditionum autoritate (Frankfurt, 1611) RMK 3/1095, preface by David Pareus; J.Heltai, 'David Pareus magyar kapcsolatai', in Adattár 23. Tudóslevelek-művelődésünk külföldi kapcsolataihoz, 1577-1797 (Szeged, 1989), pp.50-55, letters from Pareus in Aug. 1614 and March 1616 to István Melotai Nyilas denying a bishop's right to imprison ministers.

Antichrist, and in February 1612 Szilvásújfalvi was expelled from the ministry for blasphemy, imprisoned, and then banished from Transylvania in 1614.²⁷

As we have seen, accusations of Puritanism in the northern Tisza district in the 1630s against János Tolnai Dali and his supporters were always linked with accusations of lack of respect for the traditional form of church government in Hungary and Transylvania. Calls for presbyteries to be set up, and for greater autonomy for congregations were not restricted to northern Hungary, with the Transylvanian synod in June 1646 declaring that where it was necessary, and with the help of the chief magistrate, presbyters and deacons should be appointed throughout Transylvania.²⁸ An opening letter to the 1646 national synod at Szatmár from István Geleji Katona nevertheless stated that presbyterial church government was completely impossible in Transylvania because of firm opposition to it from the prince. The Szatmár synod eventually concluded that certain "difficulties and obstacles" prevented lay presbyteries being set up, especially the general lack of ability amongst the population of Transylvania, and the existing clergy hierarchy of the

²⁷ Nagyvárad synod results in the 'Tiszántul egyházkerület legrégibb jegyzőkönyvből' in Tóth, tiszántuli egyházkerület történetéhez, pp.18-20; Debreceni Ember, Historia Ecclesiae Reformatae, pp.337-339 and 343-353; István Szilágyi Benjámin, 'Synodalia' in the Tiszántul református nagykönyvtár (Debrecen) sign. R.575, pp.244 and 251-271; S.Kiss, 'Szilvásújfalvi Anderko Imre' in Egyháztörténet 5 (1959), pp.218-241.

²⁸ I.Szilágyi, 'Az erdélyi h.h. anyaszentegyház közzsinatainak végzései...kivonatban' in MPEIF 3 (1872), pp.1-9, 77-84 and 473-479. Also on events in June 1646 see L.Makkai, A magyar puritánusok harca a feudálizmus ellen (Budapest, 1952).

Hungarian Reformed church was confirmed.²⁹

The resolutions on church government passed by the national synod were reinforced by revised Transylvanian canons compiled by superintendent Geleji. These 'Geleji' canons strongly defended the voluntary agreement of ministers to obey clergy superiors as the right authority within the Transylvanian church. Citing Calvin, Beza, Bucer and Zanchius for support, Geleji expressed the organisation of Hungarian Reformed church government in the following terms;

"Although we justly damn and reject monarchy and anti-Christian hierarchy; nevertheless neither by any means can we bring into our church anarchy, or the polity of Cyclops, in which no-one hears anything, and which is far more deadly than monarchy itself; but we embrace for the government of our church aristocracy to a certain degree, or rather aristocratic-democracy".³⁰

The canons set out the duties of superintendents to ensure the good governance of archdeacons, with powers to suspend or remove ministers, and to monitor the flow of student ministers to foreign universities. The role of archdeacons was strengthened by the canons as guardians of uniform practices in church services, and their approval was required for the appointment of any minister. The canons also permitted lay presbyters to be selected to assist ministers, but on the prospects for presbyterial church government in Transylvania the canons stated that;

"Although this arrangement was certainly, according to its usage, very necessarily and usefully set up in different places and regions of the Christian church elsewhere, and there were those of our people, who, when abroad, grew accustomed to its advantages, and wanted to set up the thing here, but because of our different political order which has caused difficulties, it

²⁹ Sárospataki Füzetek 4 (1860), pp.244-247; Szilágyi Benjámín, 'Acta Synodi Nationalis', ff.105-160.

³⁰ Kiss, Egyházi kánonok, 1649 canons, no.85.

is clearly not permissible here".³¹

Supporters of presbyterial government were appalled by the revised canons, and Pál Medgyesi, in 1649 chaplain to Zsigmond Rákóczi, wrote to Zsigmond that they offered the church a path to tyranny. Medgyesi believed that the trust being shown in traditions by the church was Papist, and that Johann Bisterfeld and others should try to persuade the prince not to ratify the canons. After prolonged debate the 'Geleji' canons were however sanctioned by the Transylvanian synod in 1648, and confirmed by the prince in June 1649.³²

The Transylvanian clergy hierarchy proved determined to ensure that the church settlement agreed at the Szatmár synod and restated in the revised canons should be adhered to. The personal resolve of the new prince II.György Rákóczi was further stiffened against proponents of changes to church government as news of events in England in 1649 filtered through to Transylvania. Medgyesi wrote to Zsigmond Rákóczi of a campaign of persecution against ministers who supported Presbyterianism in Transylvania conducted by Geleji and György Csulai, chaplain to II.György Rákóczi. Medgyesi wrote of opposition which he himself faced in Transylvania, and of plots to see him removed from court, which led Medgyesi to conclude that "the church is in reality lying under a great oligarchy, with a few men making all the

³¹ Kiss, Egyházi kánonok, no.99.

³² Medgyesi to Zsigmond in June 1649 in S.Szilágyi, 'A kolozsvári egyház történetéhez' in EPK 1874, pp.165-6 and 172-4; MPEIF 3 (1872), pp.1-9, 77-84 and 473-479; I.Révész, 'II.Rákóczi György fejedelem, a Geleji Katona féle kánonokat ünnepélyesen megerősíti' in MPEIF 7 (1876), pp.91-93.

decisions".³³ Medgyesi also turned to Zsigmond on behalf of János Gidófalvi, a reform-minded minister at Kolozsvár. Gidófalvi had written to Medgyesi in June 1649 seeking help against the local archdeacon and other colleagues at Kolozsvár who had accused him of liturgical innovation, and promised to try to have him sacked. Archdeacon Miklós Váradi described Gidófalvi as an evil-spirited man, and threatened to pull Gidófalvi out of the Kolozsvár pulpit by his beard if he tried to preach there again. Medgyesi and Bisterfeld also appealed to Zsigmond in August 1649 for help in the battle to have Benedek Árkosi appointed at the Gyulafehérvár academy, with assurances of orthodoxy demanded from Árkosi before his posting was finally confirmed.³⁴

Eventually Pál Medgyesi was forced to give way to his opponents in the Transylvanian church leadership and at court, and he left Transylvania in July 1650. Medgyesi followed Zsigmond and Zsuzsanna Lórántffy to their estates in northern Hungary, becoming chaplain to Lórántffy, and joining János Tolnai Dali who had become school director at Sárospatak in 1649. In 1650 Medgyesi published Dialogus Politico-Ecclesiasticus which recommended that lay presbyteries be set up immediately to replace the existing clergy hierarchy. With understandable caution Medgyesi had asked both Bisterfeld and Zsigmond to read

³³ An unsigned diplomatic message was sent to Rákóczi in 1649 with details of the execution of Charles I.; K.Thály, 'Egykorú tudósítás I.Károly angol király kivégeztéséről, 1649' in TT 1879, pp.396-398; S.Szilágyi, 'Herczeg Rákóczy Zsigmond levelezése' in TT 1887, pp.656-658 and 671-672, letters of Aug. and Oct. 1649; S.Szilágyi, 'Medgyesi Pál levelei' in EPK 1876, pp.306-309 and 320-322, letter to Zsigmond in Oct. 1649.

³⁴ Szilágyi, EPK 1874, pp.165-6 and 172-4, letters of June 1649; Szilágyi, EPK 1876, pp.306-309 and 320-322.

parts of this work before publication, and he dedicated it to Zsigmond.³⁵ Medgyesi's book however outraged II.György Rákóczi, and the prince wrote to his mother in May 1650 that Medgyesi had not sought his permission to publish the work. György wrote that he was deeply offended by the introduction to the Dialogus, and its implication that his father had been responsible for blocking Medgyesi's Presbyterian proposals in the past.³⁶

Pál Medgyesi claimed in his Dialogus that it was time for the church in Hungary and Transylvania to fall into line with all other Reformed churches, which with the exception of the English church had already established governing lay presbyteries. Medgyesi quoted William Ames' opinions that the church could not be rightly ordered without presbyteries, and that the true church was a single congregation not a general institution. Medgyesi argued that officers of the church were divided into preachers, teachers, presbyters and deacons. The minister, or teaching presbyter, was responsible for preaching and the sacraments, whilst other presbyters should be chosen by the congregation to direct parish life. Medgyesi suggested that such presbyteries were urgently needed and could be started immediately in Hungarian towns, with the countryside to follow after improved education for potential peasant presbyters. Presbyters were

³⁵ Pál Medgyesi, Dialogus Politico-Ecclesiasticus, azaz két keresztyén embereknek egy mással való beszélgetések:...az egyházi igazgató presbyterekről, avagy vénekről, öregekről és a presbyteriumról, egyházi tanátsról (Bártfa, 1650) RMK 1/831; Szilágyi, EPK 1876, pp.306-309 and 320-322, a letter to Zsigmond in Dec. 1649.

³⁶ S.Szilágyi, 'Medgyesy Pál életéhez' in Protestáns Szemle 2 (1890), pp.146-154, letter from György.

described in the Dialogus as the non-teaching caretakers and directors of each congregation, and Medgyesi attempted to establish the New Testament basis for presbyterial government, arguing that poor translation of the Biblical texts involved, led to the belief in Hungary that presbyters must be clergymen only.³⁷

Medgyesi denied that presbyteries had affected the authority of princes anywhere in the Reformed world, and underlined that the chief magistrate should continue to supervise the church. He also tried to answer noble concerns about presbyteries, presenting them as no threat to their traditional rights of patronage. According to Medgyesi, church government by clergy hierarchy opened a dangerous path back to Rome, and he concluded that the role traditionally given in Hungary and Transylvania to bishops and archdeacons lacked any scriptural basis and that they therefore must be replaced.³⁸ Medgyesi also described how regional synods would continue to meet to resolve common problems under his proposals for a new presbyterial system, in contrast to the pure congregationalism of English Independents. Medgyesi was however concerned that synods should not be conducted as exercises in oligarchic control by a clergy hierarchy. He

³⁷ "Ha igaz Reformatusok, ne legyenek böltsebbek Istennél. Ha isteni rendelés az Presbyterium, vegyék-bé"; Medgyesi, Dialogus, pp.73, 75 and 109. Texts on church government under debate included Titus 1:5 and I Tim. 5:17.

³⁸ "az superattendensekhez és esperekhez. Hogy hiszem emberi rendelések ezek: az Presbyterium penig isteni."; Medgyesi, Dialogus, pp.28, 42, 99, 108-109 and 126; Pál Medgyesi, Rövid tanítás a presbyteriumról avagy egyházi tanácsról (Sárospatak, 1653), G.Incze(ed.), (Budapest, 1934), p.26. Medgyesi also selectively quoted Zsigmond's support for his views on presbyters from Pál Kereszturi, Christianus Lactens (Gyulafehérvár, 1637) RMK 2/508, pp.107 and 116-118.

therefore set forward the way in which he believed synods should be constituted, with the need for the participation of lay presbyters and leading magistrates alongside the clergy.³⁹

As we have seen in previous chapters the influence of foreign contacts on the Hungarian church was not of course uniformly radical or innovatory. Many student ministers returned to Hungary and Transylvania from periods at universities in the Dutch Republic and in England, determined implacably to oppose Puritans and the introduction of presbyterial church government. Amongst prominent opponents of reform Ferenc Verécsi studied in England, Leiden and Franeker between 1633 and 1635, István Szilágyi Benjámin studied at Frankfurt an der Oder, Franeker and Utrecht between 1639 and 1641, and András Váczi studied in England, Leiden, Franeker, Groningen, Utrecht and Deventer between 1644 and 1647. Some Reformed student ministers did however express support for Presbyterianism whilst abroad, with Péter Szatmári Baka for example giving a disputation at Franeker in 1649 in which he defended presbyterial church government as divinely inspired. Szatmári's disputation aimed to show that the presbyters described in New Testament texts could not correspond to Reformed episcopacy in Hungary, and that episcopacy and hierarchy amongst ministers were human inventions, with a propensity to lead to despotic rule. Szatmári also wrote that he agreed with English Puritans that Presbyterianism did not detract from monarchy in any way, although he too was anxious to differentiate his support for Puritans and Presbyterianism, from

³⁹ Pál Medgyesi, 'Isteni és istenes zsinat' in Hatodik Jajja (Sárospatak, 1660) RMK 1/966.

congregationalism and Independents.⁴⁰

A response to Szatmári's work was published in 1649 by Samuel Maresius, professor at Groningen university. Maresius chose to hide his intervention under a pseudonym, with the text trying to suggest that the author was Transylvanian. Maresius warned the church in Hungary should beware of "English simplicity", and that sectarian trouble-makers such as Independents and Brownists whilst claiming to aim to improve discipline through presbyteries, in reality had the reverse in mind. Maresius also praised the wisdom of I.György Rákóczi in trying to prevent this "English fever" from penetrating into Hungary in 1646. He argued against the necessity of all ministers being equal in rank, citing the examples of inspectors or superintendents in the Swiss and German Reformed churches, and concluded that the presbyters described in the New Testament did in fact correspond to such Reformed superintendents. Maresius was nevertheless concerned at the extent of episcopal authority in Hungary, and suggested that synodal power should be strengthened, but otherwise remained wary of the consequences of any more fundamental change.⁴¹ Despite heavy criticism from such an

⁴⁰ Péter Szatmári Baka, Defensio Simplicитatis Ecclesiae (Franeker, 1649) RMK 3/1724, ff.e1v-e2v, f4v and k1r.

⁴¹ Samuel Maresius, Popularis ad Popularem; sive Irenaei Simplicii Philadelphi Epistola...ad D.Petrum Bacca Szatthmari (Groningen, 1649) RMK 3/1724a, pp.5-6, 9-10 and 14-15. The author signed himself 'Petrus Joh. Knollarothzi, Claudiopol.' but Szatmári and Johann Bisterfeld thought the work was by Maresius. Bisterfeld commented to Zsigmond in March 1650 that it was sad that God allowed such disagreements in the church, under the mask of sincere theological division; TT 1888, cxii, pp.298-300. J.Zoványi, 'Ki volt a Szathmári Baka Péter irodalmi ellenfele?' in Protestáns Szemle 18 (1906), pp.379-382. Maresius also led disputations by Hungarians on church order; Xenia Academica (Groningen, 1650) RMK 3/1750a contains disputations by Mátyás

illustrious theological opponent, in 1653 Szatmári defended his original thesis that the present Hungarian church government did not fulfil the requirements on church order set out by Christ and the Apostles. Szatmári also refuted the accusation of Independency, stressing how his suggestions allowed lay congregational presbyteries to remain linked together on matters of common interest.⁴²

Despite the best efforts of Pál Medgyesi and his supporters there proved to be only limited support for Presbyterianism amongst the Hungarian Reformed clergy. In 1651 a synod of the eastern Tisza church held at Piskólt decided to retain the established articles of hierarchical government, reasoning that the essence of presbyteries described in the New Testament was already established in all-clergy church councils. The synod also declared that lay presbyteries were opposed by the chief magistrate and by the people, so that their introduction would have had dangerous consequences for the church and nation. Supporters of presbyteries were officially declared a minority party, and henceforth could be disciplined if they attempted to advance their cause, in private or in public, anywhere in the eastern Tisza region.⁴³ The patronage of Zsuzsanna Lórántffy

Diószeghi RMK 3/1699a, Tamás Ujvári RMK 3/1700a, ff.a3r-a4r and Péter Szatmári RMK 3/1724a.

⁴² Péter Szatmári Baka, Defensio Simplicitatis Ecclesiae Christi,....adversus Irenaei Simplicii Philadelphi Epistolam and Vindiciae Defensoris Simplicitatis Ecclesiae (Franecker, 1653) RMK 3/1832, p.12.

⁴³ 'Tiszántul református egyházkerület levéltára kerületi jegyzőkönyve' vol.1, (1629-) MOL box no.1883, p.579; I.Révész, 'A tiszántul ref. egyházkerület végzése a presbyteriumok ügyében,

and Zsigmond Rákóczi in northern Hungary however enabled supporters of Presbyterianism to continue their struggle into the 1650s, achieving limited success at area synods. In 1650 a synod of the Zemplén church at Ujhely supported the development of presbyteries alongside current church structures, and in January 1651 a synod at Liszka suggested incorporating existing town and village councils and justices to begin local presbyteries. In May 1651 the Zemplén synod at Bénye also concluded that presbyteries were an essential element to improve discipline amongst congregations, but the synod was anxious to reach a consensus for such changes with local lay magistrates, and with the other church districts.⁴⁴

In October 1650 however Medgyesi was forced to admit to Zsuzsanna Lórántffy that Presbyterianism was not widely accepted in the church in Hungary and Transylvania. In November 1650 Zsigmond Rákóczi wrote of his annoyance that conservative ministers at Sárospatak were openly opposing Tolnai in direct contravention to his commands. In March 1651 Medgyesi wrote to Zsigmond of continuing opposition from János Ványai and many of the Zemplén Reformed clergy to presbyteries, but that ministers were now giving disingenuous support for presbyteries when speaking before Zsigmond. Medgyesi warned his patron for example that Ferenc Veréczi, one of the ministers at Sárospatak, was working to stir up trouble in northern Hungary against supporters

1651 Sep. 3' in MPEIF 4 (1873), pp.98-99; I.Révész, 'Adalék a magyar puritánok történetéhez' in Sárospataki Füzetek 2 (1858/9), pp.717-725.

⁴⁴ A letter from Medgyesi to Lórántffy in Szilágyi, EPK 1876, pp.320-322; ZEP/1638-1651, pp.189-191, 203 and 211. The Bénye synod results in MPEA 10 (1911), pp.22-4.

of presbyterial church government. Medgyesi wrote of a "terrible and great aversion" to presbyteries, and of persecution which he had to endure because of his support for Presbyterianism. Medgyesi claimed that he was not surprised by the great opposition he had encountered because;

"the large part of our nation only holds to the form of religion, and although people think of themselves as knowledgeable, they do not understand the fundamentals of religion, nor do they wish to understand them".⁴⁵

The sensitivity of ministers at Sárospatak to comments on Presbyterianism was shown by the frenetic reaction in 1650 to a tract on the issue by Jan Comenius. Comenius, just before his arrival to teach at the Sárospatak college, was asked by exiled Moravian Brethren in northern Hungary to write his opinion on the correct form of church government. Comenius proposed that the best path lay through the unification of monarchy, aristocracy and democracy, but the introduction given to the tract at its publication claimed that Comenius opposed those Hungarian ministers who returned from England supporting Independency. This drew a furious response from Medgyesi and Tolnai, who were convinced that Comenius had taken up an anti-Presbyterian stance. In March 1651, Medgyesi wrote to Zsigmond that "no matter how good his [Comenius'] Latin is, we are not going to gain much from him, if it is his wish to cause damage to attempts to make a truly Reformed church". Bisterfeld also wrote to Zsigmond of his

⁴⁵ S.Szilágyi, 'Medgyesi Pál levelei' in EPK 1877, pp.3-4. A 1651 letter in S.Szilágyi, 'Comenius egy ismeretlen munkája' in TT 1890, pp.202-204; Szilágyi, EPK 1876, pp.306-309 and 320-322. Bisterfeld also wrote to Zsigmond on the divisions within the Rákóczi family over Presbyterianism in 1649 in S.Szilágyi, 'Herczeg Rákóczy Zsigmond levelezése' in TT 1887, pp.654-656 and 675-676, and TT 1890, clxxiii, 16 November 1650, pp.603-604.

amazement at Comenius' apparent indifference to the issue of church government, and warning that Comenius by trying to please all, would end up pleasing none.⁴⁶

The new Transylvanian prince, II.György Rákóczi, meanwhile viewed with deep suspicion all suggestion of presbyteries either as supplementary disciplinary organs, or in direct competition with the clergy hierarchy. In January 1653 the Transylvanian diet, strongly backed by the prince, codified Transylvanian law and imposed tighter civil controls on the church. The diet confirmed the rights of the superintendents of the four received Transylvanian religions to call synods, and to undertake visitations. These 'Approbatae Constitutiones' also placed the full weight of the law behind the church hierarchy to root out any suspected innovation to church government or ceremony. Whilst affirming the right of any of the four denominations to conduct internal reform, this was only to be allowed if in accordance with the articles and canons of each church, and with the consent of that church's patrons. If doctrinal, liturgical or administrative innovations were discovered during a visitation, then any clergy involved were to be dismissed, and face civil charges with the threat of loss of life and property.⁴⁷ Johann Bisterfeld reacted to these proposed laws at the 1653 Transylvanian diet, by writing to the prince warning him not to harm the interests of the Reformed church, nor to put blocks in

⁴⁶ J.V.Kvacsala, 'Comenius és a Rákóczyak' in Budapesti Szemle 1889, pp.113-151; Szilágyi, TT 1890, pp.202-204.

⁴⁷ '1540-1848 évi erdélyi törvények' in D.Márkus, S.Kolozsvári and K.Ovári(eds.), Magyar Törvénytár (Budapest, 1900), 1653 laws, article 1/1/3.

the way of the development of the church. Bisterfeld reminded the prince that presbyterial government was the common practice in other Reformed countries, and argued against the threatened punishment of loss of life and property for those supporting the introduction of presbyteries or other innovations. Bisterfeld asked II.György Rákóczi to consider the prospect of this law being enacted against his own mother, and wrote that his conscience had required him to defend the "true Helvetic Reformed religion". The prince rejected Bisterfeld's suggestions and cursed his impudence, adding that whilst he recognised the usefulness of presbyteries, he feared that the consequences for Transylvania might be the same as those in England in the 1640s.⁴⁸

Supporters of Presbyterianism therefore failed to gain backing in any of the districts of Hungary and Transylvania for a shift from the traditional all-clergy hierarchical form of church government to a presbyterial-synodal regime. Subsequent moves in northern Hungary and at Nagyvárad in eastern Hungary to introduce presbyteries, aiming to remove congregations from the control of local church hierarchies and then introduce changes to church practices, looked to conservatives in the church very much like

⁴⁸ S.Szilágyi (ed.), Erdélyi Országgyűlési emlékek - Monumenta Comitalia Regni Transylvaniae, 13 (1661-1664), (Budapest, 1888), 'Simonius naplója-' on the 1652 and 1653 diets at Gyulafehérvár, pp.444-446. These 'Approbatae Constitutiones' sparked off a series of angry letters on church affairs between Zsuzsanna Lórántffy and II.György Rákóczi; S.Szilágyi (ed.), A két Rákóczy György fejedelem családi levelezése. Monumenta Hungariae Historica, 24 (Budapest, 1875), dxi, p.452; dxv, p.457; dxviii, pp.460-462; dxxx, p.471; and dxlvii, p.482. The prince above all wanted to prevent scandals, see S.Szilágyi, 'Az 1655-iki pozsonyi országgyűlés történetéhez' in Történeti Lapok 1874, pp.117.

Independency. After 1653 the seriousness of such challenges to the ecclesiastical regime of the Hungarian church was compounded by II.György Rákóczi viewing innovators as also defying princely authority. Tolnai and Medgyesi nevertheless encouraged Lórántffy and Zsigmond to at least support the setting up of a presbytery at Sárospatak. After Zsigmond's death in February 1652, Lórántffy ploughed on alone with support for the presbytery established at Sárospatak, despite mounting opposition from the clergy hierarchy in the Hungarian church, and sharp rebukes from her son György.

In January 1651 the Zemplén synod at Liszka first heard reports of moves towards Independency at Sárospatak orchestrated by János Tolnai Dali. At a subsequent informal meeting held in István Szilágyi Benjámin's house at Sárospatak, leading conservatives in the Zemplén church defended the role of Reformed superintendents and their powers of spiritual oversight in each diocese. It was believed that Tolnai wanted to introduce Independency in the Hungarian church by breaking all existing ties, through visitations and synods, between Reformed ministers and congregations. The meeting at Szilágyi's house also concluded that Tolnai planned to introduce imported doctrinal and liturgical innovations, leading to anarchy in the Hungarian church with the same catastrophic outcome possible as in England. The conservatives concluded that Independency was a devilish discovery, and that where it ruled no church could stand. Another Zemplén synod was called at the end of February 1651 at Sárospatak, and archdeacon János Simandi claimed that Tolnai opposed inspections by church superiors, and had brought great scandal to the church. Simandi quoted Tolnai as saying that "a

diocesan church is anti-Christian and diabolical", and accused him of teaching Independency at the Sárospatak school.⁴⁹

In 1653 arguments about the intentions of Presbyterians continued at Sárospatak. András Váczi attacked Tolnai for trying to force a presbyterial system on the town, as a method of introducing liturgical and ceremonial innovations. Váczi wrote that he too approved of presbyteries, but that their introduction was impossible because of great opposition to any change from within the church. Váczi reasoned that since it was possible for believers to gain salvation without introducing the presbyterial regime, the harmful practical consequences to church harmony of any changes to church government were not worth the trouble.⁵⁰ Tolnai responded by ridiculing what Váczi and others believed about innovators; that they did not preach from the Bible, did not pray, that they thought every man should have three wives, that the Hungarian clergy were false teachers, that higher powers were not necessary in a republic, and that the ecclesiastical regime and order had to be destroyed and Independency introduced in its place. Tolnai argued that in reality he was only an innovator to the extent that he desired to change certain "uncommon" practices in the Hungarian Reformed church.⁵¹

Nevertheless in February 1654 a complaint reached II.György Rákóczi that Presbyterians at Sárospatak continued to aspire to

⁴⁹ ZEP/1638-1651, pp.188, 192, 211-213 and 221-225.

⁵⁰ András Váczi, Replica, azaz: Tolnai Dali Janosnak csufos és vados maga és mások mentésére való valasz-tetel (Kassa, 1654) RMK 1/888, pp.85 and 187-189.

⁵¹ János Tolnai Dali, Daneus Rácai (Sárospatak, 1654) RMK 1/892, pp.122-123 and 159-160. According to the preface this was written on the orders of Zsuzsanna Lórántffy.

Independency, and did not respect the church hierarchy, nor attend local synods. Sárospatak Independents were accused of introducing new ideas on their own authority, and of wanting to differentiate themselves from the rest of the church; "There are such amongst them, who are attached to Puritanism, giddy Independency, the anarchy of 'feet without a head', Arianism and Anabaptism, and more such sects".⁵² In March 1654 György Csulai also wrote to II.György Rákóczi condemning Medgyesi for desiring to bridle the authority of magistrates, which Csulai thought might lead Transylvania down the same path of "hideous English disturbances". Csulai considered that trouble began in England by opening the window to error and false religion, and soon "180 sects" began attacking the English church. Csulai therefore concluded that the prince should act at once to eradicate such private opinions as Medgyesi's, whilst they were still relatively hidden.⁵³

In January 1655 the Zemplén archdeacon, Pál Tarczali, led a visitation to Sárospatak and met the congregation's lay presbyters. The presbyters complained that they did not want the new form of presbytery which had been imposed upon them since Medgyesi had moved to the town. The presbyters also pointed out that Medgyesi was not a minister at the Sárospatak church, and they did not agree with the role which he was being allowed to play in local church affairs because of his influence with

⁵² Anonymous tract of February 1654 from Sárospatak, in S.Szilágyi (ed.), 'Levelek és okiratok II.Rákóczy György fejedelem diplomáciai összeköttetései történetéhez' in TT 1889, xxxvii, pp.475-9, the quote is from point 14.

⁵³ Szilágyi, TT 1889, xxxix, pp.479-481, March 1654.

Zsuzsanna Lórántffy. The 1655 visitation proved to be the last which was allowed in Sárospatak until two months after Lórántffy's death in 1660, when the visitors recorded that;

"Since the Reformation the church at Sárospatak, has been dependent on, and visited, by the archdeacons of the diocese of Zemplén county; through the advice of some, for a presbytery, or under the cover of some other thing, for the past five or six years it has been taken from under the direction of the archdeacons of the diocese; but now thanks to the grace of God, we have regained the direction of this church".⁵⁴

The 1655 visitation sparked a concerted campaign by the Zemplén authorities to combat Presbyterian ministers, despite the protection which they could call on from Lórántffy. At the beginning of 1655 Lórántffy heard of reports that Pál Tarczali had secretly gathered together leading Zemplén clergy who opposed Presbyterianism, and there "fermented something against us". Lórántffy accused the Zemplén ministers of treating her with disrespect, particularly Ferenc Verécsi who had refused to serve her communion and condemned her for spreading a new faith.⁵⁵ In April 1655 a Zemplén synod was held at Liszka, and the archdeacon castigated Tolnai for disrespecting authority, and believing that a "pig's priest" was more honourable than an archdeacon. The synod gave stern warnings to Tolnai, and to Sámuel Lippai, István Keresszeghi and Pál Medgyesi for disturbing the church's good order.⁵⁶ In May 1655 leading conservatives then organised a joint synod of the northern and eastern Tisza

⁵⁴ ZEP/1653-1672, pp.53-56 and 305-307; Sárospataki Füzetek 1 (1857/8), pp.361-362.

⁵⁵ Letter to András Klobusiczky in S.Szilágyi, 'Két levél Lórántffy Zsuzsannától' in EPK 1875, pp.141.

⁵⁶ S.Szilágyi, 'Egyháztörténelmi adatok' in EPK 1880, pp.313-314, 329-330, 344-345 and 360-361.

districts at Debrecen. At this synod dramatic disciplinary action was taken against ministers who supported Presbyterianism. Medgyesi, Tolnai, Lippai and Keresszeghi were all suspended from their posts and János Belényesi, an archdeacon in the eastern Tisza region, was suspended from the ministry for one year. Zsuzsanna Lórántffy then directed the overseer of her Transylvanian estates to appeal to the Transylvanian diet to have this decision reversed. The diet however replied in a non-committal letter of March 1656, claiming that the church in Hungary had complete independence from them, and that they could not interfere. Lórántffy was only finally able to gain the return of the four suspended clergy at the Gálszécs synod in September 1656.⁵⁷

The 1655 Debrecen synod also decided that other ministers who had resisted the authority of superintendents were to be removed from their posts, agreeing that if by word or in writing these ministers attacked the synod's decisions, they were to be given over to the civil powers for severe punishment. The synod received some individuals, including Péter Szathmári Baka, back into the ministry after suspension. However this was only after receiving a retraction of opinions formerly held by Szathmári, and the synod warned that any future offence would lead to dismissal from the ministry.⁵⁸ All four ministers at Nagyvárad in eastern Hungary; István Szikra, Benedek Nagyari, Péter Kovásznai and Ferenc Szatmári were also suspended from their

⁵⁷ ZEP/1653-1672, p.133.

⁵⁸ 'Tiszántul református egyházkerület levéltára kerületi jegyzőkönyve' vol.1, (1629-), p.578.

posts by the 1655 Debrecen synod. Tensions affecting Nagyvárad and the surrounding Bihar region were highlighted by an author at the Nagyvárad school, 'Pasquillus', who wrote comic verses in 1655 attacking the innovatory opinions of twenty ministers and two teachers in the area. 'Pasquillus' chastised Szikra, Kovásznai and Nagyari and berated the divisions which they were seen to be causing in the church. István Telkibányai was also ridiculed for supporting presbyteries, whilst another minister was rebuked for advancing innovation at Nagyvárad after having been thrown out of the school at Kolozsvár because of his "new learning".⁵⁹

The arrival of Isaac Basire, once a chaplain to Charles I., as a teacher at the Gyulafehérvár college and adviser to II.György Rákóczi in 1655, heightened Rákóczi's fears of the possible effects of Presbyterianism and Independency in Transylvania. In September 1655 Basire clashed with János Apáczai Csere, a supporter of presbyteries at Kolozsvár, in a public debate about church government at Marosvásárhely held in front of II.György Rákóczi. Basire spoke about his experience of Independency in England, and referred to Charles I.'s death. Apáczai in response tried to differentiate Presbyterianism from Independency, but the prince retorted that the one led to the other, and by the end of the debate Rákóczi was so angry with Apáczai that he threatened to throw him from the tower where the

⁵⁹ K.Szabó, 'Egy gúnyirat a váradi ref. esperesség presbyterianus papjai ellen 1655-ből' in MPEIF 1 (1870), pp.590-598.

debate was being held.⁶⁰ Basire also presided over the Transylvanian synod in 1656, defending the existing clergy hierarchy of the "Catholic-Reformed" church in Transylvania. Basire described episcopacy as divinely established, with the magistrate also given the authority to protect and champion the church by divine right. Basire identified "covenanters" as the chief opponents of the true church, who at first favoured presbyterial government, but then became Independents. Indeed in a letter of April 1656 Basire recounted to Charles II. his battles in Transylvania against "Independency and presbytery (flown over here from England)".⁶¹ A response to Basire came in 1656 from a Sárospatak author, possibly Pál Medgyesi, who claimed that the Transylvanian and Hungarian church was not episcopal but presbyterian in government, with collegiate clergy presbyteries meeting under each archdeacon, and that before Basire no-one had ever equated the rank of superintendent with episcopacy.⁶²

⁶⁰ Accounts of this dispute are preserved, see L.Orosz, Apáczai Csere János válogatott pedagógiai művei (Budapest, 1956), pp.163-166; Szilágyi, A Rákóczi családi levelezése, dlxii, pp.490-491.

⁶¹ Isaac Basire[?], Pro Unitate Verae Ecclesiae (Gyulafehérvár, 1656) RMK 1/849-850; Basire, History of the English and Scotch Presbytery (?, 1659), pp.129 and 220-228; 'Domestic Calendar of State Papers' (1655-1656), nos.38-9, p.258.

⁶² Isaac Basire, 'Triumviratus sive Calvinii, Bezae et Zanchii testimoniae luculente pro Episcopatus', with response from 'Philalathes Vester' [?], Trecentumviratus et ultra (Sárospatak, 1656) RMK 2/861; also MSS. Hunter nos.85 and 140/12 in Durham Cathedral library. Gisbert Voetius believed that Medgyesi was the author of Trecentumviratus; see his Politica ecclesiastica (Amsterdam, 1676) vol.4, p.191; Ö.Miklós, 'Ki a "Trecentumviratus" szerzője?' in Magyar Könyvszemle 31 (1916), pp.256-258. Medgyesi and Basire definitely did clash in June 1660, over a Hungarian student minister's thesis on episcopacy and presbytery given under Voetius at Utrecht; MSS. Hunter no.88.

The 1655 Debrecen synod also increased divisions between II.György Rákóczi and Zsuzsanna Lórántffy. In November 1655 Lórántffy wrote to her son, criticising his approval of events at Debrecen, which she characterised as "without justice". Zsuzsanna Lórántffy wrote again in January 1656 to György accusing him of making her suffer because of his stance on presbyteries and innovation;

"I have already written many times of this to you, and I do not see any point in it....it pleased you to humiliate my chaplains, with the agreement of the bishop; you did not say 'my mother is an innovator', but when you said such over my chaplains, you have already done this;....I only see your great and harsh acts against me".

In February 1656 György responded by writing that the ministry in Transylvania and eastern Hungary was largely at peace, and had accepted the continuation of the traditional form of church government. György wrote that he had only acted to uphold his obligations under the law.⁶³ In February 1656 Pál Medgyesi felt the need to defend his behaviour to the prince, writing that it was not an easy burden to be held responsible by the prince for two-thirds of the disturbances in the church. Medgyesi continued that if someone showed him where he was wrong, he would gladly correct his opinions.⁶⁴

The ramifications of the 1655 Debrecen synod continued to be felt in the eastern Tisza region in 1656 with two of the suspended ministers, Benedek Nagyari and Péter Kovásznai, holding out under pressure for them to formally endorse hierarchical church government. In June 1656 a synod at Szatmár received two

⁶³ Szilágyi, A Rákóczy családi levelezése, dlxxiii, pp.497-498; dlxxv, pp.499-500; and dlxxx, pp.502-503.

⁶⁴ Szilágyi, EPK 1877, pp.3-4, 17-18 and 29-30.

other ministers back into their posts, after they signed formulas of repentance not to cause any more trouble. Nagyari and Kovásznai however were imprisoned in Szatmár castle on 18 June 1656 for three weeks until they finally provided a retraction of previously held opinions, and stated their adherence to orthodox Reformed confessions and canons, and to Transylvanian laws on church government. The retractions of Kovásznai and Nagyari stated that they had acted against the canons and rites of the church, and they promised in future to be "obedient sons" of the church, submitting to discipline. They also agreed not to innovate in any way over church practices or dogma, only teaching what was generally accepted by the church.⁶⁵ In July 1656 II.György Rákóczi wrote to Lórántffy with news of the retractions from the two Nagyvárad ministers. Rákóczi also wrote that prison had not improved Nagyari and Kovásznai, and that their local superiors wanted them to sign another retraction, since "a dog which has swum once across the Danube can swim over a second time".⁶⁶ At the eastern Tisza synod at Böszörmény in September 1656, Nagyari and Kovásznai defended themselves against the charge of innovation, arguing that they had merely continued with practices at Nagyvárad which they had found there. However they were eventually and very unwillingly forced to sign yet another

⁶⁵ 'Tiszántul református egyházkerület levéltára kerületi jegyzőkönyve' vol.1, (1629-), pp.93, 624, 630 and 632; Csernák, A református egyház Nagyváradon, pp.200-217.

⁶⁶ J.Koncz, 'Egyháztörténeti adalékok' in Protestáns Közlöny 1891, pp.5-6; Szilágyi, A Rákóczy családi levelezése, dxc, pp.508-509.

retraction before being formally received back into the church.⁶⁷

The confusion which followed the military disasters of 1657 and 1658 again changed the balance of power within the Reformed church. In 1658 the prospect of Ákos Barcsai, who was sympathetic to Presbyterianism, becoming Transylvanian prince, split the Transylvanian synod assembled at Marosvásárhely. Barcsai, by gathering Presbyterian supporters to his cause, gave an even more immediate political association to church party labels during his challenge for the Transylvanian throne. The Rákóczi family pulled together against common opponents during this crisis, and Lórántffy in an emotionally charged letter reproached Pál Medgyesi for harsh things which he had been saying about György. She accused Medgyesi of supporting Barcsai, not because of his Presbyterianism, but out of his own "private affections", presumably revenge against György.⁶⁸ However the loss of Nagyvárad to the Turks, and the deaths around 1660 of Zsuzsanna Lórántffy, János Tolnai Dali, soon followed by Pál Medgyesi, marked the end of Presbyterianism as a serious challenge within the Hungarian church. Some ministers however continued to be accused of innovation, with complaints raised against Péter Szatmári Baka for example during the visitation of Sárospatak in 1660. In 1667 Pál Tarczali and the Zemplén synod still felt the need to denounce Independency, renewing warnings to local patrons

⁶⁷ 'Tiszántul református egyházkerület levéltára kerületi jegyzőkönyve' vol.1, (1629-), p.580. Péter Kovásznai made a remarkable recovery from imprisonment in Szatmár in 1656, to become bishop of the Reformed church in Transylvania in 1668.

⁶⁸ Szilágyi, Protestáns Szemle 2 (1890), pp.146-154.

of its dangerous consequences, such as the fate which had befallen the English king.⁶⁹ Local fears of challenges to traditional religion remained strong in Transylvania as well, and in 1659 for example the town council of Marosvásárhely became nervous of the opinions of a new minister, and sought the town's guilds reaction to the threat of possible innovations to religion. In July 1659 the Marosvásárhely guilds responded with a chorus of disapproval. The saddlers and barbers did not want "Puritan religion" to be introduced, and the barbers continued that they did not want a presbytery either, but instead to follow the Ten Commandments and the laws of God! The hat-makers gild meanwhile commented on "presbyterial religion" that "we do not know what it is, do not understand it, and therefore do not want to have it brought in", instead sticking with "the true Christian confession".⁷⁰

After the fall of Ákos Barcsai, Transylvanian princes steadily supported episcopal authority during the late seventeenth century. The 1664 Nagyenyed synod decided that the accustomed form of church government would continue in place, whilst "teaching on presbyterial government does not have to be constricted, so long as neither in private nor in public, it gives any cause for hatred or scandal". More immediate external threats to the Reformed church in the second half of the seventeenth century increased the need for consolidation, and by the 1670s clerical dominance of church government was being

⁶⁹ ZEP/1653-1672, pp.273-278 and 305-307.

⁷⁰ The letters of these guilds are in the Maros református egyházmegye levéltára (Marosvásárhely), July 1659, no.65/B.

eroded not by congregational presbyteries, but by meetings of the Transylvanian consistory, with increasing involvement by princes and major Reformed patrons in all important church decisions.⁷¹

Reform-minded ministers of the early seventeenth century Hungarian church had been encouraged by first-hand experience of foreign Calvinist churches to challenge the established pattern of local church government, arguing that clergy hierarchy was incompatible with a truly Reformed church. Reformers cast the debate on church government as set between their demands for Christian liberty, against the constraints of human institutions and customs which led to despotic rule of some over the consciences of many. Reformers were however charged with Puritanism, and their concern for reform and strong discipline through presbyteries was dubbed as a sham, masking personal immorality. Consolidators meanwhile were concerned to prevent disturbances to church peace, and feared the divisive results of imported innovation, and scandals between ministers. The desire for renewal in the Hungarian Reformed church however remained targeted against some liturgical and ceremonial traditions and the hierarchical church order, with in fact little sign of the radical opinions of sects associated with Independents in the 1650s in England, from whom so much had been feared.

⁷¹ Some support for outright Presbyterianism continued. A 1662 disputation given by Mihály Tolnai under György Martonfalvi at Debrecen concluded that presbyteries should be introduced immediately and could not co-exist with hierarchical church government and episcopacy; György Martonfalvi (pres.), Disputatio Theologica de Presbyterio (Debrecen, 1662) RMK 2/983. For the later seventeenth century see G.Nagy, Fejezetek a magyar református egyház 17. századi történetéről (Budapest, 1985), pp.201-237; I.Révész, A magyar református egyház története (Budapest, 1949), pp.132-142; J.Pokoly, Az erdélyi református egyház története (5 vols.), (Budapest, 1904), vol.4, pp.179-213.

THE IMPOSITION AND TIGHTENING OF REFORMED DISCIPLINE IN HUNGARY AND TRANSYLVANIA

(i) The Exercise of Reformed Discipline

Early modern Calvinism was marked out by commitment to a reformation of morality in public and private life through the exercise of congregational discipline. In this chapter I shall examine the preoccupation amongst ministers in the Hungarian Reformed church during the early seventeenth century with raising standards of conduct in their communities. In Hungary and Transylvania, as elsewhere in Calvinist Europe, a distinctively Reformed ethos of discipline emerged through the institutions by which control over behaviour was exercised, through the offences which were highlighted by the clergy, and the methods used to punish offenders. This chapter will concentrate on establishing the key elements of the disciplinary regime of the Reformed church in Hungary and Transylvania, a pattern which is directly comparable with other areas of the international Calvinist community.

The Reformed church in Hungary and Transylvania shared the fundamental ambition of sister Calvinist churches abroad, with avowed dedication to ongoing reformation of the spiritual life and behaviour of Reformed congregations. The international contacts between the Hungarian Reformed church and western Calvinists which we have already surveyed, were influential in

shaping the attitudes of ministers to disciplinary issues, particularly on the slowly emerging role of ordinary lay congregants in church administration. However the lay presbyters typical of Calvinist churches elsewhere, were only introduced in a piecemeal fashion in Hungary and Transylvania, with presbyteries only slowly affecting the imposition of discipline in the Hungarian church. The evolution of congregational presbyteries and strengthening of traditional disciplinary institutions in Hungary, alongside the increasingly conscientious application of rights of visitation by senior Reformed clergy, nevertheless brought tighter controls on behaviour in Hungarian parishes. Similarly the stricter enforcement of spiritual punishments by Reformed ministers against sinners, and demands on local civil officials to prosecute and severely punish a wide range of moral and criminal offences also marked a concerted effort by the Reformed church to curb popular immorality, and establish higher standards of acceptable behaviour in the Hungarian and Transylvanian society of the early seventeenth century.

The Genevan model of a consistory of clergy and elected elders to deal with disciplinary cases was not followed everywhere in the Calvinist world. In Scotland for example the powers of local kirk-sessions and area presbyteries were complemented by officials from the civil authorities who were often reserved places in church disciplinary bodies. In the Palatinate and Hesse-Kassel in Reformed Germany, power to prosecute religious and moral offenders lay with ecclesiastical officials from the

central bureaucracy, whilst in Nassau congregational elders who dealt with disciplinary matters were selected by both secular and ecclesiastical officials. Reformed areas across Europe however held in common the involvement in each congregation of presbyters and elders in enforcing standards of discipline, as well as acting in other areas of church life such as the administration of poor relief.¹

In Transylvania and Hungary authority to uphold the law, establish good order, and punish wrong-doing lay with local landowners, and their noble county assemblies. There was no great codification of crimes and punishments, and procedure was based on custom and precedent, with either monetary or physical punishment handed out for different offences. In each county a high sheriff was supported by sheriffs and county justices, and in each parish a selected magistrate, or justice, was responsible for reporting to each local noble. Village councils of jurymen and a curator of village works supported the justices in their activities. In self-governing towns, a council of justices and jurymen dealt with legal matters, and as a last resort difficult cases could be referred to the Transylvanian prince.²

¹ E.W.Monter, 'The Consistory of Geneva, 1559-1569', in Bibliothèque D'Humanisme et Renaissance 38 (1976), pp.467-484; R.Po-Chia Hsia, Social Discipline in the Reformation. Central Europe 1550-1750 (London, 1989).

² P.Angyal, A.Degré(eds.), A xvi. és xvii. századi erdélyi büntetőjog vázlata (Budapest, 1943); A.Koncz, Debreczen város régi büntető joga (Debrecen, 1913); E.Varga(ed.), Úriszék xvi.-xvii. századi perszövegek (Budapest, 1958); R.Wolf, Torda város tanácsai jegyzőkönyve, 1603-1678, ETA 6/1 (Kolozsvár, 1993); 'Protocollum judicis primarii et senatus oppidi Sáros Nagy Patak' in the 'Tiszáninneni egyházkerületi levéltár- Sárospatak város jegyzőkönyvei', MOL box nos.20493-20494, (3 vols.) vol.1, pp.30-52.

Each Reformed minister was responsible for bringing disciplinary cases of religious or moral offences to light, and for ensuring that appropriate sanctions were enforced against wrong-doers. Individual ministers relied heavily on the support of clergy superiors and local synods, and on co-operation with local noble patrons to establish good discipline in their congregations. The right of Reformed superintendents and archdeacons to inspect congregations allowed the disciplinary performance of each minister to be monitored. These visitations became semi-inquisitions into local life, and the occasions on which major disciplinary cases were aired and settled.³ Church canons ordered regular examinations of the behaviour of ministers and parishioners, with two or three visitations every year ordered by the 1561 Debrecen confession. The 1567 Debrecen articles required only annual visitations of every parish, whilst the Transylvanian canons of 1649 specified an annual visitation by archdeacons of all local churches, and an investigation of archdeacons by the Transylvanian superintendent each year. Reformed canons also specified particular offences to be watched out for on visitation, and suggestions of appropriate punishments to be meted out, with "idolatrous games and dancing" associated with drunkenness strictly prohibited, and demands for the death penalty to be enforced against adulterers and blasphemers.⁴

³ E. Illyés, Egyházfegyelem a magyar református egyházban (Debrecen, 1941); G. Nagy, Fejezetek a magyar református egyház 17. századi történetéből (Budapest, 1985) especially chapters 1, 2, 3 and 11.

⁴ A. Kiss, A xvi. században tartott magyar református zsinatok végzései (Budapest, 1881), pp. 263 and 563-613, and on offences pp. 173, 228-231, 251 and 598-599; A. Kiss, Egyházi kánonok - Geleji Katona István 1649. és a szatmár-németiben 1646.

This pattern of church discipline seems to have been broadly established throughout Hungary and Transylvania by the early seventeenth century with senior clergy embarking upon regular rounds of visitations, and their efforts supported by the work of area synods. Rare glimpses into parish life in Transylvania during this period show visitations in progress, and a series of decisions of the eastern Tisza synod reveals a concerted effort there to tighten public morality, particularly against excessive behaviour at religious festivals.⁵ However the most comprehensive source about how this system of visitation worked in the Hungarian Reformed church is provided for the Zemplén region of the northern Tisza church district. Zemplén county, which straddles the modern border between Hungary and Slovakia, was one of the most Reformed dominated areas of Hungary. Encompassing the Rákóczi estates centred on the castle at Sárospatak, Zemplén was a mountainous county but with southern regions prone to spring floods from the rivers Tisza and Bodrog. It was this territory of settled and largely Hungarian villages stretching to the north and east of Sárospatak, rather than the predominantly Slav and German villages of northern Zemplén, which formed the Reformed heartland. The visitors travelled between the villages of southern and central Zemplén throughout the year, with letters sent out by the archdeacon warning parishes that

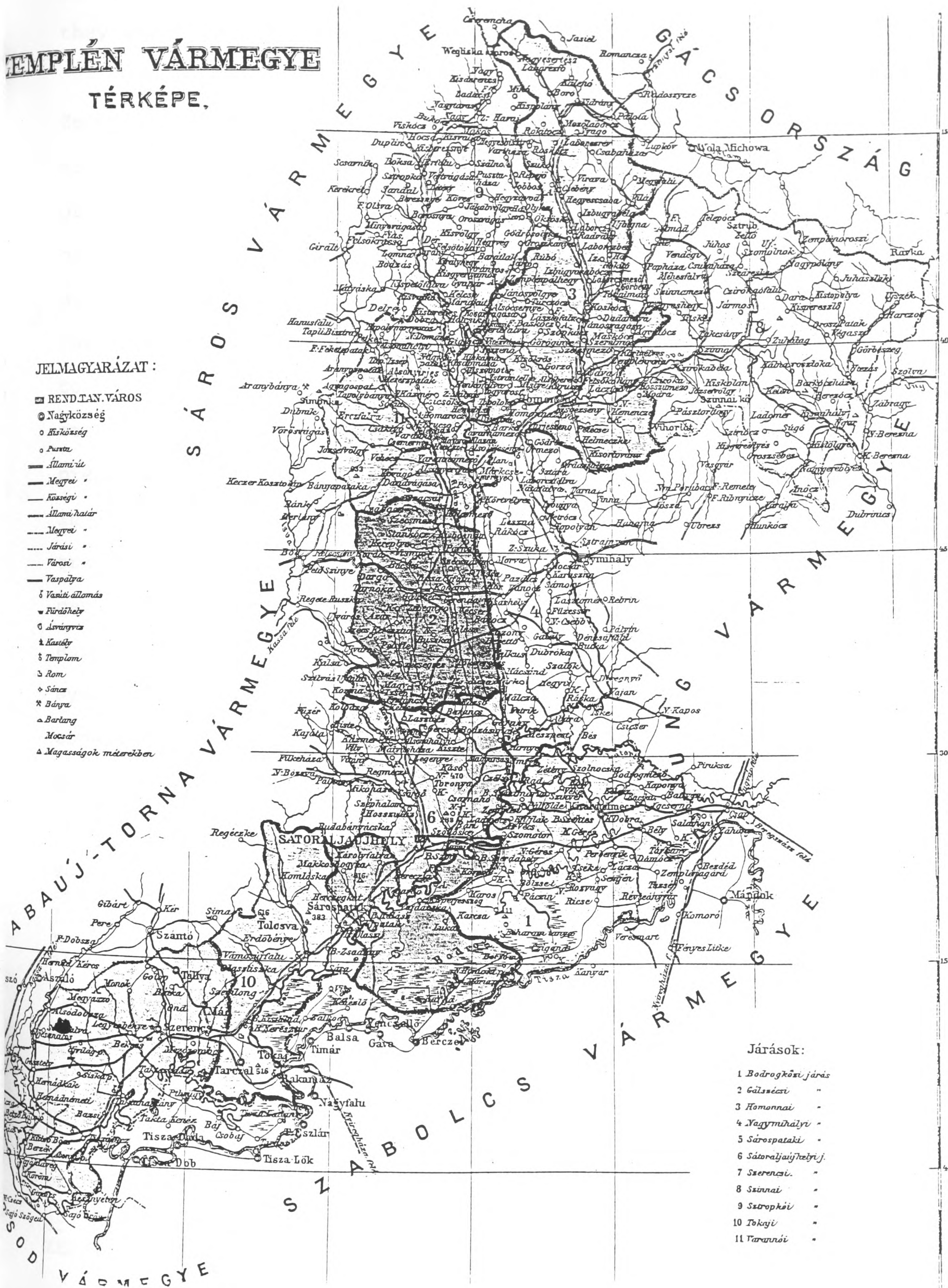
évben tartott nemzeti zsinat végzései (Kecskemét, 1875) nos.88 and 92.

⁵ G.Rákosi, 'Erdély református egyházközségi élet a xvii. században' in MPEA 1 (1902), pp.31-49; 'Debrecen egyházmegye-igazgatási iratok', and 'Nagykárolyi (Középszolnok) egyházmegye iratai' for local synod records in the Tiszántul ref. egyházkerület levéltára (Debrecen), I.31b and I.35a.1.

TEPLÉN VÁRMEGYE **TÉRKÉPE.**

JELMAGYARÁZAT:

- RENDTAN. VÁROS
- Nagyközség
- Község
- Puszta
- Állami út
- Megyei
- Kistérségi
- Állami határ
- Megyei
- Járási
- Városi
- Vasút
- δ Vasúti állomás
- ▼ Fürdőhely
- Lászlóváros
- ▲ Káptalan
- δ Templom
- △ Rom
- ◆ Sánc
- * Bányá
- ▲ Bányász
- ▲ Mocsár
- ▲ Magasságok méterekben



Járások:

- 1 Bodrogi járás
- 2 Gálcséi
- 3 Homonnai
- 4 Nagyménfői
- 5 Sárospataki
- 6 Satoraljajohelyi
- 7 Szerencsi
- 8 Szinnai
- 9 Sztrópkai
- 10 Tokaji
- 11 Tarnói

they were about to arrive.

The annual required visitation of Reformed congregations by Zemplén's archdeacons, normally accompanied by other senior ministers, was the prime means of investigating general standards of discipline in the regional church. The meticulous recording of the results of Zemplén's visitations by archdeacons István Miskolczi Csulyak from 1629, János Simándi from 1646, and Pál Tarczali from 1653 until 1669, further marked their dedication to the task of supervising local standards, with a conscientiousness which was probably not matched even in other predominantly Reformed areas of northern and eastern Hungary, or in Transylvania.⁶ Nevertheless as far as we can tell, the treatment of disciplinary issues in Zemplén followed a typical pattern of infrequent examinations of each locality and commune, supported by discussions at regular meetings of the Zemplén area synod. The Zemplén archdeacons looked to their synod for support, especially when called upon to intervene in difficult local disputes. The archdeacons frequently had to satisfy competing

⁶ The records for Zemplén county are taken from the SNK vols.16-18. Copies are available in MOL box no.1907; ZEP/1629-1645 and 'Liber Reditus Ecclesiasticum Comitatus Zempleniensis, 1623', and MOL box no.1908; ZEP/1638-1651 and ZEP/1653-1672. Some records from Zemplén are in J.Zoványi, 'Miskolczi Csulyak István zempléni ref. esperes (1629-1645) egyházlátogatási jegyzőkönyvei' in TT 7 (1906), pp.48-102, 266-313 and 368-407; J.Zoványi, 'Miskolczi Csulyak István esperesi naplója és leveleskönyve' in MPEA 10 (1911), pp.26-142; 11 (1927), pp.168-191; 12 (1928), pp.186-219; and 13 (1929), pp.142-148. 'Felső-magyarországi cikkek' of 1595, no.52, and the 'Borsod-Gömör-Kishonti cikkek' of the late sixteenth century no.35, in Kiss, zsinatok végzései, pp.709-722 and 723-733. In 1647 János Simándi made a register of the number of churches in the Zemplén district, with 76 listed parishes served by 64 clergy, whilst Pál Tarczali recorded 65 churches and 9 more 'slav churches' which accepted Reformed visitation in 1653; 'Catalogus Eccles. in dioecesi Zempleniensi et Ministri Anno 1647', in ZEP/1638-1651, pp.127-129 and ZEP/1653-1672, pp.2-7.

claims from ministers, church patrons, and local communities, a difficult balancing act as István Miskolczi Csulyak wrote during a dispute at Szilvásujfalu in 1629; "I am a judge, and I hold one ear to the accuser, and one ear to the defendant, and I have to judge the accusation".⁷

Instructions from the beginning of the seventeenth century on the conduct of visitations in Zemplén required an appraisal of the maintenance of each church building, graveyard, minister's house, and sacramental plate. A check also had to be made on any church land in the parish, and on the income paid to each minister. During the visitation the local congregation was to be gathered together by the archdeacon, and asked about the minister's soundness of doctrine, diligence in teaching, catechising, conduct of the sacraments and marriages, about his care of church property and personal conduct. The minister was then in turn questioned about the congregation's attendance at services, and at communion, and about their general behaviour. Visitation parties were also required to ask questions about the conduct of schoolmasters, and about the punishments being handed down by local justices for different offences.⁸

Demands from the Reformed church to tighten controls on behaviour placed pressure on the capabilities of traditional disciplinary bodies in various localities across the region. This resulted in

⁷ MPEA 10 (1911), pp.33 and 113.

⁸ J.Zoványi, 'A zempléni ref. dioecesis egyházlátogatási kérdőpontjai' in Protestáns Szemle 18 (1906), pp.40-41; a similar set of questions was used in visitations in Udvarhely in Transylvania; J.Pokoly, Az erdélyi református egyház története (Budapest, 1905), (5 vols.) vol.4, pp.159-160.

some areas in reforms to strengthen local institutions, and elsewhere in the setting-up of presbyteries. In the Szekler lands of eastern Transylvania many villages had the right to draw up regulations for the smooth running of their own communities, and to decide how to punish miscreants. This self-governing tradition was built upon by the Reformed church in Berekeresztur in 1602 when the local minister, the Maros archdeacon, the deputy-sheriff of Maros county, and representatives from Berekeresztur and six satellite hamlets, agreed to select a number of churchwardens to restore "good order" in their district;

"Since building a Christian people has been impossible without pious and true teachers of good conduct, the minister shall receive certain of such persons, whose judgement and recognition of knowledge and morality is like that of the clergy. They shall be received at all times by the informed will of the whole parish."

These new regulations imposed hefty fines against anyone found working on the Sabbath, and brought an end to wine-trading in the churchyard. Church-goers were admonished for their past behaviour at services, especially for sitting outside the church, and they were encouraged to hurry inside to hear the minister or else face a day in the stocks. The burden of responsibility for upholding these standards of discipline, and for assisting the practical running of the Berekeresztur church, was placed upon the new churchwardens, and these arrangements apparently proved satisfactory with fourteen wardens along with twenty-one jurymen confirmed in their offices in the presence of Reformed church visitors in 1624.⁹

⁹ J.Kolozsvári, 'Egyházi fegyelemre, rendtartásra vonatkozó határozatok a berekereszturi ref. egyházközségben az 1602 évben' in Református Szemle 1933, pp.469-475, the quotation from the first clause; I.Imreh, A törvényhozó székely falu (Bucharest,

Some small towns in eastern Hungary also formalised traditions of self-government to attempt to provide a more effective local disciplinary regime. At Tecső in 1639 a new book of regulations for appointed village officials opened with a prayer for obedience to God's laws. A justice was to be chosen by the town to ensure good order and to punish those who disturbed it, supported by a council of jurymen. When offenders such as "marriage-breakers, thieves and the devil-possessed" were caught, the jurymen and others were to pursue them to the boundaries of the town. After this chase, offenders were to be placed in the stocks, or pay a fine of one forint to the justice.¹⁰ At Misztótfalu meanwhile, the town council aimed to enhance control over behaviour with the annual selection of a justice to promote order and prevent public disturbances, and to reconcile warring parties in preparation for communion.¹¹

In western Hungary interference by Catholic nobles and fear of the Turks hampered the progress of Reformed visitations. This weakness of Reformed organisation forced congregations in western areas to become more self-reliant in maintaining satisfactory order and discipline. In 1616 the minister at Pápa, János Kanizsai Pálfi, gained local support to follow the Heidelberg

1983), pp.99-120, and for Berekeresztur see pp.279-285.

¹⁰ 'Tecső protocolluma, 1639-1805', in the Debrecen református kollégium nagykönyvtár kéziratára, sign. R111/2769.

¹¹ 'Misztótfalu mezőváros jegyzőkönyve, 1596-1803', in the Debrecen református kollégium nagykönyvtár kéziratára, sign. R.3289, pp.100-101 for a 1640 reconciliation case. In 1637 the chief constable and his deputy were joined by eleven jurymen on the Lower Misztótfalu council, and this body stoutly defended its local authority, rejecting outside interference from Szatmár county deputy sheriffs in the 1660s, pp.84-5.

model of presbyterial church government. The appointed presbyters at Pápa were responsible for order and discipline in the town, as well as for ensuring the efficient running of church services and the sacraments.¹² In 1630, one year after Kanizsai was appointed superintendent of the western Danubian church, a synod held at Pápa adopted presbyterial government as the model for all congregations in the region. After being thrown out of Pápa and Németújvár in 1633 by Catholic nobles, Kanizsai moved on to Kiskomárom and began a 'senatus ecclesiasticus' there in 1634, with eleven presbyters selected to look after moral discipline and maintain concord in the town.¹³ The continuing work of presbyters at Kiskomárom, and of active presbyteries throughout western Hungary, was confirmed in 1650 by Blasius Nagy-Maréczy, then minister at Kiskomárom. He described how presbyters were examined during visitations about the behaviour of congregations. According to Nagy-Maréczy, presbyters at Körmend and Pápa were largely drawn from the nobility and middle ranks of townsmen, whilst at Kiskomárom he listed the Somogy county deputy-sheriff, the county assessor, "landed nobles" and "honourable tradesmen"

¹² The Pápa presbytery regulations were renewed in 1650; 'Anno 1650 3 Julii Consules Ecclesiastici ad Regimen Ecclae Papensis Constituti' in 'A pápai református egyh. levéltára Liszkay féle besorolás' DREL no.29. E.Thury, A dunántúli református egyházkerület története (Pápa, 1908), pp.179-187; J.Pokoly, 'Az első magyar ref. presbyterium keletkezése és szervezete' in Protestáns Szemle 2 (1890), pp.202-220; E.Tóth, A pápai református egyház története (Pápa, 1941), pp.40-80; J.Makár, Kanizsai Pálfi János élete és munkássága (New Brunswick, 1961).

¹³ The presbyters' role at Kiskomárom was compared to those elders who held up Moses' arms as the Israelites fought the Amalekites. In 1640 there were fourteen presbyters, and in 1645 there were sixteen, and in 1650 the death of some presbyters led to the co-option of others; 'A kiskomáromi ref. egyházközség legrégebbi anyakönyve 1624-1732', DREL no.131.

amongst twenty-four presbyters. In western Hungary Nagy-Maréczy claimed that "in every town and in every village there are presbyters who, in a proper and godly manner, watch over the 'outer orders' and the minister".¹⁴

As we have already seen support for the introduction of presbyteries in conjunction with, or even replacing, the clergy hierarchy also came from some Reformed ministers in eastern Hungary and Transylvania. Synods held in Zemplén during the early 1650s supported the development of presbyteries alongside existing church structures, suggesting that councils and justices be incorporated to begin local presbyteries. In May 1651 the Zemplén synod concluded that presbyteries were essential towards achieving stricter church discipline, and that the current disciplinary regime was partly excessive and partly defective.¹⁵ Presbyteries, promoted by prominent church patrons such as Zsuzsanna Lórántffy and Zsigmond Rákóczi, and by senior ministers such as Pál Medgyesi, were indeed set up from the 1650s at Sárospatak, Fogaras, Ung, Nagyvárad, Kecskemét and in the Küküllő region of central Transylvania.¹⁶

¹⁴ S.Szilágyi, 'Levelek és okiratok II.Rákóczy György fejedelem diplomáciai összeköttetései történetéhez' in TT 1889, pp.350-352.

¹⁵ A letter from Medgyesi to Lórántffy in S.Szilágyi, 'Medgyesi Pál levelei' in EPK 1876, pp.320-322; Zemplén synod records in ZEP/1638-1651, pp.189-191, 203 and 211; MPEA 10 (1911), pp.22-4.

¹⁶ J.Pokoly, 'A fogarasi egyházközség levéltárából' in MPEA 8 (1909), pp.106-107, 120-125 and 129-130; I.Juhász, 'Az erdélyi egyházak 17. századi együttélésének kérdései a fogarasi vártartományban' in Ráday gyűjteménye évkönyve 4-5 (1984/5), pp.9-27; G.Kúr, A komáromi református egyházmegye (Pozsony, 1993), pp.158-169. L.Fördös, 'A kecskeméti reform. egyház jegyzőkönyvéből' in MPEF 2 (1880), pp.35-37; G.Illyés, 'Az Apafiak szerepe a küküllői református egyházmegye történetében'

The advocacy by Hungarian ministers in the early seventeenth century of presbyterial government was led by a conviction that lay presbyters offered the prospect of greater control over the behaviour of congregations than even the most conscientious archdeacon on visitation could ever exercise, and also by the assertion that presbyterial government formed an inescapable part of a properly organised Reformed church. Pál Medgyesi proposed that presbyters would aid discipline by bolstering ministers' determination to punish wrong-doing, and argued that the want of presbyteries was the cause of good order being such a "rare bird" in Hungary.¹⁷ Medgyesi, whilst minister at Váralja in eastern Hungary, appalled his congregation by preaching against a "godless" market held outside the church immediately after each Sunday service, and which led to "terrible carousing, shrieking, horrible blasphemies, and fights". Medgyesi had the market moved to Saturdays, but in the face of local discontent and noble connivance, the market started again on Sundays, and Medgyesi left Váralja in disgust.¹⁸ Whilst supporters of presbyteries alleged that they wanted tighter discipline, their opponents

in Református Szemle 1930, pp.468-472 and 482-486; G.Komjáthy, Adalékok az ungvári ev. ref. egyház történetéhez (Ungvár, 1906), p.12.

¹⁷ Medgyesi described in 1653 how presbyters would have to learn the skills of disciplining a congregation in Rövid tanítás a presbyteriumról avagy egyházi tanácsról (ed.) G.Incze, (Budapest, 1934); also Medgyesi, Dialogus Politico-Ecclesiasticus (Bártfa, 1650) RMK 1/831, pp.73, 86, 90-91, 93, 99, 177 and 198. Medgyesi complained of blasphemous swearing, drunkenness, breaking of Sabbath rules, unclean lives and theft in Igaz magyar nép negyedik jajja s-siralma (Sárospatak, 1657) RMK 1/922, pp.17-18.

¹⁸ Medgyesi also battled against Whitsun Queen celebrations at Váralja; Szilágyi, EPK 1876, pp.306-309, a letter to Zsigmond Rákóczi in Aug. 1649.

claimed the resulting disruption of traditional church authority was a cover for immorality. In February 1654 a complaint was made to II.György Rákóczi that the Sárospatak presbytery had excommunicated some nobles, publicly scoffed at their immoral lives, and denounced noble marriages which it disapproved of. The presbytery at Sárospatak was also accused of grasping power from local lay magistrates, and ruling "on the necks of the congregation", "prohibiting every Christian conversation, youthful pleasure, and honourable enjoyment", with "pharisaical holiness".¹⁹

The institutions of discipline in Calvinist churches across Europe could call on a distinctive range of punishments to deter wrong-doing. Presbyteries had powers to rebuke those who came before them, and demand an expression of guilt and sorrow from offenders. Worse still was the ordeal of public penance and confession before the whole congregation, usually involving a reserved seat in the church, and requiring special clothes to be worn. Unrepentant sinners could be locked up, fined, made subject to public mockery, or even banished from a town or parish. The ultimate spiritual weapon of Reformed churches remained excommunication, and effectively complete social exclusion. Once someone was excommunicated the only route back into the community was to undergo public repentance in church, and receive a rebuke

¹⁹ Anonymous tract of February 1654 from Sárospatak in Szilágyi, *TT* 1889, xxxvii, pp.475-9. In 1652 new presbyters were selected at Sárospatak, and were led by Pál Medgyesi in a discussion of a recent "apocalyptic star"; 'Protocollum Judicis Primarii et Senatus Oppidi Sáros Nagy Patak', in 'Tiszáninneni egyházkerületi levéltár Sárospatak város jegyzőkönyvei', vol.3, pp.427 and 435.

from the minister.²⁰ In Hungary and Transylvania the Reformed church had a range of spiritual weapons at its disposal in the battle against sin, as well as influence over the policies of the civil authorities towards particular crimes. The punishment of offenders varied widely across the region, but the central aim of Reformed ministers during this period was to use publicity to shame the weak into repentance, and to encourage a spiritual response to any accusation of wrong-doing.

The most potent weapon in the disciplinary arsenal of the Reformed church in Hungary and Transylvania was excommunication, reserved for those who refused to take communion according to the *Herczegszóllós* canons of 1576, and for those who did not want to hear the word of God according to the *Debrecen* articles of 1567; "do not give what is holy to dogs". After warnings from a minister, unreformed thieves, adulterers, blasphemers, false oath-makers and drunkards were also deemed worthy of excommunication from their Christian communities. The rewritten Transylvanian canons of 1649 concluded that temporary exclusion from the church should be imposed if reprimands from a minister were having no effect on open sinners. Those who continued with their actions despite such warnings could then be excommunicated, with the approval of the local synod, and the minister damning the offender and abandoning him to the power of satan.

²⁰ R.A.Mentzer, 'Disciplina Nervus Ecclesiae: The Calvinist Reform of Morals at Nîmes' in The Sixteenth Century Journal 18 (1987), pp.89-115; Monter, *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 38 (1976), pp.467-484; G.Parker, 'The 'Kirk By Law Established' and the Origins of 'The Taming of Scotland': St Andrews 1559-1600' in L.Leneman(ed.), Perspectives in Scottish Social History: Essays in honour of Rosalind Mitchison (Aberdeen, 1988), pp.1-33.



A Whore in she does Pennance before y Congreg^{on} in y Chur^{ch}.

Sinners could however be re-accepted into the church community after exclusion, if they showed a willingness to repent. The 1561 Debrecen confession stressed that;

"the truly repentant are not to be left outside the church in misery for long, in the land of satan, but when they have mended their ways, we shall call them back".²¹

Repentance required an admission of guilt, and a renunciation of the sin which had been committed. This was marked publicly in church services by the penitent sitting in a stool of repentance or standing at the church door, and by wearing dark clothing, or covering his or her head.²² Ministers in the upper Danubian region were first required to preach against a sin, and then to expel any repeated sinners from the congregation. Return to the church required kneeling penitence in "mourning clothes", before absolution could be granted. The penitent was then kept out of church for some more weeks, before being ceremonially received back into the congregation with a further public confession of the sin, and another rebuke by the minister. The Reformed church in Hungary and Transylvania also reserved the right to refuse a Christian burial to those who did not gain re-admittance into the church, and who were therefore considered to have died in sin. If repentance was however seen to be genuine, and re-admission

²¹ Kiss, zsinatok végzései, pp.241, 584-585 and 686; Kiss, Egyházi kánonok, 1649 canons, no.44.

²² Drawings from the early eighteenth century; 'The true and exact Dresses and Fashions of all the Nations in Transylvania', British Library, Manuscript Collections, Add. MSS. 5256, especially nos.15, 19, 23 and 66 in J.Jankovics, G.Galavics and A.R.Várkonyi(eds.), Régi erdélyi viseletek (Budapest, 1990). 'Borsod-Gömör-Kishonti cikkek' in Kiss, zsinatok végzései, no.27, pp.723-733; J.Zoványi, 'Egyházi fegyelem és szeretetmunkásság a régi magyar protestánsokkal' in Szeretetszövetség 1935, no.1-2, pp.2-3.

allowed, then the civil authorities were frequently not called upon to punish the original offence.²³

Records from Zemplén show that the region's archdeacons attempted to establish public shaming as the central element of correction. There were however frequent occasions on which the standards of punishment and public humiliation which the visitors were encouraging the ministry to apply, were balked at by parishioners, with many trying to evade making public repentance for their sins in church. Sometimes not only ordinary church members refused to co-operate, so too did local law enforcers as the norms of community justice were disrupted by the more exacting demands of the Reformed church. The minister in the Zemplén village of Kápolna reported in 1639 that the justice and village council were not punishing swearing or fornication at all, and that theft only resulted in a fine of wine or other alcoholic drink to be donated by an offender for the rest of the village to enjoy.²⁴ However those who resisted the church invited the application of more severe sanctions against them. A justice in Zétény was required by his minister to repent publicly, but refused to do so, and István Miskolczi Csulyak advised the local minister that if the justice died without making public confession of his faults, then he should not be

²³ János Samarjai, Agenda az Helvetiai vallason levő ecclesiaknak ceremoniájakról (Lőcse, 1636) RMK 1/662, and analysed in G.Kathona, Samarjai János gyakorlati theológiája (Debrecen, 1939); 'Borsod-Gömör-Kishonti cikkek' in Kiss, sinatok végzése, no.28, pp.723-733. Also the Farkasd synod of the Western Danubian church in 1654 in the 'Egyházkerületi egyzökönyvek mutatója', DREL no.7.

²⁴ Kázmér in 1632 and Kápolna in 1639, TT 7 (1906), pp.274 and 371. Grumbling was also reported at Szőlőske in 1629, TT 7 (1906), pp.58-59.

given an honourable funeral, and was not to be buried in the church graveyard. Resistance was also offered to church discipliners by a certain Ambrus Vajda, who refused to go to church, saying that even if they killed him he did not want to go. The visitors instructed his local council that the church bell should not be rung at his death, and that he was not to be buried in the graveyard, the hallmarks of a so-called "ass's funeral".²⁵ At Izsép in 1648, János Simándi was faced with a man who refused to follow the public penance set for him, and Simándi decided that he therefore could not be absolved from his sins, and must be excommunicated until he reformed his attitudes. At Cigánd in 1656 meanwhile, Pál Tarczali advised the local minister that if an old woman who refused to take communion did not change her ways then she was to be excommunicated, whilst at Rozvány the minister was instructed that excommunication could fall on any unregenerate "abominable blasphemers", as he felt it was deserved.²⁶

²⁵ Hotyka in 1639, TT 7 (1906), pp.304 and 312. Also Terebes in 1648 for an "abominable sinner" who never came to church; ZEP/1638-1651, p.148. Miklós Thót in 1639 at Nagygéres was ordered to be buried in the style of an ass: "ha meg kezd halni, zamár módon temetessék el."; TT 7 (1906), p.300. There was a man at Rozvány in 1654 who was still angry at the previous minister, and would not take communion, or again at Zsadany in 1654, ZEP/1653-1672, pp.31-32 and 53-56.

²⁶ March 1648, ZEP/1638-1651; Feb. 1656, ZEP/1653-1672, pp.112-113 and 115.

(ii) A Crusade for Reformed Morality; Swearing,
Drink, Sex and Marriage

Calvinist discipliners across the continent were initially engaged in prosecuting dogmatic and religious offences, but once a better grip on theological orthodoxy had been established, the focus of discipliners progressively switched to moral and behavioural problems. Calvinist discipliners were everywhere occupied with non-attendance at church and communion, fighting and quarrelling, defamation and lying, public nuisance and scandals, drunkenness and associated tavern vices of gambling and gluttony, household and sexual immorality, marriage problems, Sabbath observance, language, dress, magic, witchcraft and the perceived effects of possession by the devil. Regional variations have however emerged in the particular sins which were concentrated on in different Reformed communities. At Emden in East Friesland, drunkenness was seen to be a particular problem, whilst at Groningen drunkenness hardly ever featured in the cases brought against parishioners. In Geneva meanwhile scandalous behaviour and quarrelling both within the family and between neighbours was the major preoccupation of the consistory. At times in France more people were brought before the consistory for dancing than for sexual immorality, whilst in the Palatinate hearing and blasphemy gained unusual prominence. At St. Andrews in Scotland meanwhile almost two thirds of cases in the late sixteenth century dealt with fornication and adultery, and in Episcopal England the church courts were so dominated by

sexual offences that they came to be known as the 'bawdy courts'.²⁷

In the early seventeenth century ministers of the Reformed church in Hungary and Transylvania embarked upon a campaign to set tighter limits on acceptable public behaviour and morality, and to enforce punishments against those who offended against the standards they required to be maintained. A pattern of the offences which were emphasised by the Hungarian church during this period emerges from Zemplén visitation records, backed up by supporting evidence from other areas such as the town of Kiskomárom and the activities of its newly founded presbytery. In the remainder of this chapter I shall examine the exercise of discipline in these areas as examples of a Reformed church programme aiming particularly to impose controls on blasphemous swearing, drinking, arguments and fighting, and the immorality connected with sex and marriage.

The reports of ministers to the archdeacons and visitation parties on general standards of behaviour in Zemplén ranged enormously. István Miskolczi Csulyak became archdeacon in 1629, and on 15 September at five in the morning he visited Agárd, where the minister was able to report no difficulties with his congregation, but by nine the same morning Miskolczi had moved on to the neighbouring village of Perbenyik, where he found

²⁷ H.Schilling, Civic Calvinism in Northwestern Germany and the Netherlands (Kirkville[MI], 1991), pp.44 and 58; Monter, Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance 38 (1976), pp.467-484; Lentzer, The Sixteenth Century Journal 18 (1987), pp.89-115; .Po-Chia Hsia, Social Discipline in the Reformation. Central Europe 1550-1750 (London, 1989), p.153; Parker, 'The Kirk By Law established' in Leneman, Perspectives in Scottish Social History, p.1-33; M.Ingram, Church Courts, Sex and Marriage, 1570-1640 (Cambridge, 1987).

uncontrolled swearing and fighting, and concluded that all sense of law had collapsed there, with no effort either to stop offences being committed, or to punish them.²⁸ The visitations completed by Miskolczi in 1629 indeed revealed widespread abuses in the disciplining of offenders, and a lack of standardised punishment, or no punishment at all, for many sins targeted by Reformed ministers. Miskolczi therefore recommended that local village councils should offer more assistance to ministers by becoming involved in the enforcement of spiritual discipline. Miskolczi suggested that local councils should be able to judge if someone was required to repent for having committed a sin, and also relieve the burden on the clergy by deciding on the circumstances for repentance, such as how many times penitents should appear in church, and whether they should stand hooded or not.²⁹

In some congregations the archdeacon and other visitors were delighted by the fearless application of ministers to the task of disciplining, such as at Olaszi in 1629 where the minister was reported to burden offending sinners with harsh rebukes, without regard for their social status.³⁰ Indeed it became more common by the 1650s for reports from parishes in Zemplén to contain praise from both the congregation about the minister, and from the minister about his people. In the light of the outspoken reports of previous years, this change can hardly be attributed to reticence on the part of the Zemplén Reformed community to

²⁸ TT 7 (1906), pp.94-95.

²⁹ TT 7 (1906), pp.48-49.

³⁰ TT 7 (1906), p.54.

criticise one another. Visitations by Pál Tarczali in 1655 and 1656 seem to have gone particularly well, with comparatively few scandals reported, and congregations even complimented on their diligent attendance at church services.³¹ The progress signalled by these 1650s visitations in the relatively settled and Reformed dominated Zemplén church district, was not however matched elsewhere. In the neighbouring Ung region, visitations in the 1650s to some of the more remote areas still revealed hair-raising situations. In one village the archdeacon discovered the church, "quite destroyed, with Ruthene flags and idols piled against it". The parochial house was also in a bad state, and thieves had stolen cattle from the minister. The villagers had burned the school, and apparently told the visitors that they had "no problems that needed bringing a priest", leaving the archdeacon to write that they honoured a dog more than a spiritual teacher.³²

Whilst the majority of discipline cases reported by the Zemplén clergy to their superiors involved descriptions of immoral behaviour, there were also some instances of religious offences. At Hotyka in 1629 András Batka, who had been married by a Catholic priest, was charged with refusing to listen to church services from inside the church-building, a case which was put by the visitors to the Zemplén synod for further

³¹ Reports from Szécs, Lasztócz, Velete, Radvány, Kajata and Füzér in 1655, and from Karcza, Kövesd, Szerdahely and Luka in 1656, ZEP/1653-1672, pp.75-81 and 126-130.

³² 'Liber Ecclae seu Matricula dioecese Ungensis', in 'Tiszáninnen ref. egyházkerület; Ungi egyházmegye egyházlátogatási jegyzőkönyve, 1618-1774', MOL box no.1912, for the village of Budzka Dluhá[sic]; K.Haraszty(ed.), Az ungi református egyházmegye (Nagykapos, 1931), pp.42-43.

consideration. At Visnyó a piper called István Bárány was punished for crouching down at the end of saying the Lord's Prayer, whilst at Tolcsva in 1643 Miskolczi recorded that a certain György Bónis had baptised a child and died immediately afterwards. There were also frequent complaints about the state in which churches were kept, with some described as smelly or with meat stored in them. At Szécskeresztur in 1629 Miskolczi even found pieces of an altar remaining in place, and ordered them to be removed immediately.³³

Individuals were often reprimanded for non-attendance at church services or at communion, and there were general accusations of poor attendance by congregations. For example the minister at Bénye in 1635 noted that there were sometimes only three present for some services, and that people did not attend church on the slightest pretext. In the 1650s congregations were still often reprimanded for not attending week-day services and catechising classes, and even at Sárospatak the ministers complained of absenteeism from the Sunday evening service in 1660.³⁴ Ministers in Zemplén also raised objections to the behaviour of their congregations during church services. At Ricse

³³ At Polyánka in 1629 for example the church was described as disgustingly smelly, with pork fat hanging from the beams and rafters, TT 7 (1906), p.75. At Vámosujfalu there were mice in wheat stored in the church making it smelly, and pork fat on the church benches in Ujlak in 1629, TT 7 (1906), pp.80 and 270.

³⁴ Bénye in 1635, TT 7 (1906), pp.85 and 285. For general accusations of poor attendance especially during week-day services see Ujhely in 1629, TT 7 (1906), p.57; and for the comment that few of the congregation actually came to communion services, Szőlőske and Imreg in 1629, TT 7 (1906), pp.58 and 82. The laziness of nobles was also highlighted at Izsép in 1629, and at Tolcsva in 1641, TT 7 (1906), p.78 and p.376; Zsadány in 1650, Rozvagy in 1656, and Sárospatak in 1660, ZEP/1638-1651, p.187, and ZEP/1653-1672, p.115 and p.307.

in 1639, the minister complained that there was always shouting or noise near the church during prayers, and he wanted the congregation to depart quietly after services, not to stand around "contending with one another".³⁵

Throughout the course of visitations in Zemplén in the early seventeenth century, the one behavioural issue which stood out in prominence was a campaign conducted by the Reformed clergy against foul language, cursing and blasphemous swearing. Traditions of using the name of God and His power to swear by, as well as oaths invoking the devil, were viewed with the utmost seriousness by Reformed visitors. Reference was constantly made by ministers to the prevalence of blaspheming in "sayings about the spirit", and "sayings about baptism", and to generally foul and sexually explicit language. Women were noticeably common as those reported using the spirit of God, or their own spirit and baptised status in oaths and in blasphemous curses. In Kisazar in 1648, the minister accused his congregation of "devilish and abominable blasphemies", and a list of names which the son of János Horvát had used at Szilvásujfalu in 1651 included, "son of the devil, son of the devil's wife, son of a devil-given whore, and son of a thieving whore".³⁶ The problem of swearing was not confined to Zemplén, and the Küküllő area synod of Transylvania explained in 1619 that through obscene talk people were allowing

³⁵ TT 7 (1906), pp.56, 71, 301 and 402.

³⁶ An example of "lélek mondás" and "keresztelte[sic] mondás" at Gálszécs in June 1641, TT 7 (1906), p.387. Women were charged with blaspheming for example at Saava in 1648, ZEP/1638-1651, pp.100-101, 147 and 219.

their mouths to become instruments of the devil, especially in "spirit sayings" and oaths about being possessed by the devil. Pál Medgyesi was also concerned about oaths and curses, and proscribed sayings which showed a lack of honour for God's name, such as "God preserve you", "God help you", and oaths such as "devil spirited", and "God overcome you".³⁷

It proved very difficult for the Reformed clergy to gain general acceptance in Zemplén for the higher standards of language which they wished to impose. When the minister at Viss tried to reprimand a girl guilty of a blasphemous curse, he was castigated for doing so by the girl's mother. At Szentes in 1629, when the sexually explicit swearing of the wife of Miklós Thót was overheard, she was reported to the minister. The minister then publicly rebuked her in church, but both the offender and the informant were so angered with the minister that they refused thereafter to come to church.³⁸ The archdeacons in Zemplén nevertheless insisted that the punishment of swearing and

³⁷ G. Illyés, 'Az 1619. évi küküllővári zsinat felterjesztése Bethlen Gábor fejedelemhez' in Református Szemle 1934, pp. 501-505. Similar blasphemies and curses listed by a Dunamellék synod of 1653, 'Kerületi jegyzőkönyvek, 1629-1731 (Simandianum Protocollum)', MOL box no. 1890, pp. 20-21; Pál Medgyesi, Igaz magyar nép negyedik jajja s-siralma (Sárospatak, 1657) RMK 1/922, pp. 17-18. At Bári in 1648 for example, those who were actually seen to have resorted to the devil were excluded from the congregation, ZEP/1638-1651, pp. 150-151. The presentment of witchcraft at trial increased during the seventeenth century in Hungary. A. Komáromy, Magyarországi boszorkányperek oklevéltára (Budapest, 1910); F. Schram (ed.) Magyarországi boszorkányperek 1529-1786 (Budapest, 1982); G. Klaniczay, 'Hungary: The accusations and the Universe of Popular Magic' in B. Ankarloo and G. Henningsen (eds.), Early Modern European Witchcraft (Oxford, 1990), pp. 219-257; L. Makkai, 'Puritánok és boszorkányok Debrecenben' in A Hajdú-Bihar Megyei Levéltár Évkönyve 8 (1981), pp. 113-130.

³⁸ TT 7 (1906), pp. 60 and 89.

blaspheming must be made more rigorous, and demanded that such offences be taken more seriously by local civil authorities. At Horvát in 1629 Miskolczi found that "spirit blaspheming" was not being punished at all, whilst at Szőlőske, blasphemous swearing was punished by offenders having their hands placed in the stocks. The minister at Toronya reported that whilst the local custom was for swearing to be punished by a place in the stocks;

"when they want to lightly punish somebody, they gather together and make him pay for drink, and if there is little to drink, they upbraid the offender, and then drink till they are drunk".

Miskolczi thought that all these sanctions were insufficient, and ordered that one blasphemous oath should be punished by the offender's neck being placed in the stocks for the duration of a sermon, for two offences the guilty party should remain in the stocks until the evening, and on the third occasion blasphemers should be beaten as well. Indeed stricter punishments were beginning to be enforced, and at Kazsu in 1639 blasphemers stood in the stocks and were publicly rebuked by their minister, whilst at Kozma in 1641 blasphemy led to the offender's head being put in the stocks and a beating.³⁹

The punishment of offences in Zemplén often varied with the social status of the transgressor, with for example the minister at Zalkod reporting that those living with the local noble patron went unpunished despite being guilty of swearing. At Sárospatak, it was reported that punishment for swearing was enforced in the

³⁹ TT 7 (1906), pp.59, 269, 273, 285 and 384. Blasphemy was weakly punished at Olaszi in 1629, Pelete in 1632, Zsadány in 1633, Ujlak, Jesztreb and Szőlőske in 1636, Rozvágy, Imreg and Redmecz in 1639, TT 7 (1906), pp.51, 53-4, 277, 279, 287-8, 290, 300, 309 and 370. Miskolczi found that cursing was still not punished at all at Szerdahely and Kápolna in 1639, TT 7 (1906), pp.305 and 371.

town except amongst those who lived at the Rákóczi court, and amongst the town's Heyduck soldiers. Meanwhile at Szilvásujfalu in 1639 a distinction was made between ordinary people, who were put in the stocks and beaten for swearing, whilst jurymen could pay off punishment by a fine of wine to be provided for the community.⁴⁰ In November 1638, Miskolczi commented on the punishment handed out to blasphemers at Olaszi, that although offenders were sometimes placed by their hands in the stocks, members of the local council were only punished by providing drink of a forint's value.⁴¹ In 1641 Miskolczi attempted to change this customary punishment, and at Vitány and Kajata he recommended that the punishment for theft, blasphemous swearing and other roguery of a one forint fine should not be drunk in wine, but instead the money be set aside for the common use of the village.⁴²

This picture of the mixed enforcement of punishments for swearing and other offences in Zemplén, and only partial acceptance by local elites of the punitive requirements of the Reformed church continued into the 1640s and 1650s. At Pelejte in June 1641, the minister and local nobility came to an agreement to outlaw swearing and oath-making. Any who offended would have their necks placed in the stocks, and if they made any difficulty then they would also have to pay one forint to be used by the village. However in two neighbouring villages, Izsép and

⁴⁰ TT 7 (1906), pp.76, 82, 97, 99 and 372.

⁴¹ TT 7 (1906), p.296. Miskolczi rebuked them by quoting Hosea 4:8, "They feed on the sins of my people, and relish their wickedness".

⁴² TT 7 (1906), p.383.

Lasztócz, swearing was still not even recognised as a sin or a crime, and went completely unpunished.⁴³ Pál Tarczali, Zemplén's archdeacon in the 1650s, continued to be troubled by reports of blasphemous curses and oaths, and their lax punishment. Accusations were even made against ministers for swearing, with both the minister and his wife at Zsadány accused by their congregation of cursing in 1654, as was the minister at Lasztócz in 1655.⁴⁴ Overall however there was some success in Zemplén in establishing a pattern, however incomplete, of recognising blasphemous and filthy language as important sins, and in the enforcement of more consistent and severe penalties against transgressors. Similarly defamation also came to be viewed with greater seriousness, particularly when directed against ministers. Local justices were reminded by the Zemplén archdeacons of the requirement on them to punish those who verbally abused a minister when such cases came to their attention, such as at Olaszi in May 1629, where Miskolczi learnt that the wife of István Szász called the minister a "hangman". In a 1651 case, a justice stood accused of describing the minister as a "priest for pigs", and "a son of a whore", whilst at Kisfalud in 1654, János Nagy was accused of telling the minister that he had given himself to the devil.⁴⁵

⁴³ TT 7 (1906), pp.388, 396 and 406.

⁴⁴ ZEP/1638-1651, p.219, at Szilvásujfalu in 1651, and at Lasztócz, Radvány, Kápolna and Erdőbénye in 1655; ZEP/1653-1672, pp.42, 77, 79, 81 and 111. Also see Felsőredmecz in 1648, and Pelejte in 1650, ZEP/1638-1651, pp.145 and 208.

⁴⁵ TT 7 (1906), p.54, 87 and 311; ZEP/1638-1651, p.215, and ZEP/1653-1672, p.39. Incidences of the kind of local quarrels and squabbles that led to defamation and sexual slander also appear. In Bacska in 1639, women who scolded their husbands as rogues and

Drink and drunkenness were also highlighted by the Reformed clergy as grave problems in Zemplén's parishes during the early seventeenth century. Reformed ministers acted to enforce rigorous standards upon local patterns of customary and traditional drinking at taverns. At Olaszi in 1650, the minister complained about the behaviour of Gergely Bolyko who was known to frequent the local pub on Sunday afternoons. The minister was particularly annoyed since he thought Bolyko, as a juryman, should have been setting an example for others to follow.⁴⁶ In most villages only temporary taverns were set up at annual festivals, but Reformed visitors sought to eradicate even these. At Lasztócz the local minister complained that drinking on the second day of major religious festivals meant that parishioners were not attending the evening church services on those days. At Terebes however there was popular resistance to the church's attack on holiday taverns, with resentment expressed against a local minister who had preached against traditional drinking customs.⁴⁷

Resistance to the demands of the Zemplén archdeacon and local ministers to limit holiday drinking continued into the 1630s, and at Ujváros in 1632 the minister complained to the

thieves went unpunished, TT 7 (1906), p.303.

⁴⁶ ZEP/1638-1651, p.187.

⁴⁷ Miskolczi found there had been a tavern at Vily at Easter, and on the second day of Whitsun in Izsép in 1629. Christmas and Easter drinking was reported against the youth of Hotyka, and a tavern set up at Whitsun against the village of Toronya in 1629; TT 7 (1906), pp.56, 59, 63-5, 71 and 78-9. István Geleji Katona, Váltság Titka (Nagyvárad, 1647) vol.2, RMK 1/799, p.414, complained about Whit festival kings, and masked carnivals at Whitsun. T.Dömötör, Naptári ünnepek- népi színjátás (Budapest, 1964).

archdeacon that there had been a festival tavern with beer-drinking, dancing and whistling. At Szécs, servants of a local noble continued to organise holiday taverns, and the minister claimed that the local justice had been prevented from punishing anyone for it, whilst at Nagyazar in 1635 there had been fighting at Christmas in the tavern, and a certain Jancsi Kotnyeles had been asked to demonstrate his reputed magical skills.⁴⁸ The Reformed clergy also attacked traditional carnival celebrations and the immorality associated with them during this period. At Ujlak and Csarnahó in 1629, celebrations during carnivals were forbidden by visitation parties, especially involving the wearing of masks. At Bénye however in 1655, local youths held a carnival "with great scandal", whilst at Kövesd locals were finally persuaded by their minister in the 1650s to abandon their custom of building a St. John's fire in the middle of the village.⁴⁹

The painstaking application of visitation rights by Zemplén's archdeacons during this period brought standards of public morality under greater scrutiny, and encouraged new rigour in the public shaming and punishment of sins of blasphemous cursing and foul language, drunkenness and festival immorality. Close attention was also paid by visiting senior clergy to sexual immorality, the unmarried, and to problems concerning marriage. One major source of concern in the protection of morality in

⁴⁸ There was still a tavern at Radvány in 1641, and dancing was noted after festival church services at Ujlak in 1636, TT 7 (1906), pp.275-277, 282 and 287. The pub at Kajata was causing problems in 1648, ZEP/1638-1651, p.145.

⁴⁹ TT 7 (1906), pp.81, 83 and 87; ZEP/1653-1672, p.111.

villages was the custom for women to gather together in a spinning-room during the winter. Zemplén's archdeacons encouraged ministers to stop this practice altogether, or at least to have it controlled, since it was "nothing other than a cover for roguery".⁵⁰ At Szentes in 1629, Miskolczi warned the congregation that "the spinning-room is forbidden amongst Christians. It gives opportunities for wrong-doing". However at Zétény in 1639, he conceded that if the locals were determined to continue to spin together, then it should at least take place in an honourable home, and that men should not be admitted under any circumstances.⁵¹

The Zemplén visitation records also show a consistent drive to create a harsher regime of discipline against fornication and other sexual sins. The civil authorities punished fornication, before offenders came to church to offer public repentance for their wrong-doing, and the church wanted their initial punishment to be severe. At Szerdahely in 1629, weak punishment for fornication was criticised, and it was ordered that the hands of sinners ought to be beaten until they cried out in pain. Miskolczi discovered many villages in Zemplén where fornication went largely unpunished, with offenders not even making public repentance in church, wearing the required hood to cover their heads. When youths at Jesztreb who had been found guilty of fornication declared themselves unwilling to undergo public

⁵⁰ Imreg in 1639, TT 7 (1906), p.309.

⁵¹ Szentes, Kajata, Szilvásujfalu, and Szécskeresztur in 1629; Pelete, Nagyrozvágy, Kozma in 1632; Ujlak in 1636 and Zétény in 1639; TT 7 (1906), pp.66, 68, 70, 89, 96, 275, 277, 287 and 304.

repentance, Miskolczi however ordered that if any of them died they were not to receive a proper burial.⁵²

Apart from regular injunctions on desired harsher punishments for fornication and sexual immorality, difficult cases of sexual immorality were also recorded by the Zemplén archdeacons. A case of incest at Ujlak in 1629 led to a punishment of two days in the stocks, followed by public repentance whilst hooded. Miskolczi also recorded a case of sodomy in Erdőbénye in 1632 between two students, only one of whom was imprisoned for a short time. Miskolczi ordered that in future such cases should be dealt with much more severely with longer gaol sentences. At Toronya suspicion of a woman whose house was frequented by local students sparked an immediate investigation, whilst the Sárospatak visitation of 1641 revealed an extraordinary example of bigamy, in which the wife of Tamás Magyar was found to have another husband in Tarczal, whilst Magyar himself had two other wives in neighbouring villages. Cases of divorce and marriage annulment were usually referred to regional synods where requests were normally only granted on account of impotence, adultery, bigamy or abandonment.⁵³ Area

⁵² At Nagygéres, Rad, Battyán, and Szentes in 1629, "Az paráznáknak büntetésében nagyobb disciplinának kell lenni", TT 7 (1906), pp.59, 81, 86-7, 89-90 and 96. At Lásztócz in 1651, a woman accused of fornication did not want to make public repentance, ZEP/1638-1651, p.231.

⁵³ TT 7 (1906), pp.71, 80, 267, 273, 372 and 380. The 1561 Debrecen confession offered divorce only after adultery, abandonment, or the intention to murder a partner. Marriages could be annulled if impotence was proved; Kiss, zsinatok végzései, p.169. For cases of divorce petitions see J.Zoványi, 'A zempléni ref. diocesis zsinatai, 1629-1645' in TT 10 (1909), pp.184-211 and 406-438, especially pp.205, 411, 412, 416 and 426-427.

synods also heard appeals for the official annulment of engagements with many couples disciplined for the secret exchange of tokens as signs of engagement. In 1641 the Zemplén synod held at Sárospatak for example heard a plea from György Békési at Szerdahely to be freed from engagement on the grounds that he had been bound by diabolical possession. The church synod agreed to his request, and required the gifts exchanged between the couple to be returned in front of the minister, and for a public reconciliation to take place between them.⁵⁴

Thefts, quarrelling and violent arguments were also major offences which the Zemplén church wished to be dealt with more severely during this period. Convicted thieves were subject to civil and ecclesiastical punishments, with for example bee thieves at Viss subject to fines, but then also required by the archdeacon to make public repentance of their sins. The Zemplén archdeacons were again active in seeking out abuses of this system, and at Zétény in 1639 Miskolczi noted that there were thieves who had made public repentance three times, yet still continued in their activities. A more satisfactory case was recorded in Zsadány in 1639 where a pig thief, György Kovács, having been punished by the civil authorities had since been living such a godly life that the Zemplén visitors released him from the necessity of public repentance and confession, and from the humiliation of a ministerial rebuke.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Cases of abandonment leading to divorce at the Zemplén synods of 1632 and 1633, ZEP/1629-1645, pp.147-163 and 197-207. The Zemplén synod of 1655, was also largely taken up with matrimonial offences, ZEP/1653-1672, pp.57-69. For cases of abandonment and bigamy in 1640, ZEP/1629-1645, pp.348-351.

⁵⁵ TT 7 (1906), pp.60, 304 and 313.

Local disputes were also investigated by the archdeacons during visitations, ranging from petty quarrels and arguments especially recorded amongst women, to more serious cases involving violence. Cases involving violent deaths, and threats of violence were passed on to the visitors for their deliberation. The unruly and young men also came under scrutiny such as the "violin-playing, drinking cobblers" living in a house in Szőlőske in 1635, or the "women of bad repute" at Nagyrozvály in 1629 whom Miskolczi wanted punished for fear that they would bring sin into the village. Miskolczi also discovered that roguish youths who had been causing trouble at Nagyrozvály had neither been asked to make penance in church, nor had been punished by the civil authorities, since it was seen locally as unsuitable for the sons of prominent village families to endure such humiliating punishment in public.⁵⁶

In the rather different circumstances of the Reformed church at Kiskomárom in western Hungary, the minister was supported by a presbytery in attacking major areas of public immorality, and in ensuring that wrong-doers were severely punished. The first meeting of the Kiskomárom presbytery was held in the church building in August 1634, and was also attended by the deputy commander of the town's garrison. The presbyters were henceforth normally consulted in disciplinary matters although the minister, János Kanizsai Pálfi, did sometimes continue to act alone. The

⁵⁶ Nagyrozvály, Toronya and Velete in 1629, TT 7 (1906), pp.63 and 96. Murderers and fornicators in Kisfalud in 1638, and inter-family violence led to a death in 1639 in Karcsa; TT 7 (1906), pp.77, 271, 291, 299 and 369.

presbytery spent much time and effort reconciling disputes and petty arguments between family members and neighbours. In December 1634 an unmarried woman was reprimanded for being short-tempered, and in April 1635 a mother and son were brought before the presbytery, with the presbyters demanding that the son publicly apologise for dishonouring his mother. Meanwhile in August 1635 János Szabó was warned to live peaceably with his wife in future, or face further disciplinary action.⁵⁷

Punishments regularly handed down by the presbytery included demands for repentance in church, and public rebukes of offenders in front of the assembled presbyters. The presbytery for example heard the case in March 1635 of the wife of Gergely Szakos, who had been caught with a young man at night. The presbyters noted that she had been sentenced to death by the Kiskomárom civil authorities, but the presbytery enforced three Sundays of public penance to be followed by a full public confession in place of the civil punishment. The woman was required to stand alone at the outer door of the church, and to wear sober clothing. She was specifically warned that this repentance must be shown to be heart-felt, corresponding to the seriousness of her offence. Similarly a thief was sentenced to be hanged in June 1635, but instead faced three weeks of public penance in church, followed by a public confession of his sins over a further four weeks.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ 'A kiskomáromi ref. egyházközség legrégébbi anyakönyve 1624-1732', DREL no.131, pp.198-208.

⁵⁸ In Oct. 1636 a married woman found with a peasant escaped with only three weeks of public penance, but a thief was executed in the same month, and a woman caught by her own husband with another man in Apr. 1635 was put in the stocks and beaten; DREL no.131, pp.198-208.

The significance of public penance as a punishment was also shown by the strenuous efforts some offenders made to avoid it. György Czabai and his wife for example went to the minister's house seeking an opportunity for private repentance for their scandalous behaviour. The problems between Czabai and his wife, despite their efforts to avoid publicity, were however aired at an area synod, and the couple were eventually reconciled on Good Friday in full view of the whole community.⁵⁹

The presbyters and minister of the Kiskomárom church were also active in protecting the purity of their communion. In May 1637 at Whitsun, Lőrinc Busani approached the Lord's Table for communion but because Kanizsai suspected him to be guilty of impropriety with a servant, he was sent away from the table without receiving the sacrament.⁶⁰ In July 1635, the Kiskomárom justice consulted the presbytery on tightening local regulations over behaviour in the town. Kanizsai and his presbyters suggested harsher punishments for blasphemy and better protection of the Sabbath, with a prohibition on the passage of carts into the town on Sundays or on holidays. A strengthening of local laws was also requested by the presbytery to prevent pubs from opening until the end of evening church services, and a ban was suggested on wine-selling after eight in the evening.

⁵⁹ In Kiskomárom the church also could refuse to bury with honour those who died in dishonour, such as Mihály Czizma in Nov. 1635; DREL no.131, pp.198-208; K.Révész, 'A presbyterium legelső nyomai hazai református egyházunkban' in Protestáns Szemle 4 (1892), pp.419-446.

⁶⁰ Indeed the Kiskomárom records reveal that attendance at communion was very patchy indeed. In 1635 a list of twelve communions held by Kanizsai showed 62 at Christmas and "multos" at Easter, but only eleven present in July, and again in August; DREL, no.131, pp.41-44.

The imposition and tightening of discipline over the religious and moral life of the Reformed communities of Hungary and Transylvania during the early seventeenth century is comparable with the strengthening of controls on behaviour in the rest of the Calvinist world. The Reformed ministers of Hungary seem to have applied the range of spiritual punishments at their disposal with ever greater determination during this period, treating offences more severely and wishing to work in co-operation with the civil authorities to provide stiff punishment for offenders against their moral and behavioural code. Sinning offenders faced exclusion from the church and its sacraments, and the rituals of public shaming which were seen by the church authorities as key elements of punishment. During the early seventeenth century the Reformed clergy in Hungary and Transylvania tried to impose tighter, and identifiably Reformed, standards of social discipline particularly on issues of Sabbath observance, swearing, blasphemous oaths and drunkenness. The mixed success of these efforts was caused by the difficulties of rigorous visitation in some areas, and not inconsiderable popular resistance to the demands of the Reformed clergy. Even in a settled area where Reformed religion was predominant such as Zemplén, progress towards controlling behaviour was patchy despite the heroic efforts of its archdeacons. The ministry and presbyters of Kiskomárom made more solid advances to curb behaviour which was disapproved of, becoming concerned with minor problems of petty disputes. The success of such initiatives only acted to increase the frustration of supporters of presbyteries elsewhere with the slow progress being made towards achieving a

reformation of life in Hungary and Transylvania.

PRINCES, NOBLES AND CLERGY; REFORMED
CHURCH-BUILDING IN HUNGARY AND TRANSYLVANIA

(i) The Reformation of the Clergy; a New Elite

From the latter decades of the sixteenth century the lines of demarcation between Europe's confessions hardened, and intense competition ensued between them in the early seventeenth century. Each church undertook to consolidate its position, with reforms of religion taking place in three parallel although different processes, with the tighter enforcement of regulations on doctrine and discipline in the Calvinist, Lutheran and Catholic traditions. This church-building process ran alongside the centralising tendencies of early modern states, with the power of states essential to the success of efforts to renovate religious life. Churches, through clergy hierarchies and ministers, and states, through princes and nobles, were indeed partners in the exercise of religious and social control over the territories under their supervision.

The distinctive pattern of Calvinist church-building, wedded to an ideology of further reformation to church life, moved from initial support for Calvinist statements of faith to intensive efforts to impose upon Reformed communities high standards of theological orthodoxy and moral discipline. In this chapter I shall examine issues raised by Reformed church-building in Hungary and Transylvania during the early seventeenth century,

in particular surveying the role played by the clergy, and also the leading partnership in the church between Reformed ministers, noble patrons and Transylvania's princes. The Reformed clergy wanted to further the reformation of religion that had established Calvinism as the public faith of the Transylvanian state, by attaching princes and nobles to the cause of imposing confessional discipline in eastern Hungary and Transylvania, and gaining the commitment of the lay authorities to high standards of personal and public morality.

I shall begin by looking at the re-emergence of clergymen in Hungary and Transylvania from their tarnished image before the Reformation to become a professional elite in the seventeenth century. I shall show that this evolution was based upon high standards of education, and the determined efforts of Reformed ministers to achieve some degree of social separation and distinct status as an order. There were deliberate attempts to make the Hungarian Reformed clergy into a well disciplined elite, visibly different from other orders through strict controls on their dress and behaviour. Reformed ministers were also increasingly rigorously regulated in their duties by their own hierarchy, with internal disciplining of the Reformed clergy more severe than that of anyone else during this period. During the early seventeenth century ministers in Hungary and Transylvania increasingly formed a class apart, ennobled as an order, often inbred, comparatively well educated and moving from one parish to another on a regular basis. Such growing separation of the Reformed clergy from their surrounding communities was indeed essential if their role as increasingly assertive discipliners,

outlined in chapter 7, was to be an effective one.¹

The monitoring of student ministers at Reformed schools across Hungary and Transylvania was the first stage of shaping the Hungarian Reformed clergy. A series of school regulations was introduced in the early seventeenth century which set out expected standards of behaviour, with limitations placed on students which were intended to divide them from the rest of society. Rules governing the student body at the princely academy of Gyulafehérvár included powers given to student officers in charge of discipline to punish offenders with fines, which increased if any misdemeanour was repeated. For example wine was not allowed to be bought or sold in the college, and students were expected to abstain from excessive drinking. Other offences listed in the regulations included "being rowdy and turbulent, picking quarrels, bickering, fighting, aimlessly roaming around at night, hunting, bird catching, fishing, and playing games of chance". Serious offences were punished severely, with for example any student found drunk in church being ceremonially thrown out of the college in front of all the other students, accompanied by the funereal ringing of the school bells.²

¹ H.Schilling, 'Confessionalization in the Empire: Religious and Societal Change in Germany between 1555 and 1620' and 'The Second Reformation- Problems and Issues' in Religion, Political Culture and the Emergence of Early Modern Society (Leiden, 1992), pp.205-301; R.Po-Chia Hsia, Social Discipline in the Reformation. Central Europe, 1550-1750 (London, 1989), p.28; A.Pettegree, 'The Clergy and the Reformation: from 'devilish priesthood' to new professional elite' in A.Pettegree(ed.), The Reformation of the Parishes (Manchester, 1993), pp.1-22.

² I.Juhász and Z.Jakó, Nagyenyedí diákok 1662-1848 (Bucharest, 1979), pp.5-46; F.Váró, Bethlen Gábor kollégiuma (Nagyenyed, 1903). Gábor Bethlen's instructions for the academy

In the school at Sárospatak, school orders were compiled in 1618, 1621 and 1648, based on Wittenberg school regulations from 1586. A compulsory pattern of religious life and worship was specified for students, with stipulations for regular attendance at church, prayer at meals, and reading the Bible in the morning and evening. There was also a proscription on older students from speaking Hungarian, and detailed rules on behaviour included a ban on playing cards, or other games of chance.³ Regulations at the school at Debrecen from the 1650s forbade shooting, smoking, fighting, dancing or music-making. Fines for misbehaviour at Debrecen included five denar for not attending church, 20 denar for playing cards, 25 for not paying attention in church, and 50 denar for leaving the college at night. Meanwhile the behavioural code at the school of Nagyvárad offered a stern warning against writing love poems and verses, whilst "cavorting about" and dancing were both strictly prohibited.⁴ Similarly orders at the

at Gyulafehérvár in 1622, were added to by the three German professors in 1630 in 'leges illustris scholae Transilvaniae'.

³ R.Békefi(pub.), 'A sárospataki ev. ref. főiskola 1621-iki törvényei' in ÉTTK 18/3, (Budapest, 1899), 'Leges de moribus', pp.54-61; L.Makkai, 'A kollégium története alapításától 1650-ig', in A sárospataki református kollégium (Budapest, 1981), pp.17-59; J.Gulyás, A sárospataki ref. főiskola rövid története (Sárospatak, 1931), pp.1-20; J.Marton, A sárospataki református főiskola története 1621-ig (Sárospatak, 1931), pp.129-156.

⁴ R.Békefi(pub.), A debreczeni ev. ref. főiskola xvii. és xviii. századi törvényei (Budapest, 1899), 'De moribus scholarium', pp.87-97; S.Nagy, A debreceni kollégium (Debrecen, 1940), pp.21-108; F.Zsigmond, A debreceni református kollégium története 1538(?) - 1938 (Debrecen, 1938), pp.31-73; J.Barcza(ed.), A debreceni református kollégium története (Budapest, 1988), pp.5-43. There were student disturbances at Debrecen in 1627, 1644, 1648, 1650 and in 1657; I.Mészáros, Az iskolaügy története Magyarországon 996-1777 között (Budapest, 1981), pp.368-406; R.Békefi(pub.), 'A marosvásárhelyi ev. ref. iskola xvii. századi törvényei' in ÉTTK 18/8, pp.29-32.

Pápa school established student officers in charge of discipline, with tight rules on general behaviour. Students were expected to attend daily prayers without fail, and had to wake up at four in the morning to begin the round of worship and classes. Regulations at Pápa also demanded that students steer clear of bad company, drunkenness, dances, cursing and games. Their behaviour was to be respectable and honourable whenever they walked in the town, and they were not allowed to carry weapons at any time.⁵

The regulations drawn up during this period at the various Reformed schools across Hungary and Transylvania were also preoccupied with appropriate and morally proper clothing for their students, and concerned that Reformed student ministers should be easily distinguishable from the rest of urban youth. In 1624 the school orders at Debrecen set out a uniform for its students to observe of a long ankle length cloak, a green toga highlighted with yellow cord, and a high fur cap with green trimming. Students were strictly warned against being seen bare-headed like Turks, wearing Tatar-style hats, or any clothing associated with soldiers, and they were to avoid wearing wide belts, and any colour of gloves except black or white. If any student did not comply with these rules on dress he was to be thrown out of the college at once. Rules for students' dress at Pápa indicated again that any clothing associated with soldiers was not permitted, and older students had to wear a long black

⁵ G.Lampérth, A pápai református főiskola története, 1531-1931 (Pápa, 1931), pp.21-35; E.Kis, A dunántúli ev. ref. egyházkerület pápai főiskolájának története, 1531-1895 (Pápa, 1896), pp.9-48.

toga, and were not allowed to have long hair, or to wear gloves. Students at the Reformed school at Nagyvárad also had to comply with requirements in their school regulations to wear proper academic dress, and in the 1650s the eastern Tisza synod threatened expulsion from the school for anyone who disobeyed.⁶

As school regulations controlled the dress of Reformed students, so church synods in Hungary and Transylvania also acted to regulate the clothing of ministers, making frequent pronouncements on approved dress for clergymen, schoolmasters and their wives. In 1561 the Debrecen confession instructed bishops not to "sparkle in gold, silver or expensive clothing", and the 1567 Debrecen articles demanded moderate dress of schoolteachers, expressly forbidding excessively short hair, and clothing like that of soldiers. In 1570 articles agreed by a synod at Szatmár in eastern Hungary advised ministers to adopt honourable and appropriate moderation in dress, and to avoid luxurious, prideful or scandalous clothing. The 1577 Nagyvárad church articles prohibited ministers from adopting military or other styles of clothing deemed inappropriate, and warned clergymen to avoid all forms of luxurious dress.⁷ Archdeacons in the eastern Tisza district were empowered by a synod of 1624 at Nagyvárad to admonish those who failed to abide by these expected standards

⁶ Békefi, A debreczeni főiskola törvényei, 'De moribus scholarium', pp.87-97; Lampérth, A pápai református főiskola története, pp.21-35; 'A böszörményi...zsinat végzése' in MPEIF 1 (1870), pp.612-613.

⁷ A.Kiss, A xvi. században tartott magyar református zsinatok végzése (Budapest, 1881), pp.33-44, 563-613, 662-673 and 690-695; 1561 Debrecen confession, p.181, 1555 Erdőd synod canon no.9, 1567 Debrecen article no.67, 1570 Szatmár synod resolution no.48 and 1577 Nagyvárad article no.7; S.Payr, A Magyar protestáns papi öltöny története (Sopron, 1935).

of dress. Teachers and students were reminded that they were only allowed to wear short-heeled boots in winter, or when it was muddy, but were not to wear fur under any circumstances. In 1630 a synod at Debrecen ordered ministers to wear clothes "appropriate to their order", and strictly outlawed wearing boots, shorter decorated fur-lined coats or golden collars. In 1632 by order of the Zemplén area synod in northern Hungary iron-shod boots and fur-lined coats were forbidden for ministers, "so that people go about in clothes appropriate to their office".⁸

Similarly in the Transylvanian church, canons from 1606 advised that the dress of all ministers must be suitable to their office and lacking in luxury. In 1638 a Transylvanian synod at Nagyenyed resolved that ministers should not wear boots, and could be fined for doing so, and after a third offence could be removed from office. The synod also forbade schoolteachers and students from wearing high hats, or collared fur-line coats. In 1642 another synod at Nagyenyed threatened expulsion from the ministry for those who wore unbecoming clothing, particularly velvet, and coloured or decorated clothes, although exceptions were made for the Transylvanian superintendent, court chaplains and senior archdeacons. The Szatmár national synod of 1646 required ministers to obey the dress code laid down by regional synods, and particularly mentioned that worldly or foreign clothing was prohibited, whilst the 1649 canons expected students and teachers not to have Turkish-style haircuts, and wear neither

⁸ J.Lugossy, 'Constitutiones in generali synodo Varadina anno 1624, 1 die Julii' in PEIL 6 (1847), pp.235-236, nos.4 and 5; ZEP/1629-1645, p.147-163.

fur caps, nor red or yellow boots.⁹

It was not only ministers, teachers and students whose appearance was regulated by the Reformed church, the dress of ministers' wives also subjected to detailed scrutiny. Articles from Debrecen in 1567 prohibited clergy wives from any luxury or immoderation in dress. Their hair had to be in an ordinary style, and they were warned against affecting decoration in their clothing with pearls, and not to copy the dress of noblewomen. In 1624 the eastern Tisza synod at Nagyvárad ordered clergy wives to avoid wearing golden shirts or rings, red or yellow boots, wide fur belts or straps, short-sheepskin coats or multi-layered skirts. In 1642 the Transylvanian synod ordered ministers' wives to avoid golden robes and luxurious clasps, pearls or any neck decoration, and boots that diverted from normal fashions. The 1649 canons further required that the wives of ministers should not wear expensively decorated clothes or any jewellery, and that their hair be styled moderately.¹⁰ The church warned against the immorality associated with decorated and immoderate clothing amongst the clergy and their families. Unseemly clothing was seen to have potentially disastrous results, and István Czeglédi included abuses of dress amongst the causes of God's anger

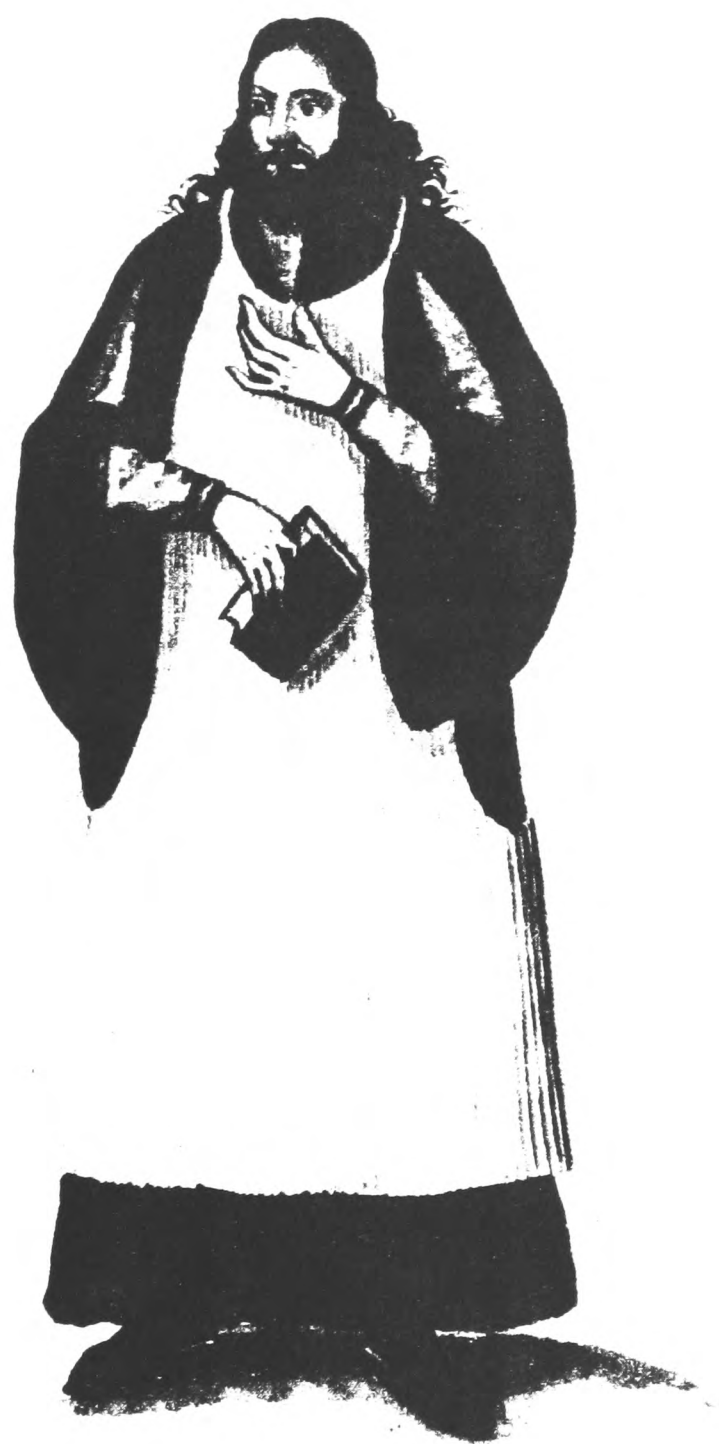
⁹ I.Szilágyi, 'Az erdélyi h.h. anyaszentegyház közzsinatainak...végzéseikivonatban' in MPEIF 3 (1872), pp.1-9, 77-84 and 473-479 for Transylvanian synods of 1606, 1638 and 1642; A.Kiss, Egyházi kánonok- Geleji Katona István 1649 és a szatmárnémetiben 1646 évben tartott zsinat végzéseik (Kecskemét, 1875), conclusion no.28 of the 1646 synod, and 1649 canons nos.83, 94 and 96; Péter Bod, Smirnai szent polikárpus...erdélyi református püspököknek historiájok (Nagyenyed, 1766), p.85.

¹⁰ Kiss, zsinatok végzéseik, 1567 Debrecen article no.43, pp.563-613; Lugossy, PEIL 6 (1847), pp.235-236, no.3; Kiss, Egyházi kánonok, 1649 canon no.84; Szilágyi, MPEIF 3 (1872), pp.1-9, 77-84 and 473-479.



19

9 *A Hungarian Calvinian Minister.*



A Minister as he performs his Office



A Hungarian Calvinian Student



A Hungarian Nobleman



69. A Captain of y^e Hungarian.

falling on Transylvania with the military disasters of 1657. There were also deliberate attempts to make ministers, teachers and their families easily distinguishable from other orders, with the Köveskút synod in 1612 ordering ministers in the western Danubian region to be discernably different from traders, soldiers and cobblers, and in particular recommended that long gowns and cloaks of "an appropriate colour for the office" be worn. The 1649 Transylvanian canons also included an order for ministers' dress to be distinguishable from Anabaptists on the one hand, and from the excessive splendour of Catholic priests on the other.¹¹

It was not only in dress that ministers, teachers and student ministers were encouraged to be distinct, but also in their language and behaviour. Church articles from the late sixteenth century forbade ministers from taking part in singing and dancing, and whilst allowing that ministers could freely go to parties, if music and dancing began they were to get up and leave the room immediately. The 1642 Transylvanian synod at Nagyenyed detailed fines for ministers and their wives for dancing, playing the violin, taking part in markets on Sundays or holidays, or any involvement in superstitious healing. Canons from 1649 detailed how ministers' lives were to be exemplary,

¹¹ Drawings from the early eighteenth century; 'The true and exact Dresses and Fashions of all the Nations in Transylvania', British Library, Manuscript Collections, Add. MSS. 5256, especially nos.15, 19, 23 and 66 in J.Jankovics, G.Galavics and A.R.Várkonyi(eds.), Régi erdélyi viseletek (Budapest, 1990). István Czeglédi, Az országok romlásáról írott könyvnek első része (Kassa, 1659) RMK 1/941, no.4, p.23; "Hat te cifra ÖLTÖZET mint vagy? mert te vonod egyik le az éghből az haragos Istent!". Köveskút synod resolutions in E.Thury(ed.), '1550-1617 adatok a dunántúl és felsődunamellék egyházkerületekről' in MPEA 7 (1908) pp.127-140, canon 23.

temperate and completely beyond reproach. Good company was advised, and conversations only engaged in to build up neighbours and friends, with swearing, and arguing with other ministers forbidden. The canons also insisted that all usury and business trading was to be avoided, nor were ministers to "sink into the problems of life". Clergy were neither to keep weapons, hawks nor hunting dogs, since instead they were to be "fishers of men". Sobriety was ordered, with ministers not slaves to their stomachs but "the light of the world, and the salt of the earth". For those whose attitudes and actions fell short of these ideals, warnings could be given by senior clergy to disobedient ministers, to be followed ultimately by dismissal from office.¹²

Tight control was also exerted over the clergy in punishing theological heterodoxy, or any lack of respect and obedience due to church superiors. Archdeacons and superintendents exercised their rights to warn, suspend and deprive from office erring ministers under their jurisdictions. Ministers with rogue opinions on church government or ceremony could be forced to recant before being allowed to continue in office. As was noted in chapter 6, Imre Szilvásujfalvi Anderkó was locked up in a bishop's prison for disobedience, and János Tolnai Dali suspended from office in 1646 on suspicion of heterodox and innovatory opinions. Similarly we have seen how trying to bring about innovation in the church became a civil offence in Transylvania

¹² Kiss, zsinatok végzései, for 1577 Nagyvárad article no.15; Kiss, Egyházi kánonok, 1646 resolution nos.14-22, and 1649 canons nos.78-82; Szilágyi, MPEIF 3 (1872), pp.1-9, 77-84 and 473-479.

in the 1650s, with two ministers from Nagyvárad imprisoned until they swore retractions of previously held opinions.¹³

The Reformed church in Hungary and Transylvania therefore set high standards of doctrinal orthodoxy and moral behaviour which its ministers were expected to uphold. Superintendents and archdeacons investigated clergy standards during regular visitations of parishes, when congregations were asked to comment on ministers' general conduct and application to their duties and responsibilities.¹⁴ As we have seen in chapter 7, ministers found themselves set at a certain distance from the surrounding community through their leading role in local discipline, and there were many examples of anti-clerical attitudes and verbal assaults on the ministry in the process of their disciplinary activities, with some individuals also trying to avoid or challenge punishments laid down by the clergy. Individual ministers were therefore left in the difficult situation of trying to please different constituencies, needing to satisfy church superiors, local noble patrons who held annual rights of presentment over them, and members of their congregation who had an open channel of complaint against them. Whilst on some occasions archdeacons were met with only praise from a

¹³ S.Kiss, 'Szilvásújfalvi Anderko Imre' in Egyháztörténet 5 (1959), pp.218-241; J.Zoványi, 'Adatok a magyarországi puritánus mozgalmak történetéhez' in MPEA 10 (1911), pp.13-20; I.Révész, 'A szatmár-németi zsinat végzései, eddig ösmeretlen eredeti szerkezetökben' in Sárospataki Füzetek 3 (1860), pp.244-247; 'Tiszántul református egyházkerület levéltára kerületi jegyzőkönyve' vol.1, (1629-), MOL box no.1883, pp.93, 624, 630 and 632.

¹⁴ J.Zoványi, 'A zempléni ref. dioecesis egyházlátogatási kérdőpontjai' in Protestáns Szemle 18 (1906), pp.40-41.

congregation about the conduct of their minister, many congregations proved more than willing to break local loyalties and criticise the clergy in front of outside visitors, when in turn ministers' standards of behaviour fell below what was expected.¹⁵

Many ordinary parishioners seemingly felt little inhibition about forwarding information to visitation parties about ministers' perceived weaknesses. Visitations in Zemplén led to a remarkably free expression of popular resentment against the clergy, and also against schoolteachers. Congregations forwarded criticisms to visitors about ministers' faults in preaching, and about neglect of catechising and church services. At Helmech in 1629 the congregation informed István Miskolczi Csulyak that the local minister did not hold a service on Sunday evenings. The Helmech minister however responded that he would gladly have held a service if he had seen a desire for one in the village. At Hotyka in 1641, the congregation complained of infrequent weekly preaching, but again the minister maintained that when he had held mid-week services only two people came.¹⁶ Complaints were also widely raised against schoolteachers during visitations. At

¹⁵ Ministers received only praise at Vitány in 1641, see Zoványi, TT 7 (1906), pp.382-383; at Szerdahely in 1654, and at Szécs, Velete and Lasztócz in 1655, and Nagygéres in 1656; ZEP/1653-1672, pp.21, 75-78 and 123.

¹⁶ There are frequent examples of these complaints about neglect of duty by the minister in Zemplén; at Bereczki and Helmech in 1629, at Erdőbénye in 1632 and at Hotyka and Ujhely in 1641; TT 7 (1906), pp.84-5, 91, 375-376 and 380-382; at Saava in 1647, and Bári in 1648; ZEP/1638-1651, pp.100-1, 150 and 215; and at Zsadány in 1654; ZEP/1653-1672, p.42. Compare this with the bland mutual praise between Lutheran parishioners and ministers in western Hungary; E.Thury, 'Kis Bertalan és Musay György dunántúli ág. hitv. ev. püspökök egyházlátogatási jegyzőkönyve, 1631-1654' in MPEA 6 (1907), pp.11-193.

Terebes in 1629, the schoolteacher was reported to the archdeacon for swearing, singing love songs, and for hitting the boys, whilst the master at Csörgő was reported as rowdy when drunk in 1643. In 1638 at Bénye, the schoolmaster was lazy and cruel according to the congregation, and had been chasing a young married woman. He was warned by the visitors to teach diligently in the future, or face removal from the school.¹⁷

Congregations also accused clergymen of drunkenness, and drinking was often seen to be the cause of ministers neglecting their duties. Ministers were accused of being drunk during services and whilst preaching, with the congregation at Olaszi in 1629 stating that they would prefer their minister not to preach when drunk, rather than have him preach scandalously. At Sára in 1641, the minister was reported to have got so drunk one Sunday lunch, that he was unable to conduct the evening service. Drunkenness during services was also reported against the minister at Jesztreb in 1639, and the visitors were informed that he also argued with and regularly hit his wife, and had been neglecting his teaching duties of local girls for the past six months. At Olaszi in 1641 the congregation added wife-beating to the charge of drunkenness against their minister, and also reported that he had sworn at someone whilst drunk.¹⁸

¹⁷ TT 7 (1906), pp.79, 291-2 and 406-407.

¹⁸ Accusations of drunkenness were made against the minister at Nagygéres in 1629, at Zétény in 1634, Olaszi in 1638, Hotyka in 1639 and Sára and Ujváros in 1641; TT 7 (1906), pp.89-90, 199, 295, 308-9, 312, 377-9 and 385; congregations also passed on accusations of swearing against the wives of ministers at Fűzér in 1639; TT 7 (1906), p.371, and at Zsadány in 1654; ZEP/1653-1672, p.42; Mátyás Diószegi Bónis, Az részegesnek gyűlölséges, utálatos és rettenetes állapota (Leiden, 1649) RMK 1/820.

Such serious charges against any minister initiated disciplinary action from his superiors. Cases could be referred by archdeacons to area synods for resolution, or the archdeacon could decide on an appropriate remedy during a visitation. The synod at Ujhely in 1631 heard the case of Basilius Töltszéki who had been reported by his congregation for drunkenness, and threatening to kill the schoolmaster. Meanwhile in 1634 Miskolczi found the congregation at Olaszi unhappy with their minister, János Rozgonyi. Rozgonyi was accused of drunkenness, swearing, defamation and of hitting Imre Kelőczy with a Bible. Miskolczi, after hearing from many local witnesses about Rozgonyi's behaviour, decided that he must leave Olaszi and find a vacant parish elsewhere. Miskolczi warned Rozgonyi that if he heard the slightest complaint in the future about his behaviour, then he would be dismissed from the ministry altogether. Miskolczi also demanded that Rozgonyi never get drunk again, since he believed that alcohol was at the root of all his problems.¹⁹ Sometimes however the church authorities found difficulties in imposing a punishment on a minister if he was supported by his local patron. The minister at Zétény was deemed worthy by the archdeacon of being removed from his post in 1634 for swearing, drunkenness and generally inappropriate behaviour. There were also complaints from the congregation that he preached for too long, and did not bother to wake up those who fell asleep during his sermons. However the local patron András Thót did not want his minister removed. The Zemplén archdeacon countered this defiance, by

¹⁹ TT 7 (1906), pp.279-282; J.Zoványi, 'A zempléni ref. diocesis zsinatai, 1629-1645' in TT 10 (1909), p.419.

placing the church at Zétény under an exclusion order, with no Reformed minister allowed to go to Zétény until obedience was assured from the minister and from Thót.²⁰

The relationship between Reformed clergymen and their parishioners was also affected by frequent disputes arising from the financial demands which a minister could make on his congregation. Each minister was entitled to payments in cash and kind from rights to the tithe, and to privileged use of local church land. Reformed archdeacons were careful during visitations to monitor the income which each minister and teacher could rightfully claim, as well as investigate the state of local church property. Records revealed exactly what each parishioner was expected to pay the minister every year, either in money, or in wheat and wood.²¹ For example in Bodrogkeresztur, one of the larger towns in Zemplén, the minister had possession of four vineyards, and could claim either labour or cash from the congregation towards their upkeep. The minister also had fields and pasture lands, as well as an eighth of the tithe due to him in wheat, wine and lambs. Meanwhile the school master at

²⁰ J.Zoványi, 'Miskolczi Csulyak István esperesei naplója és leveleskönyve' in MPEA 12 (1928), pp.199-200.

²¹ 'Matricula Ecclesiarum Reformatorum in Sede Siculicali Maros...', in the Erdélyi református egyházkerület levéltára (Kolozsvár); 'Nagykárolyi (Középszolnok) egyházmegye iratai' a revenue book in the Tiszántul református egyházkerület levéltára (Debrecen) I.35a.1; G.Dávid, 'A Marosi traktus 17. századbeli történetéből' in Református Szemle 1930, pp.151-154, 165-168, 210-212, 232-234, 246-248, 263-266, 311-316 and 487-490; I.Szilágyi, 'A máramarosi helv. hitvallású egyházmegye és egyházközségek rendezete a 17. század elején' in Sárospataki Füzetek 2 (1858-9), pp.382-391, 678-689 and 984-986; I.Magyarósi, A zilahi ev. ref. anyaszentegyház története (Kolozsvár, 1880).

Bodrogkeresztur could claim one vineyard, and had the right to either wine or money from each householder every year in addition to payments from the families of his students. Other local traditions of paying ministers included the right of the minister at Sárospatak to a chicken from every household annually. In smaller villages and parishes in Zemplén, ministers often had their income supplemented through a grant from royal taxes, or by charging a chicken for conducting baptisms and funerals.²²

Archdeacons on visitation in Zemplén frequently became involved in disputes over local church property, and heard complaints from ministers of income due to them not being handed over. Archdeacon Miskolczi ordered a re-measurement of a disputed field at Ujváros in 1629, and heard that nobles were not paying their dues to the minister at Nagygéres. In Perbenyik, the minister complained that there some people who had not handed over payment in wood for three years, whilst at Cigánd the minister reported problems in getting his income from parishioners on their pretence of poverty. At Bacska in 1639, the minister claimed that the delivery of his income was late, whilst at Tárkány, István Istenes[sic!] was reported to the archdeacon for threatening the minister and swearing at him when he was

²² For the portion of tithes ranging from one sixteenth to one quarter which the ministers in Hungarian counties actually received see lists of payment in J. Zoványi, 'Protestáns lelkészek nyugtatványai régi tizedjegyzékek mellett' in MPEA 13 (1929), pp.5-142. For example in Kisazar in Zemplén "az király dezmajabol octava jaar, buzabol, baranybol" from 'Liber Reditum Ecclesiasticum Comitatus Zempleniensis 1623', MOL box no.1907, pp.7-11, 29 and 83; also 'Tiszántúli ref. egyházkerület Debrecen egyházmegye jegyzőkönyvei', vol.1, 1615-1655, MOL box no.1884, includes lists of clergy income and church property for the Debrecen diocese, pp.414-429 and 433.

asked for an overdue payment of grain.²³

**(ii) Princes, Patrons and Priests; the Competing
Agents of Further Reformation**

The relationship between Transylvania's princes, Reformed noble patrons and parish clergy was decisive in shaping commitment to further reformation in the Hungarian church. In this section I shall survey the role of godly princes and other godly gentlemen in the Reformed church of Hungary and Transylvania. The Reformed clergy tried hard to mould the attitudes of Transylvania's princes towards sin during this period, and encouraged them to set high standards of public and private morality. Reformed princes were elevated into an idealised role by the Reformed clergy as defenders of a godly citadel, with a powerful concentration prevalent during the early seventeenth century in Transylvania on the motif of Biblical Israel, and parallels drawn with Old Testament kings. There is only limited evidence about the success of the Reformed church in achieving the confessionalisation of the Hungarian nobility into a godly gentry, not merely accepting orthodox doctrine but also abiding by Reformed standards of discipline and morality. I shall examine some of the conflicts which arose between Reformed ministers and their noble patrons during this period, especially over rights of presentment to parishes, and over prerogatives about disciplining. On occasions when arguments arose in a locality

²³ TT 7 (1906), pp.69, 88, 90, 94-97 and 302-303.

between nobles and the clergy, both sides tended to appeal to the prince to come to their aid, as the ultimate authority in the church and society.

Transylvanian synods in the late sixteenth century had urged princes to be "the images and mirrors of the virtues of God" and to act according to the laws of the land, to take care that God's word was preached effectively, to fight for the defence of their homeland, to build up schools and academies, to punish wrongdoers and to stop idolatrous worship. Reformed princes who were seen to act in this way in the early seventeenth century were portrayed as liberators of the people from tyranny, and the guarantors of true faith and justice.²⁴ The Hungarian anti-Habsburg rebellion of 1604 led by István Bocskai was influenced in part by Calvinistic notions of rights of resistance against tyranny. Bocskai was subsequently idealised as supported by God to take revenge on sinning higher authorities, and to free Hungary. Members of the Hungarian diet acclaimed Bocskai as "Moses of the Hungarians" as they elected him king, and in a message to the Habsburg emperor Bocskai wrote that;

"God has been with me in this; account for my position through my acting on God's secret counsel; like Moses from his shepherding, David from the sheep-pen, like the fleeing Jehoshaphat, whom God made prince and king over His people".²⁵

²⁴ Failure in their duties would lead to "a hideous death because of indulgence and drunkenness like Balthasar, Darius, Alexander the Great, and Attila"; Kiss, zsinatok végzése for 1567 Debrecen articles, pp.175-180, 1562 Tarczal canon nos.56 and 69-73, pp.589 and 607-611.

²⁵ Monumenta Comititalia Regni Hungariae- Magyar Országgyűlési Emlékek vol.11 (Budapest, 1890), pp.152-154; K.Benda, 'A kálvini tanok hatása a magyar rendi ellenállás ideológiájára' in Helikon 17 (1971), pp.322-330; F.Szakály(ed.), Szalárdi János és siralmas magyar krónikája (Budapest, 1980) part 5, p.85; L.Makkai, 'Nemesi köztársaság és kálvinista teokrácia

Such successes by Transylvania's princes in conflicts against the Habsburgs reinforced the impression amongst the Reformed clergy that Transylvania and eastern Hungary formed a resting place of divine favour, thanks primarily to its godly rulers. Gábor Bethlen inherited Bocskai's mantle, and was described by the Transylvanian diet at his accession as not chosen by them alone;

"Your Grace is given to us today by God, as he gave David after Saul, or Hezekiah after Ahaz, and we ask that as of old God blessed holy kings from amongst His people, David, Solomon, and Hezekiah, He will bless and sanctify Your Grace with wisdom, truth and bravery".²⁶

Bethlen was repeatedly depicted by Reformed ministers as a new king David. This enduring image was particularly important in allowing Bethlen to be compared favourably against his Catholic predecessor Gábor Báthori, described as a new Saul. There had been accusations at the time of Bethlen's accession that he was directly responsible for Báthori's death. By becoming identified with David, Bethlen was portrayed by his supporters as divinely appointed to inherit the princely title. Péter Alvinczi reinforced this message in his funeral sermon for Báthori, recalling the compassion shown by David for Saul as a parallel for Bethlen's generosity towards Báthori.²⁷

a 16. századi Lengyelországban és Magyarországon" in Ráday Gyűjtemény Évkönyve 3 (1983), pp.17-29. Péter Alvinczi recorded fantastic signs, loud noises and fire in the skys around Kalló, with demonic activity and strange animal portents; K.Benda, 'Alvinczi Péter kassai prédikátor történeti följegyzései, 1598-1622' in A Radáy Gyűjtemény Évkönyve 1 (1955), (Budapest, 1956), p.14.

²⁶ Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek vol.6, p.355.

²⁷ Péter Alvinczi, Az néhai felséges Báthori Gábor... testének eltakarításakor tett intések (Gyulafehérvár, 1628); J.Heltai 'Bethlen Gábor és Báthori Gábor viszonya a kortársak

A stream of elegiac propaganda was produced about Bethlen by Reformed ministers, including poetry about his service to true faith and his battles against tyranny. Bethlen's character and actions were idealised into a heroic form, using mainly but not exclusively Old Testament imagery. István Melotai Nyilas wrote of Bethlen during the war of 1619 as like David when he faced the Philistines. Péter Alvinczi portrayed Bethlen as a new Jehoshaphat struggling against the wiles of Catholic clergy, and a poem written by András Prágai compared Bethlen to Gideon, Joseph and even to the angel Gabriel;

"It lova reank tekinte az nagy Syonból
Uj Fejedelemmel bodoqhita kedveből
Aegyptusből zabadita, S az kis Bethlenből
Silöt haza. Mint Iosephet nagy Aegyptöből.

Gabriel küldetek, s, nekünk öröm hirdetek,
Meniből Istentől adatek s-ki muttatek,
Bethlen Gabor kegyes Urunk zekben ültetek,
Romlot orzagban, Rex Salem, be zenteltetek."²⁸

In 1626 János Pataki Füsüs described Bethlen as Hungary's "brilliant star", a new Gideon coming like the comet "as a heavenly sign, leading Your Majesty in the last times to be king

szemében' in Irodalomtörténet 65 (1983), pp.685-708; L.Rácz, 'Főhatalom a xvi.-xvii. századi erdélyben' in Jogtudományi Közlöny 1981, pp.857-864; V.Biró, Az erdélyi fejedelmi hatalom fejlődése (Kolozsvár, 1917), chapter 3; K.Kovács(ed.), Bethlen Gábor állama és kora (Budapest, 1980); L.Makkai, 'Bethlen Gábor és az európai művelődés' in Századok 115 (1981), pp.673-697.

²⁸ András Prágai, 'Sebes agynak késő sisak' in Régi Magyar Költők Tára vol.8, pp.58-61, section r; István Melotai Nyilas, A szent Dávid XX. zsoltárának magyarázatja (Kassa, 1620); István Vásárhelyi Kerekes, Epitaphion katastrophikon, azaz: szomorúságról öröme váltózó versek Bethlen Gábor erdélyi fejedelem tisztességére (Nagyszében, 1618) RMK 1/483, section e; Gáspár Bojti Veres, Panegyris...Gabrielis Bethlen (Heidelberg, 1617) RMK 3/1193.

Josiah of Hungary, father to your people".²⁹ Indeed a comet, often interpreted as a portent of impending doom, was seen in 1618 with the records of one congregation in Hungary describing months of "heavenly wonders" with "flashing flames and shining clouds", "stretching north from Constantinople like an executioner's sword".³⁰ Responding to the fears raised by this comet, the Küküllő area Reformed synod in Transylvania petitioned Bethlen in 1619 to offer the country leadership by setting high moral standards at court, and to instigate a period of national repentance. The Küküllő synod specifically requested that Transylvanians be encouraged to adopt a more modest lifestyle, humbler dress, and to keep weekly fasts on Sundays. The synod also demanded the severe punishment of sinners, especially fornicators, without regard for their social status, and the punishment of adulterers and blasphemers according to God's law. Bethlen was also asked to defend the Sabbath from all activities and trade, and the synod wanted punished anyone who was discovered at weddings or festivities with musical instruments such as a pipe, violin or drum.³¹

²⁹ "Felségedet választotta Isten újonnan mostan Magyarország tündöklő csillagává, kit az égen feltetsző üstökös csillag ez utolsó időnek 1618 esztendejében napkeleti Gedeonként eljönni utolsó napján karácson havának nyilván mutatott. Ez mennyei jel vezérelte Felségedet, hogy ez utolsó időben lenne Magyarországnak Jósiás királya, hazájának atyja." in János Pataki Füsűs, Királyoknak Tüköre (Bártfa, 1622) RMK 1/549, p.22; Péter Alvinczi, A nemes magyarország panaszainak megoltalmazása (Budapest, 1989), (ed.) J. Heltai, p.40.

³⁰ Kecskemét parish record for 1619; S. Szilágyi, 'Kecskeméti ref. anyakönyvi följegyzések' in Sárospataki Füzetek 1 (1857-8), pp.652-659, and 2 (1858-9), pp.65-78.

³¹ G. Illyés, 'Az 1619. évi küküllővári zsinat felterjesztése Bethlen Gábor fejedelemhez' in Református Szemle 1934, pp.501-505.

Gábor Bethlen responded to this series of requests from the Küküllő synod in 1619, and introduced stringent new laws in the Transylvanian diet on morality and public behaviour. The articles passed through the diet prohibited work and travel on Sundays, blasphemous swearing and cursing, and imposed restrictions on the sale of alcohol, along with other measures enjoining prayer, fasting and greater enthusiasm in God's service. The 1619 articles also set punishments to be enforced for various offences, such as fines of six forints for nobles and two forints for peasants for breaking Sabbath day observance. Swearing was to be punished by a one forint fine for nobles, and by a morning in the stocks for peasants. Bethlen also accepted the synod's complaint that punishment for wrong-doing was not being enforced according to God's law against thieves, murderers, adulterers, or against the vices associated with devil-possession, and his articles ordered that these crimes be punished in future with the death penalty.³² In 1653 II.György Rákóczi also enacted laws against immorality, for example describing how Sundays and holidays should be filled with "more worthy things" than travelling, work, fairs or drinking. The death penalty was again renewed for adultery, with a beating followed by public repentance as punishment for those found guilty of fornication.³³

³² 'Articuli Bethleniani, Illustrissimi Gabrielis Bethlen, ad ecclesiam Dei pertinenti' in E. Illyés, Egyházfegyelem a magyar református egyházban (Debrecen, 1941), p.95. These 1619 articles were renewed in 1629 at the request of Péter Margitai, the eastern Tisza superintendent.

³³ 'Bethlen Gábor fejedelem a Szilágyság papjainak s Margitai Péter superintendens kérésére újból megerősíti a bűntények ellen már régebben hozott rendelkezéseket', in

Gábor Bethlen was undoubtedly perceived as an advocate of further reformation in Transylvania by the Reformed clergy. His support for the imposition of confessional discipline was rewarded with a series of works by Reformed ministers which aimed to raise the imagery of kingship, and the status of princes in Transylvania. James VI./I.'s vision of kingly responsibility in Basilikon Doron was for example translated into Hungarian by György Szepesi Korocz.³⁴ The cult of the Protestant prince was further extended by András Prágai and by János Pataki Füsüs, who employed twelve precious stones to represent the qualities of a good king, together with a staff of law, a crown of true religion and an golden orb of truth. Pataki's ideal Christian ruler was active in building churches and schools, punishing criminals and bringing justice to his people, and these were all qualities which Pataki could see in Bethlen to whom the work was dedicated.³⁵

'Tiszántuli református egyházkerület levéltárának...válogatott iratok', MOL box no.2177, no.6, July 1629; D.Márkus, S.Kolozsvári and K.Óvári(eds.), Magyar Törvénytár- 1540-1848 évi erdélyi törvények (Budapest, 1900), 'Approbatae Constitutiones' 5/51, 'Protocollum primum seu Gyarmatianum Tractus Beregiensis' (1593-1631) for church action against swearing and Sabbath-breaking in Illyés, Egyházfegyelem a magyar református egyházban.

³⁴ György Szepesi Korocz(tr.), Basilikon Doron. Az Angliai...első Jakab királynak...fia tanításáért irt királyi ajándék (Oppenheim, 1612) RMK 1/436; I.Bitskey, 'Irodalompolitika Bethlen Gábor és a két Rákóczi György udvarában' in Magyar Könyvszemle 96 (1980), pp.1-14; L.Makkai(ed.), Bethlen Gábor krónikásai, krónikák, emlékiratok, naplók a nagy fejedelemeiről (Budapest, 1980); T.Toth Somlyói, 'Erdélyi királytükör' in B.Varjas(ed.), Irodalom és ideológia a 16-17. században. Memoria Saeculorum Hungariae vol.5, (Budapest, 1987), pp.275-293.

³⁵ János Pataki Füsüs, Királyoknak Tüköre (Bártfa, 1626) RMK 1/549; for example jasper represented strength, topaz intelligence, emerald mercy. Antonio de Guevara, Fejedelmeknek serkentő órája, azaz Marcus Aurelius...életéről (Bártfa, 1628) RMK 1/566, partly translated by András Prágai and dedicated to

Other works appeared during this period on the role of Protestant princes in disciplining society, on princely duty and service to the state, and on the qualities of a ruler working for the common good, with the translation into Hungarian of Justus Lipsius' works De Constantia and Libri Politicorum in the 1640s circulating notions in Transylvania on Christian stoicism, providence, and steady, benevolent princely rule.³⁶ Bethlen's successors as Transylvanian princes were also lauded and idealised, and in 1649 Pál Medgyesi's oration at the funeral of I.György Rákóczi stressed the qualities of the dead prince, "our sweet David" and "the ornate crown of our head", with Medgyesi further praising Rákóczi's piety, modest life and work on behalf of the church.³⁷ Comparisons between Transylvania's princes and Old Testament kings became commonplace amongst Hungarian writers and chroniclers during this period, with godly princes repeatedly depicted by Reformed ministers as leading their people under

I.György Rákóczi. The qualities of kingship were explained through gems on a clock, "hát mit mongyunc mi az mi ORANKról, mely oly drágalatos szép köveckel tündöklic, hogy nincs oly Fejedelem, az ki egyszer smind azoknac az köveknec szerit tehetne".

³⁶ János Laskai (tr.), Iustus Lipsiusnak az alhatatosságról írt két könyve (Debrecen, 1641) RMK 1/714; Justus Lipsius a polgári társaságnak tudományáról írt het könyve (Nagyvárad, 1644); Justus Lipsius, Epistolica Institutio (Nagyvárad, 1656) RMK 2/872; I.Bán, 'Fejedelemeknek serkentő órája' in Irodalomtörténet 40 (1958), pp.360-373; T.Komlós, 'Egy manierista 'theatrum europaeum' és szerzője' in ITK 70 (1966), pp.85-105; A.Vargha, Iustus Lipsius és a magyar szellemi élet (Budapest, 1942); G.Oestreich, Neostoicism and the Early Modern State (Cambridge, 1982); T.Wittman, 'A magyarországi államelméleti tudományosság xvii. század eleji alapvetésének németalföldi forrásaihoz - Justus Lipsius' in Filológiai Közlemények 3 (1957), pp.53-66.

³⁷ Pál Medgyesi, Erdély s egész magyar nép...hármass...jajja (Nagyvárad, 1653) RMK 1/880.

divine guidance, as Moses had led Israel through the desert.³⁸

Reformed canons from the late sixteenth century stressed the role not only of the prince but also of nobles as partners in the process of leading and disciplining congregations. The clergy were nevertheless also instructed to rebuke the nobility whenever necessary, particularly over Sabbath observance, and also for failing to partake regularly in communion, for living opulently, for drunkenness, or for failing in their duties as magistrates and administrators of local justice.³⁹ The increased disciplinary zeal and activity of Reformed ministers in the early seventeenth century affected the relationship of clergymen with nobles as well as with their congregations. There was a fine balance between the respect which was shown by the clergy for the rights of noble patrons, and the authority which leading clergy claimed over church affairs. This delicate equilibrium was thrown into sharp relief by disciplinary cases in which charges were brought against nobles, and in other matters over which the interests of the two orders on occasions collided.

The important role of the nobility in the Hungarian church was acknowledged by the Reformed clergy hierarchy, but leading

³⁸ "Méltán hasonlítottatik, és igen méltán, e mi szegény hazánknak, Erdélyországnak és ahhoz tartozó részeknek állapota az Izrael és Judá nemzetének azon Istentől rendeltetett fejedelemségi igazgatás alattvaló boldog állapotához."; Szakály, Szalárdi János kronikája, part 2, p.72; János Redmecz, Az felséges Bethlen Gábornak öt rendbeli Isten anyaszentegyházával cselekedett jótéteményéről (Kassa, 1622) in (ed.) L.Makkai, Erdély öröksége (Budapest, 1994) vol.4, pp.24-46; Gáspár Bojti Veres, A nagy Bethlen Gábor viselt dolgairól in (ed.) L.Makkai, Bethlen Gábor emlékezete, (Budapest, 1980), pp.19-66.

³⁹ Kiss, zsinatok végzései, 1567 Debrecen article no.73, pp.610-611.

ministers also aspired to greater autonomy in directing some aspects of church-life. The church leadership for example began to assert more control over the movement of clergy against the will of congregations and their patrons. This interfered with the traditional custom in Reformed parishes across the region to reselect each minister annually. This practice was seen by the church as a stumbling-block to the effective imposition of discipline by the minister in his local community, since it was thought that ministers would not wish to upset those with powers to deselect them. The 1561 Debrecen confession had stated that a congregation could not introduce a minister against the wishes of the local archdeacon, and that if ministers believed they were doing a good job in a parish then they should not be moved. It was however also conceded that archdeacons could not impose selections over the heads of congregations and local patrons.⁴⁰ In 1612 the Köveskút canons forbade local patrons in western Hungary from removing a minister without the agreement of the church authorities, and by the Komját canons of 1623 the upper Danubian church also claimed the right to move individual clergy in cases of necessity.⁴¹ The Transylvanian synod of 1633 at Nagyenyed decided that its ministers could be moved to where the church hierarchy judged they were most needed, even against the minister's own will, and a 1639 synod at Marosvásárhely further laid down a requirement that no minister could be moved without

⁴⁰ Kiss, Egyházi kánonok, pp.81-98.

⁴¹ Thury, MPEA 7 (1908), pp.127-140; Canones Ecclesiastici in Quinque Classes Distributi (1623 Komját canons), (Pápa, 1625) RMK 2/438.

the prior knowledge and permission of the church authorities.⁴²

Serious divisions could also arise between the clergy hierarchy and Reformed nobles over disciplinary matters. The Zemplén synod at Ujlak in 1632 heard a case from Izsép of a noble, Pál Petróczi, who had argued with his local minister and threatened to hit the minister's hat into his head. The synod was satisfied that this matter deserved to be taken seriously, but placed their evidence before the next gathering of the Zemplén county nobility, with the expectation that Petróczi would be punished by them. The 1632 synod also received a letter from the Zemplén sheriff intervening in another case brought against a noblewoman, Kata Egri. The sheriff had decided not to proceed with any punishment of Egri, and asked that if the synod was still determined to enforce public repentance on her, for the circumstances to be mild, not requiring special clothes, nor using the special seat reserved for penitents during a Sunday service. The synod subsequently decided to allow Egri to make public repentance in her own clothes, so long as they were dark, but still required her to stand in the penitents' chair.⁴³ The Zemplén synod at Ujhely in 1651 considered a different sort of conflict between a noble and minister at Lasztócz. An escaped peasant had claimed sanctuary in the Lasztócz church, but was dragged out by his master, Ferenc Balog. The synod appealed to the Zemplén noble assembly for redress against Balog in this case, and for the assembly to support the freedom of churches

⁴² Szilágyi, MPEIF 3 (1872), pp.1-9, 77-84 and 473-479.

⁴³ ZEP/1629-1645, pp.147-154.

from violence, and respect rights of asylum in church-buildings.⁴⁴ Local synods across Hungary and Transylvania also dealt with appeals for divorces and annulment of engagement promises, including requests involving nobles. In one appeal brought before the Szolnok-Doboka synod in Transylvania by Mihály Kovács, his step-daughter, Ilona Szentmártoni, was absolved from engagement oaths she had made with a Romanian servant named Simon. The grounds given by the synod for this decision were that Ilona Szentmártoni was from a noble family, whilst the man was a servant and Romanian. The church however imposed the condition that Ilona Szentmártoni must confess publicly and repent of her sin of making such a secret engagement.⁴⁵

Alongside collaboration between Reformed ministers and godly gentlemen, there was also clearly potential for competition between the increasingly assertive claims of the clergy as discipliners, and the established authority of nobles over the administration of justice. Nobles were accustomed to holding decisive sway in church affairs generally, and for example in the eastern Hungarian county of Szabolcs the local noble assembly had intervened to assist the fortunes of Reformed churches in the aftermath of the devastation of the Fifteen Years War. In 1636 Szabolcs the noble assembly again took the lead in highlighting

⁴⁴ ZEP/1638-1651, pp.225 and 231.

⁴⁵ In 1657 a certain Simon Magyar appealed to the same synod for a divorce on the grounds that his wife was "smelly and bad-tempered". The church refused to grant his request; 'Protocolum Matricula Székiensis' (Szolnok-Doboka), pp.73, 77 and 83. Also see 'Matricula Ecclesiarum Reformatorum in Sede Siculicali Maros...' for church serfdom (egyház jobbágyság) in the Szekler lands, pp.10-13 at Lőrinczfalva, and p.57 at Fintaháza, both volumes in the Erdélyi református egyházkerület levéltára (Kolozsvár).

the need for patrons to rebuild damaged churches, and provide homes for ministers. The noble assembly also instructed landowners that each village should select a justice, jurymen, and sextons who would be answerable ultimately to the county high sheriff. These officials were to ensure that evildoers were punished in each locality, and the Szabolcs nobility further ordered that stocks and gallows be built in every town and village. The nobles also determined that in disputes between the nobility and clergy, nobles could complain to the deputy sheriff, whilst ministers could report to their archdeacons.⁴⁶ By the early 1640s however tensions emerged between the Reformed clergy and nobility in eastern Hungary. The noble assembly of Szatmár county forwarded an eleven point 'Instructio' to the Reformed church in November 1641. These points reflected noble concerns that the church's drive for discipline was infringing upon their traditional rights and privileges. The nobles demanded confirmation of their unrestricted rights of patronage in the selection of ministers for any parish, and complained about the presumptuous behaviour of the local archdeacon, István Medgyesi. The Szatmár assembly opposed the use of excommunication altogether, and demanded that public repentance not be compelled on the nobility, especially not for minor offences, nor even if a noble killed someone in self-defence.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ A meeting in Petneháza in January 1636, 'A tiszteletes szabóltsi tractus mátriculája...1597 dik esztendőtol fogva...' in 'Szabolcs egyházmegye iratai' at the Tiszántul református egyházkerület levéltára (Debrecen), I.37.a, pp.9-11.

⁴⁷ 'Debrecen egyházmegye jegyzőkönyvei', vol. 1 (1615-55), MOL box no. 1884, "Instructio" and "Replicatio", pp.442-445; G.Nagy, Fejezetek a magyar református egyház 17. századi történetéből (Budapest, 1985) overstated the extent to which lay

The noble assemblies in Szabolcs, Bereg, and Ugocsa supported their colleagues in Szatmár, and jointly forwarded their proposals to the 1642 general synod of the eastern Tisza church. The synod responded by arguing that public repentance must be made for all sins, regardless of the rank of the offender, but conceded that for minor theft public repentance would not be necessary for nobles. The synod also argued that if all but one or two in any congregation were satisfied with the performance of the minister, then he should not be dismissed. The church in the eastern Tisza region called for support for its stance from the four northern Tisza archdeacons in Ung, Zemplén, Borsod, and Abaújvár. At the synod at Ujhely in April 1642 these archdeacons responded cautiously, uncertain as to what had provoked the noble attack on Reformed church discipline in the eastern Tisza region in the first place. The Ujhely synod was also concerned that any outspoken response might also bring the wrath of their own nobility against them. The four archdeacons however wrote to the leaders of the church at Szatmár, with advice on the demands made by noble patrons on the church there. The archdeacons asserted that there were many who disregarded the authority of the church, or who tried to destroy it completely. The archdeacons also confirmed the scriptural and historical basis of the church's sole rights over excommunication, free from interventions from "kings, landowners, nobles, or royal constitutions". They stressed the continuing need for the exercise of these powers against the unrepentant, since without

and secular authorities were marching in step over discipline, p.213.

such rights of exclusion the church communion would be corrupted. The archdeacons finally concluded that the proposals of the noble assemblies in eastern Hungary were "ill-considered".⁴⁸

The tightening of Reformed discipline was clearly beginning to put pressure on nobles' lifestyles, as exhibited by tensions between the clergy and nobility in the Szekler lands of eastern Transylvania. In 1643 a list of recommendations was submitted to the Maros church by Szekler lords, including requests for the maintenance of traditional church practices concerning baptisms, marriages and funerals. Ministers were also asked not to exclude people from attending services on the smallest of pretexts, and the Szekler lords opposed excommunications, or exclusions from the church until a clear sentence had been arrived at for any offence. In response an area synod at Marosvásárhely asserted that individual ministers could not be criticised about the practice of excommunications, since powers of exclusion lay with local synods, but otherwise offered little substantive satisfaction to the Szeklers' main demands.⁴⁹

The strain between the increasingly assertive disciplinary force of the clergy and a nobility generally accepting the need for discipline, yet on occasions defensive in the face of clerical power, was experienced at first hand by Zsigmond Lónyai, a high sheriff in the eastern Tisza region. In letters to I.György Rákóczi in 1646, Lónyai related he had been brought under discipline by his own minister, and was not allowed to move

⁴⁸ A letter from Gáspár Gelei, János Geörgei, Dániel Vársáni and István Miskolczi; ZEP/1629-1645, pp.380 and 384-386.

⁴⁹ G.Illyés, 'Az 1643. évi zsinat válasza a székely urak felterjesztésére' in Református Szemle 1936, pp.261-265.

freely, because the minister had judged that he had failed to punish local miscreants quickly enough. Lónyai wrote that;

"Although I do not favour the other opinions of Tolnai [Dali János], but in so far as in other Reformed churches there is a secular presbytery to bridle ministers, I cannot disapprove of it, with relation to the way in which they are beginning to dominate over us, which has never been the case before, but only since God encouraged Your Grace the prince to their side, by which I know that Your Grace did not pay heed to the abuses of this growth. I do not disagree with this in religion, but on morality I think, that if Your Grace does not take care over the lords and nobility, that some of the clergy will gladly dominate, ...and I do not know what to do with them, if Your merciful Grace does not assist us."⁵⁰

The impression given by Lónyai that the nobility needed support from I.György Rákóczi against the church was exactly contrary to that given to the prince in a letter of 1648 from the four archdeacons of the northern Tisza region. The archdeacons cited the approach made by the nobles of Szatmár, Bereg, Szabolcs, and Ugocsa against the church in 1642 as a sorrowful example of how the nobility, "want to take for themselves a free life, and using all their ability want to pull themselves from under every discipline of the church". The archdeacons argued that neither the authority of archdeacons nor superintendents was sufficient to counter such recalcitrance, and that the nobility could be brought completely under Reformed church discipline only with the support of the prince.⁵¹

⁵⁰ S.Szilágyi, 'Lónyay Zsigmond pere saját papjaival' in MPEF 8 (1886), a letter of June 1646, pp.147-149. Pál Medgyesi, Dialogus Politico-Ecclesiasticus (Bártfa, 1650) RMK 1/831 argued that peasants would not rule over their social superiors in a presbyterial system, since nobles mostly attended court chapels, or worshipped in towns, where they would not come under the discipline of their own serfs.

⁵¹ L.Hegedüs, 'A zempléni helv. hitv. egyházmegye jegyzőkönyvéből' in Sárospataki Füzetek 1 (1857-8), a letter of Apr. 1648, pp.472-3.

In December 1653 the noble assembly in Szabolcs proposed a new punishment code for the county, with a series of measures aiming to eradicate blasphemous cursing and foul language. The nobles ordered a first offence to result in a punishment of time in the stocks and a beating, whilst after a second offence the local landowner was to have the offender put in irons, beaten with a cane, and then forced to undergo public repentance. The nobles also placed the responsibility onto local justices to hand over offenders to landowners, under pain of punishment themselves for non-compliance.⁵² Pressure was increasingly being placed on other noble assemblies by the clergy hierarchy and the Transylvanian prince to tighten the punishment of immorality, and to put into effect regulations of this kind. In October 1654 II.György Rákóczi wrote to the Szatmár county nobility, expressing his concern at the daily growth in swearing and immoral behaviour. Rákóczi demanded that the Szatmár nobility not impede the work of the clergy in preventing the prosecution of sin and evil-doing. In response the noble assembly denied that they were in any way restricting the activities of the church, but indicated that the problems from the 1640s in their county had still not been resolved;

"In those things which affect the direction of the church and discipline, we are the servants of the true church, of which we are members, but we are not aware by which privilege the clergy of whatever rank, can impose things on us by themselves, without our knowledge and will, and set every direction of the church by themselves. About which we could have made our complaints; but

⁵² Some of the outlawed curses included "devil-given, devil-spirited, devil-created, dog-spirited and dog-faith". The code of 1653 in 'Liber Protocolaris Venerabilis Districtus Szatmariensis ab anno 1670 inchoatus' p.156 and in K.Kiss, A szatmári reform. egyházmegye története (Kecskemét, 1878), p.12.

we do not wish to burden Your Grace with an enumeration of them.⁵³

The Reformed clergy emerged during the early seventeenth century as an order devoted to discipline, with enthusiasm for the cause of curbing immoral behaviour in Hungary and Transylvania. There was also an ever stricter regime of control over the clergy themselves by their superiors, with detailed rules for behaviour at schools and from synods governing the lives of Reformed students and ministers. The Reformed clergy became increasingly socially distinct as an order, with many ministers often coming from the same family. In this chapter I have discussed the relationship between Reformed ministers and the people, the discipliners and the disciplined. The social status of ministers was enhanced by stricter regulation and better education, but this process made Reformed ministers more isolated from their congregations, and more frequently the targets of resentful criticism from below over the payment of incomes as well as over the exercise of ministers' disciplinary responsibilities. This increasing separation of Reformed clergy in the Hungarian church from their congregations was however essential to the moderate advances made during this period in their crusade against popular immorality, and towards the taming of Hungary and Transylvania.

I have also examined the relationship between the church leadership of clergy, nobility and princes as a case study of Reformed church-building and confessionalisation during the early

⁵³ 'Liber Protocolaris Venerabilis Districtus Szatmariensis ab anno 1670 inchoatus', pp.119-120, and in Kiss, A szatmári reform. egyházmegye története.

seventeenth century. Transylvania's princes were idealised by the Reformed clergy as divinely inspired, and encouraged to take up the role of leading a true and reformed church. The Reformed clergy worked hard to shape the attitudes not only of Transylvania's princes, but also of the Hungarian nobility towards sin and discipline. However, as we have seen, cooperation between Reformed noble patrons and an increasingly assertive clergy hierarchy sometimes broke down, with the increasingly distinctive and professional Reformed clergy seen to pose something of a challenge to traditional jurisdictions and prerogatives. Reformed discipliners however continued to rely heavily on the Hungarian nobility for their patronage of the church and its schools, and for the enforcement of confessional discipline. We can see that the Reformed clergy did gain the support of Transylvania's princes, and in at least some cases of godly gentlemen, willing to commence with further reformation and to place harsher restrictions on behaviour in the parishes of Hungary and Transylvania.

INTERNATIONAL CALVINIST LINKAGES, REFORMED
ALLIANCES AND APOCALYPTIC EXPECTATION

(i) Apocalyptic Ideas in Reformed Hungary
and Transylvania

Calvinists could present a dour face to the world as harsh disciplinarians and austere theologians, with the religious culture of early modern Calvinism typified by delegates from Reformed churches at the early seventeenth century synod at Dordrecht in the Dutch Republic, who sternly defended strict Calvinist orthodoxy. However a dualism exists between this public face, and an often private world of more exotic and radical religious and philosophical interests which also must be included in an assessment of what international Calvinism stood for. Religious reform was, as we have seen, at the centre of Calvinist ideology, and questions of renewal and regeneration were at the heart of early modern European Calvinism. These concerns certainly explain such manifestations of Reformed religion as Puritanism in Hungary and Transylvania, pre-pietism and mysticism in the Dutch Republic and Germany, and general attachment to alchemical projects and Christian encyclopedism, study of memory arts, belief in the 'brothers of the rosy cross' and eschatological excitement.

Apocalyptic beliefs were widespread amongst Reformed communities in the early seventeenth century, with a conviction

prevalent of the imminence of the end times, and of a Last Judgement which the godly could look forward to. These ideas found advocates amongst Calvinists across Europe, but especially in Reformed communities living in fear of invasion or persecution, or in exile. A minority of theologians were not even content with this general apocalyptic expectation, and tried to work out the exact date of the end of the world despite the explicit Biblical proscription from doing so. Calvinist eschatology tended to look for gradual improvements towards the end of history with increasing revelations of knowledge, and potential victories over satanic powers in the world which required immediate political and military activism.¹

In this chapter I shall outline the spread of apocalyptic beliefs in the early seventeenth century Hungarian Reformed church, with a mixture of ideas about divine judgement, an imminent end of the world, and about a special and predestined role for Hungary and the Transylvanian principality. I shall examine the attention paid to prophetic signs in nature and in the sky, which linked popular and elite apocalyptic traditions, and stress the importance of parallels drawn between the fate of Hungary and Israel, as peoples chosen by God. I will also emphasise the moral message, encapsulated in Reformed beliefs about divine retribution and the apocalypse in Transylvania, of an urgent need to proceed with further reformation, to battle against immorality, and against satanic powers in the world which

¹ N.Cohn, The Pursuit of the Millennium (London, 1957); M.Walzer, The Revolution of the Saints (London, 1966); B.W.Ball, A Great Expectation- Eschatological Thought in English Protestantism to 1660 (Leiden, 1975).

were broadly accepted as being the Papacy and the Ottoman Empire.

Ideas about God's judgement were prominent in the writings of sixteenth century Hungarian reformers, with Hungarian minds concentrated on the subject by the proximity of the non-Christian world, a possible instrument of divine punishment. Gáspár Károlyi for example explained the causes of the destruction of the Hungarian kingdom in the sixteenth century, by detailing parallels between the history of Hungary and Israel, in its idolatry and breaking of God's covenant. Károlyi saw Hungary as an apocalyptic battle-ground, with spiritual and moral renewal needed if the Turks were to be defeated in the future. Another prominent reformer, Mihály Sztárai, used the Old Testament history of the wicked king Ahab to warn contemporary kings and princes of the dangers of invoking God's wrath through their sin.² Károlyi was also persuaded that there were clear signs that the Last Judgment was at hand in wars and rumours of wars, with evil spreading amongst the people, the growing power of the Antichrists of Constantinople and Rome, and with advances in learning. Károlyi followed Melanchthon in dividing history into six ages and four world empires. Of the last 2000 years of the sixth age he calculated that 1505 had already passed, and expected the remaining time to pass more quickly leading to the Last Judgment. The identification in Hungary of the Turks as Antichrist indeed owed more to teaching at Wittenberg, and the

² Gáspár Károlyi, Két könyv minden országoknak és királyoknak jó és gonosz szerencséjének okairól, melyből megérthetni, mi az oka a magyarországnak is romlásának és miczoda ielensegekből esmerhettiuc meg, hogy az istennec iteleti közel vagion (Debrecen, 1563) RMK 1/52, p.F6; Mihály Sztárai, História a zsidó Ákháb királynak bálványozásáról (Debrecen, 1619) RMK 1/490.

lectures on history given by Melanchthon, than to the opinions of Calvin on celestial judgement and the Antichrist.³

Apocalyptic interest heightened in Hungary with the prediction by Ferenc Dávid that 1570 would bring the destruction of the Antichrist. Expectations in eastern Hungary reached fever pitch in 1569 with heavenly signs, and the discovery of a 'black man', a popular prophet awaited to lead a holy army to defeat the Turks. This prophet called György Karácsony encamped with his supporters around Debrecen in 1569 and 1570. The captain of the Hungarian frontier fortress of Eger, Simon Forgách, wrote that the Eger garrison had to be dissuaded from joining Karácsony, since "religion had gripped them as if thunder-struck, they broke no law, did not curse or swear, and reprimanded one another for such offences". In expectation of a miraculous victory, Karácsony led a band of 600 to the frontier at Törökszentmiklós only to be crushed by the Turks there and scattered in confusion.⁴

In the early seventeenth century contacts between Hungarian student ministers and western Calvinist theologians encouraged continuing attention to be paid to apocalyptic ideas. David Pareus at Heidelberg wrote of the Papacy as the source of the true church's spiritual afflictions, with the Ottoman empire providing physical torments. Pareus also believed that the period following the Reformation would lead quickly to the end of the world, with the prophecies in the book of Revelation reflected

³ G.Kathona, Károlyi Gáspár történelmi világgépe (Debrecen, 1943).

⁴ I.Révész, 'Debreceni lelki válsága, 1561-1571' in ÉTTK 25/6 (Budapest, 1936), p.76.

in the current condition of Europe.⁵ In 1618 Pareus wrote to Gábor Bethlen explaining that he was preparing an exegesis on Revelation. Pareus praised Bethlen for understanding the need to combat the adulterous Rome, and recommended that Bethlen spent time reading Revelation with its "deep secrets".⁶ Johann Alsted, teacher at Gyulafehérvár from 1629, was a confirmed millenarian, and apocalyptic reasoning may well have drawn Alsted eastward to what he believed was a vital station in the dramas of regeneration which he foresaw.⁷ Alsted believed that the millennium was yet to come, but denied that he was a chiliast on the grounds that he awaited spiritual and not earthly joys. Alsted believed that the thousand year rule of the saints would begin in 1694, based on his calculations from the movements of the planets, and the appearance of a new star in 1604. He also predicted a revival in Protestant fortunes from 1625, and that a conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter in 1642 suggested that a major revolution should be expected amongst Europe's governments.⁸

⁵ David Pareus, A Commentary Upon The Divine Revelation of the Apostle and Evangelist John (1608), (tr.) E. Arnold (Amsterdam, 1644).

⁶ Ferenc Páriz Pápai, 'Romlott fal felépítése (Rudus Redivivum)' in MPEA 5 (1906), pp.129-181, no.4, a letter of Apr. 1618 copied from Heidelberg library.

⁷ On Alsted's move to Transylvania; "In the first instance, the effect will be experienced in places situated under the signs of the [fiery] trigon, namely in Germany, Hungary, Moravia, Bohemia" from Johann Alsted, Cursus philosophici encyclopaedia (1620), col.1270.4, and quoted by H. Hotson, 'Johann Heinrich Alsted' (Oxford D.Phil, 1994).

⁸ Johann Alsted, Diatrobe de mille annis apocalypticis or The Beloved City (London, 1643); Alsted, The world's proceeding woes and succeeding joys (London, 1642). Thomas Brightmann's views were also known in Transylvania; István Geleji Katona,

In spite of the influence of Alsted, early seventeenth century Hungarian Reformed ministers who were interested in apocalyptic ideas, such as Transylvanian superintendent István Geleji Katona, rejected attempts to set a definite date for the return of Christ.⁹ Similarly Alexis János Kecskeméti, a former student at Wittenberg and Heidelberg, accepted that the end of the world was near without suggesting exactly when this might occur. Kecskeméti also rebuked those, such as Pareus, who tried to predict the future decline of the Habsburg and Ottoman empires from Old Testament prophecies. Kecskeméti, whilst condemning predictions based on astrology as erratic, nevertheless drew attention to comets and earthquakes as signs of wars, and causes for the people to repent of their sins. Kecskeméti also stressed the need for a Hungarian prince to protect the church, establish high moral standards, and lead the recovery of national independence.¹⁰

Expectation about a looming end to the world and impending judgement in the early seventeenth century Hungarian church flared up in periodic crises during unusual natural events. Péter Alvinczi for example recorded in May 1603 that a strong earthquake at Nagyvárád, which caused two church towers to lean towards each other, led local people to believe that their final

Váltság-Titka (3 vols.), vol.1 (Nagyvárád, 1645) RMK 1/779, p.94.

⁹ Geleji Katona, Váltság-Titka, vol.1, p.1026; G.Nagy, Geleji Katona István eschatológiája (Budapest, 1941).

¹⁰ L.O.Gombáné(ed.), Kecskeméti Alexis János prédikációs könyve (Budapest, 1987), pp.200, 413 and 591. Compare this with Lutheran writers such as István Magyarai, Az országban való sok romlásoknak okairól és azokból való megszabadulásnak jó módjáról (Sárvár, 1602) RMK 1/379, also István Szathmári Ötvös(tr.), Titkos jelenése (Nagyszeben, 1668) RMK 1/1078.

hour had come.¹¹ The immediacy of God's anger and judgement against individuals and nations as a result of their sin was central to the moral imperatives raised by the apocalypse for many Hungarian writers. The way in which God dealt with Israel in the Old Testament was the reference point from which it was taught that disease, natural disasters, fire and military defeats were all a result of sin.¹² Máté Csanaki dedicated a work on the connection between the plague and sin to I.György Rákóczi in 1634. Csanaki, who had studied extensively in Germany, the Dutch Republic, England and Italy, presented stars and angels as the agents of the arrival and departure of plague, whilst stressing that it was not stars themselves which were to be feared, but God who directed them and whose anger could only be assuaged by penitence.¹³

The predilection for prophecy in Hungary and Transylvania extended from the elaborate and convoluted calculations based on planetary movements by theologians such as Alsted, to the sections of 'Prognosticon Astrologicum' published in Hungarian calendars, as indeed elsewhere in Europe, which advanced predictions about harvests, disease and wars based on the movements of heavenly bodies and stars. A calendar from 1620 predicted a November eclipse to mean grave dissension in religion

¹¹ K.Benda, 'Alvinczi Péter kassai prédikátor történeti följegyzései, 1598-1622' in A Radáy Gyűjtemény Évkönyve 1 (1955), pp.5-26.

¹² Anon., Lelki tömjénező, melyben a...könyörgésnek kedves illatu füstöletivel az Istennek...haragja engeszteltetik (Gyulafehérvár, 1646) RMK 1/785.

¹³ Máté Csanaki, A döghalálról való rövid elmélkedés (Kolozsvár, 1634) RMK 1/636.

in Hungary, and the death of a leading churchman. Another calendar dedicated to Gábor Bethlen predicted three eclipses for 1625, and the author advised Hungarians to seek protection from a spiritual eclipse through the light of the Gospel. Gáspár Debreczeni believed that a solar eclipse in 1636 would "cause changes for the worse in religion, the oppression of good old customs, and just laws". Meanwhile in 1644 David Fröhlich extrapolated from the movements of Jupiter and Mars the most dangerous days in the year to expect the start or continuation of wars. He also described how the conjunction of the planets in 1643 and 1644 would bring wonderfully beneficial changes in the Hungarian church and in politics.¹⁴ Meanwhile György Komáromi Csipkés attempted to prove that predicting the future was hateful to God in a 1660s critique of astrology. Komáromi argued that Christians should not believe lying astrologers, and that the sun, moon and stars were natural bodies and not signs for men. Komáromi also denied that comets were signs of impending evil, of God's anger, or of impending final judgement. Komáromi suggested that comets had no particular significance for any one country, giving examples of comets which had no effect on events in Hungary and Transylvania.¹⁵

Attempts to predict future events, and the causal connections seen between natural omens and human affairs were,

¹⁴ Bálint Hancken, Kalendárium (Debrecen, 1620) RMK 1/509; Dávid Herlicius, Kalendárium (Gyulafehérvár, 1625) RMK 1/555; Gáspár Debreczeni, Kalendárium (Debrecen, 1635) RMK 1/656; Dávid Fröhlich, Kalendárium...Prognosis Astrologica (Nagyvárad, 1644) RMK 1/763.

¹⁵ György Komáromi Csipkés, A Judiciaria astrologiáról és üstökös csillagokról való judicium (Debrecen, 1665) RMK 1/1023, pp.36-7 and 49-50.

as Komáromi himself conceded, widely accepted by Hungarian Reformed writers during this period. János Szalárdi recounted bad omens in the year of II.György Rákóczi's election as Transylvanian prince, with two lightning strikes on the castle at Nagyvárad, and the accidental death of a man when a church-bell fell on him. Szalárdi wrote that such "sad signs of the soon ensuing general great evil were seen as if shown by a finger", and emphasised the pressing need for repentance and conversion in Transylvania.¹⁶ The mid-1650s were years of particularly high eschatological excitement across Protestant Europe, with eclipses in 1652 and a comet in 1653, and expectations were raised for the results of a solar eclipse in August 1654. Verses written by a Reformed minister at Nagyvárad in 1655 talked of the passing and changing times, and of the sun and moon wearing "mourning clothes" and prophesying events to follow. These verses also referred to the lessons of the 1654 eclipse that the people must turn back to God, and that divisions in the church must be healed since the eclipse was confirmation that the final days were at hand.¹⁷ Predictions were published suggesting 1655 as the final dawn of the Messiah, and if not 1655 then possibly 1656

¹⁶ F.Szakály(ed.), Szalárdi János és siralmas magyar krónikája (Budapest, 1980), pp.197-8 and 342-3.

¹⁷ K.Szabó, 'Egy gúnyirat a váradi ref. esperesség presbyterianus papjai ellen, 1655-ből' in MPEIF 1 (1870), pp.590-598;

"Az üdők el multak, mindenek változnak,
Még az csillagok, is egekben bujdosnak,
Nap és hold egy más közt gyász ruhát hordoznak,
Azok is minékünk ugyan praedicálnak"
"Másodszor jelenti az világnak végét,
Amaz rettenetes napnak el jövését,
Az Chrisztus színének hamar jelenését,
Mind az egész földnek az ő vétkes terhét"

which was the supposed number of years between the covenant of Noah and Christ's incarnation. In Transylvania János Szalárdi recalled the prophecy by Imre Szilvásújfalvi Anderkó at the beginning of the century for 1657 as the year of destiny;

"Ezerhatszázötvenhétben, Mikor ember, jutsz ennyiben,
Rezzen világ minden részben, mert a nagy év percen ebben.
Avagy jegy kezd ködben lenni, vagy az Halys visszafolyni,
Az nagy Taurus elolvadni, kis Halycon adattatni.
Azért kérlek így igyeden, jobbitsd magad életben,
Ne félj semmit, ha Istenben, hited vagyon, ki úr ebben."¹⁸

As well as signs of God's anger and judgement in nature and the stars, Old Testament records of God's relationship with Israel were used as a base for understanding the unfolding fate of the Hungarians, and of the Transylvanian principality. Comparisons spread beyond the typology of Transylvanian princes as biblical kings of Israel, which we examined in chapter 8, into parallels between the history and language of Israel and Hungary. After the collapse of the medieval Hungarian monarchy and the invasion of the Turks in 1526, András Farkas wrote a history of the Jews as a poetic song, paralleling the exodus from Egypt to the promised land, with the arrival of Hungarians from Scythia to their promised land. According to Farkas, Pannonia and Dacia formed the Hungarians' Canaan, with good kings at first given to the Hungarians, later to be replaced by bad kings as punishment for sin and faithlessness. Just as the Israelites had lost their temple at Jerusalem and were forced into exile by the

¹⁸ Szakály, Szalárdi János krónikája, pp.349-350; Abraham van Franckenburg(?), Clavis Apocalyptica or a prophetic key by which the great mysteries in the Revelation and the Prophet Daniel are opened; it being made apparent that the Prophetic numbers come to an end with the year of our Lord, 1655 (London, 1651), published by Samuel Hartlib.

Babylonians, so in turn Farkas argued Hungary had lost her monasteries and had become prisoners of the Turks.¹⁹

By the early seventeenth century however such parallels between the history of Israel and Hungary were given a more positive tone, and an image developed amongst the Hungarian Reformed community of themselves as a new chosen people, living under divinely inspired princes, and worshipping in a true church with a reformed and pure communion. Albert Szenczi Molnár wrote that as Israel had been led across the Red Sea, so the Hungarians had been led out of Scythia to the most beautiful part of Europe, whilst another Reformed minister, János Iratosi, wrote that Hungarians had been given a land of plenty by God. Although Iratosi conceded that when their ancestors had come from Scythia they had not known God, he believed that they had understood through nature that there was one true God who was drawing them from Asia to Pannonia. Iratosi believed that God had been dealing, and would continue to deal with the Hungarians through providence and judgements, as he had done with the people of Israel in the past.²⁰

Interest increased in the early seventeenth century amongst Hungarian Reformed students in matters concerning the Jews and Hebrew, with some Jews admitted to Transylvania in 1623. Works

¹⁹ András Farkas, Cronica de Introductione Scyttarum in Ungariam et Judaeorum de Aegypto (?, 1538) RMK 1/11, destroyed in 1848 and surviving in a copy at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences manuscript library (Budapest), sign. Történl. 4rét, 38[(Q) volume], ff.55-60.

²⁰ J.Vásárhelyi and G.Tolnai(eds.), Szenci Molnár Albert válogatott művei (Budapest, 1976), pp.177-178; János Iratosi, Az ember életének boldogul való igazgatásának módjáról and Patika-szerszámos bolt, azaz sokféle haláloknak természetükről (Löcse, 1637) RMK 1/670-1.

on Hebrew grammar were produced during this period in Transylvania, and there were many verses and dedications in Hebrew with one Reformed minister even writing Hebrew poetry at Sárospatak in the early 1650s.²¹ Attention was also given by Reformed students at universities in the Dutch Republic to the prophecy that the Jews would be converted to Christianity before the world could end. Transylvanian Reformed ministers showed concern at least to convert radical Sabbatarians in Transylvania who had adopted Jewish law, with István Geleji Katona quoting the Talmud and the works of Jewish scholars against Sabbatarian beliefs.²²

This increased study of Hebrew by Reformed ministers also led to striking claims of linguistic links between Hebrew and Hungarian. A now lost work of the sixteenth century by János Sylvester had first suggested links between the languages, and the publication by Albert Szenczi Molnár of his Latin-Hungarian

²¹ György Komáromi Csipkés, Oratio Hebraea, continens elogium Linguae Hebraeae (Utrecht, 1651) RMK 3/1781; Komáromi Csipkés, Schola Hebraica (Utrecht, 1654) RMK 3/1904; G.Szinyei, 'Adalék Komáromi Csipkés György életéhez és irodalmi működéséhez' in MPEIF 6 (1875), pp.72-82. Pál Veszelin wrote an introduction to the Hebrew language in 1643. Johann Alsted also wrote an elegiac poem about Bethlen in Hebrew, whilst Mihály Tofeus wrote Hebrew poetry; R.Dán, 'Héber hungaricák a xvi.-xvii.században' in Magyar Könyvszemle 81 (1965), pp.352-358; also M.Carmilly in Studia Judaica (Cluj) 1 (1991).

²² István Komaromi Szvertán, Disputationes Anti-Judaicae... de conversione iudaeorum (Utrecht, 1646) RMK 3/1670, pp.210-211; András Horvat, De Judaeorum, ante novissimum diem conversione futura (Kassa, 1658) RMK 2/895; Gáspár Tiszabecsi, Disputatio Theologica de plenitudine temporis contra Judaeos (Franeker, 1651) RMK 3/1771 was taken from Hungary by the Soviet army and is now in Nyiznij Novgorod (formerly Gorkij); János Laskai, Jézus királysága (Nagyvárad, 1644) RMK 1/765, p.152; István Geleji Katona, Titkok Titka (Gyulafehérvár, 1645) RMK 1/772; S.Kohn, A szombatosok: történetük, dogmatikájuk és irodalmok (Budapest, 1890); R.Dán, 'Eőssi András és az erdélyi szombatosság genezise' in ITK 78 (1974), pp.572-577.

Lexicon in 1604 aroused renewed discussion in Protestant circles about the origins of Hungarian. Amongst German Protestants, Bartholmaus Keckermann at Danzig called on Molnár to show how close Hungarian really was to Hebrew, whilst Georg Rem at Nürnberg was much more sceptical and thought that Hungarian must be linked to Scythian tongues. Molnár himself wrote that he was not aware that Hungarian was related to any other language. István Geleji Katona however was more forthcoming, and in his Hungarian Grammar of 1645 wrote that Hungarian was not related to any language except Hebrew, whilst György Komáromi Csipkés in Hungaria Illustrata believed that "of all the languages under the sky none has more affinity to Hebrew than Hungarian".²³

By the late 1640s the tone of parallels with the history of Israel in the Old Testament had grown more anxious and negative. Pál Medgyesi, chaplain to I. György Rákóczi and then to Zsuzsanna Lórántffy, was concerned at the slow pace of progress towards a reformation of life in Reformed congregations in Hungary and Transylvania, and predicted impending judgement as a result. In 1648 at the funeral of István Bethlen, Medgyesi warned his audience;

"When I think of the state of the nations of Israel and Judah, before their captivity in Assyria and Babylonia, I see as if in a mirror the frightening position of our own nation. Oh Lord,

²³ L. Dézsi, Szenczi Molnár Albert naplója, levelezése és írományai (Budapest, 1898), pp.159-162 for letters and an epigram from Keckermann and Rem in July and Aug. 1604. J. Hegedűs, 'Megjegyzések Szenczi Molnár Albert nyelvészeti munkásságához' in ITK 62 (1958), pp.45-52; György Komáromi Csipkés, Hungaria Illustrata (Utrecht, 1655) RMK 3/1942, p.23.

favour Your people".²⁴

Again at the funeral of Zsigmond Rákóczi, Medgyesi suggested that when such godly men as Zsigmond die the future must prove very dark for Transylvania and Hungary, and argued that the time was ripe more than ever before for the people to turn towards God and away from their sins. When the military catastrophe prophesied and feared by Medgyesi came about in Poland during the summer of 1657, he repeated his claim that the causes of this calamity lay in the lack of honour given to the name of God in Hungary, and failures to adopt moral and religious reforms. In one sermon Medgyesi compared the situation in Transylvania and Hungary with that of Israel at the time of Hosea the prophet, and quoted from Hosea inserting Hungarians in place of Israelites. "Hear the word of the Lord, you Hungarians[sons of Israel], because the Lord has a charge to bring against you who live in the land", and "the Hungarians[Israelites] are stubborn, like a stubborn heifer".²⁵ In another sermon on repentance, Medgyesi compared Transylvania under II.György Rákóczi to Israel under king Josiah, who reigned before the Babylonian invasion and Israel's exile; "Oh, Magyar Judah! Will you not learn from the example of old Judah, in whose path you are walking, and believe that your payment will be the

²⁴ Pál Medgyesi, Erdély s egész magyar nép...hármás...jajja (Nagyvárad, 1653) RMK 1/880, p.25, 36, 41 and 58-59.

²⁵ Hosea iii: 4-5 "For the Israelites will live for many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred stones, without ephod or idol. Afterwards the Israelites will return and seek the Lord their God and David their king. They will come trembling to the Lord and to his blessings in the last days."; Pál Medgyesi, Igaz magyar nép negyedik jajja s-siralma (Sárospatak, 1657) RMK 1/922, pp.17-18 and 20-21.

same".²⁶

In September 1657, Medgyesi was again hammering away at the central moral message of the apocalypse which he perceived to be unfolding, with sin the cause of military defeat and invasion; "Glory has left our Israel", so "woe, woe, unto us for we have sinned!". Medgyesi also warned of further perils ahead;

"Verily, verily if we do not repent, it is to be feared, yes to be feared that with the passing of that thousand years, and because furious pagans are upon us, that the period of final judgement should not be drawn onto our heads. There are three great woes in the Apocalypse, the next more troublesome than the last: the final level under the seventh trumpet. Oh thus will our woes begin to flow over us!".²⁷

Medgyesi referred to an examination of the state of the world which showed the occurrence of "fatal periods" every 350, 500, 700 and 1000 years. Medgyesi wrote that one thousand years had elapsed since his nation had finally settled in Pannonia and Dacia and concluded that the fate of the Jews, both Judah and Israel, was paralleled in their own position. Medgyesi offered his audience meagre comfort, merely repeating the message which Jeremiah had delivered to Israel of the need for conversion and turning back to God, who would not remain angry with them for

²⁶ Pál Medgyesi, Istenhez való igaz magtérés (Sárospatak, 1658) RMK 1/935, pp.35-36; the sermon from Jeremiah xxxiii: 5-7.

²⁷ "elment, elköltözött a dicsőség a mi Izraelünkből, megszűnék és nagy hirtelen elvágódék a mi szívünknek s állapotunknak koronája. Jaj, jaj! (méltán felvehetjük e szókat, sirathatjuk vele magunkat) jaj, jaj nekünk, mert vétkeztünk!", from Pál Medgyesi, Ötödik jaj és siralom (Sárospatak, 1657) RMK 1/936 and in G.Szigethy(ed.), Erdély romlásának okairól (Budapest, 1984), p.21; the text was Lamentations v: 15-16, "The joy of our heart is ceased; our dance is turned into mourning. The crown is fallen from our head: woe unto us, that we have sinned!"

ever.²⁸

Transylvania's preachers were not alone in the Reformed world in highlighting the example of Josiah, a godly ruler over a wicked people. At the jubilee of the Reformation at Heidelberg in November 1617, Abraham Scultetus had preached before Frederick V. on the faith of Josiah and his cleansing of the temple at Jerusalem. These sermons were indeed later translated into Hungarian by Albert Szenci Molnár. In Brandenburg a case was made for Johann Sigismund as Josiah, stressing how Sigismund had cleansed the church, as Josiah had stopped Baal worship and celebrated Passover for the first time since the death of Samuel.²⁹ The parallels drawn between II.György Rákóczi and Josiah concentrated on the end of Josiah's reign, with the punishment of the people for their failure to adopt reforms of behaviour or church life. János Szalárdi highlighted the sins of the nation as the root cause of God's punishment in the crisis of the late 1650s, thus deflecting criticism away from Rákóczi personally. György Komáromi Csipkés also used the example of the death of Josiah in his funeral sermon for the leading noble János

²⁸ Pál Medgyesi, Magyarok hatodik jajja (Sárospatak, 1660) RMK 1/960; with sermons Kétség torkából kihatló lélek RMK 1/963, Bűnön buskodó lélek kénszergése RMK 1/964, Joseph romlása avagy magyar nemzet 1658 esztendőbeli nagy pusztulása RMK 1/948, Felgerjedt, s pokol fenekeig hatalmazott rohogo tűz RMK 1/961, and Rabszabadító isteni szent mesterség; Külön ülő keresztyén; Serva domine (Sárospatak, 1657) RMK 1/923; M.Tarnóc, 'Szalárdi János történet szemlélete' in ITK 74 (1970), pp.689-696.

²⁹ Albert Szenczi Molnár, Secularis concio evangelica, azaz Jubileus esztendei prédikáció, ...Scultetus Abraham által (Oppenheim, 1618) RMK 1/482, pp.315-328; Christoph Pelargus Josias, imago piorum regnum ac principum...Johann Sigismundis? (Frankfurt, 1620); B.Nischan, 'Confessionalism and Absolutism: the case of Brandenburg' in A.Pettegree, A.Duke and G.Lewis(eds.), Calvinism in Europe, 1540-1620 (Cambridge, 1994), pp.181-204.

Rácz, who had died whilst defending Nagyvárad in 1660 against the Turkish vezir. Komáromi compared the death of Rácz to that of Josiah against the Egyptian king Neco on the battle-field of Megiddo, that is at Armageddon.³⁰

(ii) International Calvinism and Transylvanian Diplomacy

The engagement between ministers and teachers from across the Calvinist world in the early seventeenth century was often marked by efforts to encourage international cooperation between Protestant princes in diplomatic and military affairs. Some Reformed leaders urged princes to act against the Habsburgs as the supposed agents of the Papacy, thereby ushering in the long awaited apocalyptic age when human and divine powers would work in concert towards defeating the Antichrist, and achieving ultimate reform and renewal of the church and in the world. Reformed princes often proved capable of successfully combining the demands made on pious Protestant consciences with the furtherance of their own interests, but at any rate Calvinist princes were amongst the most active in battles against the Habsburgs during the Thirty Years War.

As contact grew between western Calvinists and the Reformed

³⁰ György Komáromi Csipkés, Szomoru esetek tüköre. gyászbeszéd Rácz János fölött (Sárospatak, 1661) RMK 1/986; István Czeglédi, Ama ritka példájú...II.Rákóczi György...testének földben tétele felett predikáció (Kassa, 1661) RMK 1/974; Szakály, Szalárdi János krónikája, part 5, p.322; János Kemény, Gilead Balsamuma, azaz Sz.Dávid 150 Soltárinak (Sárospatak, 1659) RMK 1/947, p.239.

church in Hungary and Transylvania there were also attempts to include the Transylvanian principality in Calvinist and Protestant alliances. During this period there was consistent Reformed advocacy in Transylvania of a confessional foreign policy, which was significantly to affect Transylvania's involvement in the Thirty Years War. In the remainder of this chapter I shall assess the development of Transylvania's diplomatic alliances against the Habsburgs before 1645, and against Poland in the 1650s, and assess the pressures under which Transylvanian foreign policy was formulated. I have already highlighted the framework of Reformed ideas surrounding the Transylvanian princes, with frequent idealisation of the princes as Old Testament kings, heroically defending the true church in battle against opponents perceived to be demonically inspired, acting alongside notions of Transylvania's providential destiny. Contemporary propaganda consistently emphasised the denominational motivation behind the actions of Transylvania's princes, and I shall argue that the influence of the Transylvanian Reformed church hierarchy, and of Johann Bisterfeld and Jan Comenius, as prominent advisers to the Rákóczi family, meant that confessional interests increasingly featured in decision-making. I shall therefore conclude that apocalyptic beliefs seem to have provided an edge to Transylvanian foreign policy, particularly in the decade after 1648.

In August 1619 Austria's difficulty became Transylvania's opportunity. Gábor Bethlen led a successful Transylvanian army against the Habsburg Emperor in alliance with the Bohemian

confederates and in contact with Frederick V. By August 1620 Bethlen had been elected king of Hungary, but refused to be crowned, concerned at the possible reaction this would provoke in Constantinople.³¹ Propagandists in Hungary from both sides were not slow to put their confessional gloss on the unfolding conflict. Péter Alvinczi laid the blame for the war at the door of the Catholic clergy, and particularly the Jesuits for their attempts to eradicate Protestantism from Habsburg Hungary, which Alvinczi argued Bethlen was duty bound to prevent. Péter Pázmány responded with a ringing denunciation of the Transylvanian prince for his rebellion against the right authority of the Emperor, and accused Protestants in Hungary of interfering with the free practice of Catholicism.³² Circumstances changed in 1621 after the disastrous defeat of the Bohemian confederates in November 1620 at the White Mountain. Bethlen himself had a successful campaign in the spring of 1621, pushing forward to Érsekújvár, but abandoned by his coalition partners and fearful of being seen

³¹ S.Szilágyi, 'Bethlen Gábor fejedelem uralkodása történetéhez' in TT 1879, a letter of support from Bethlen to Friedrich in Oct. 1619, pp.242-243; S.Szilágyi(ed.), 'Bethlen Gábor levelei' in TT 1885, Hungarian king to Bohemian king (Bethlen to Friedrich) Aug. 1620, pp.655-656, and Bethlen's letter to István Doczy and János Rimay, pp.659-665.

³² Péter Alvinczi, Querela Hungariae (?, 1620), translated as A nemes magyarország panaszainak megoltalmazása (ed.) J.Heltai (Budapest, 1989); translated into French as Manifeste complaincte du Royaume de Hongrie, adressée a toute la Chrestienté, et specialement a ses alliés (Heidelberg, 1620) RMK 3/1297; see also Copia eines Sendschreibens...von Bethlehem Gabor Fürsten in Sibenbürgen (Prague, 1619) RMK 3/1258, and Articulen Vande Confederatie der Hungarische, Bohemische Ende gheincorporeerte Provintien (Hague, 1620) RMK 3/1290; Péter Pázmány, Falsae originis motuum Hungaricorum succincta refutatio. Az magyarországi támadásoknak hamisan költött eredetének... hamisítása (Vienna, 1620) RMK 1/506, especially pp.1, 11 and 32-3.

by the Turks as too independent, Bethlen soon made his peace with the Habsburgs in December 1621 at Nikolsburg. This treaty saw Bethlen renounce his claim to the Hungarian throne, in return for seven counties in eastern Hungary and for territories in Silesia. In the 1620s Bethlen continued to pursue control of more Hungarian territory in a further campaign against the Habsburgs from August 1623 until April 1624, but the Hungarian estates were suitably cowed by the fate of Bohemia and denied the Transylvanian prince the active support given during his first campaign. Then in 1624 Bethlen offered to marry the thirteen year old Habsburg princess Cecilia Renata, with secret instructions given to his representative in Vienna including the astounding suggestion that the Austrian house could make Transylvania its own by marriage, and thus regain Transylvania from Turkish suzerainty.³³

Sir Thomas Roe at the Porte was suspicious of Bethlen's ambition, and feared that he intended to change his religion for territorial advantage. Roe, in correspondence with Bethlen, tried to encourage him to ally with Protestant powers for the "publique benefit of Christendome".³⁴ Indeed when Bethlen's bold attempt to unite with the Habsburgs was rejected, he did return to his previous anti-Habsburg policies. In 1624 Albert Szenczi Molnár visited England to meet the Archbishop of Canterbury, George Abbot, and the ambassador of the Palatinate in London, Johann

³³ S.Szilágyi (ed.), Adalékok Bethlen Gábor szövetségeseinek történetéhez, ÉTKK 2/8 (Budapest, 1873), pp.44-56.

³⁴ S.Richardson, The negotiations of Sir Thomas Roe in his Embassy to the Ottoman Porte from 1621-1628 (London, 1740), pp.350, a letter of Feb. 1624.

Joachim von Rusdorf, who both encouraged the Transylvanians to contact Charles I. with the aim of forging a Protestant alliance.³⁵ Bethlen married the Protestant Catherine of Brandenburg in March 1626, the same month as an anti-Habsburg alliance was ratified at the Hague between England, Denmark and the Dutch Republic. In April 1626 Bethlen wrote to Charles I., and began protracted negotiations to join the allies through an envoy, Matthias Quadt, but the negotiations stalled over the 40,000 taller monthly subsidy which Bethlen demanded in return for embarking upon a campaign against the Habsburgs. Bethlen received a bad press in western Europe for his untrustworthiness, and was satirised in verse;

"...We heare he has demis'd
A Drumme, to fill all Christendome with the sound:
But he cannot drawe his forces neere it,
To march yet, for the violence of the noise.
And therefore he is faine by a designe,
To carry 'hem in the ayre, and at some distance,
Till he be married, then they shall appeare.
Lick-finger: "Or never; well, God b'wi'you".³⁶

However the negotiations finally reached a successful conclusion with the Westminster treaty of 30 November 1626, by which Bethlen also gained diplomatic recognition for Transylvania from England, with Denmark and the Dutch Republic ratifying the Westminster agreement in separate accords of February 1627. Sir

³⁵ J.Vásárhelyi, Eszmei áramlatok és politika Szenci Molnár Albert életművében (Budapest, 1985), p.86.

³⁶ Ben Jonson, 'The Staple of News 14/24 Apr. 1626' a discussion between Lick-finger and Thomas Barberi on Bethlen; G.Gömöri, 'Bethlen Gábor a korabeli angol nyomtatványokban és szépirodalomban' in ITK 98 (1994), p.60; see the more favourable reports in I.Gál, 'Maksai Péter angol nyelvű Bethlen Gábor életrajza, 1629-ből' in ITK 36 (1926), pp.223-238; V.Fraknói, 'Bethlen Gábor és IV. Keresztély dán király' in TT 1881, pp.102-103.

Thomas Roe wrote to the Transylvanian prince in 1626 that;

"you[Bethlen] have now begunne to enter into a more honorable and secure way, by a confederacy with those princes, who by the common bond of one Christian faith, will nor forsake their allyes, nor bee wanting to their owne honours".

Gábor Bethlen launched his attack against the Habsburgs in August 1626, but he had already concluded a peace treaty by December 1626 at Pozsony along the lines of the Nikolsburg agreement of 1621. A letter from his prospective Danish ally Christian IV. in March 1627 indicated that Bethlen had concealed the progress of these negotiations from his allies, and Roe too became embittered with Bethlen.³⁷

Bethlen's interventions in the Thirty Years War drew attention towards Transylvania as a potential partner against the Habsburgs, but Bethlen also exasperated likely allies by his fickle attitude towards agreements. Bethlen nevertheless established the precedent in Transylvania that the principality could and should intervene militarily in the interest of European Protestantism, as well as to defend Hungarian constitutional freedoms. Following the accession of I.György Rákóczi, Paul Strassburg was sent to the Transylvanian court opening a channel for negotiations between Rákóczi and the Swedes between 1631 and 1633, and in May 1632 Gustav Adolf wrote to the Transylvanian prince calling on him to join the anti-Habsburg coalition. However internal political difficulties for Rákóczi, and Gustav

³⁷ Szilágyi, ÉTTK 2/8, pp.78-93; Richardson, The negotiations of Sir Thomas Roe, pp.539, 716-717 and 809; Fraknói, TT 1881, pp.98-102; H.Marczali(ed.), 'Regesták a külföldi levéltárakból' in TT 1879, pp.550 and 546, 'mémoire fait a Londres oct. 1 1626 par M.Quad de Wickrott'; S.Szilágyi(ed.), 'Bethlen Gábor fejedelem levelezése' (Budapest, 1886), pp.341-342, cccxxvi, Jan. 1626 to Alvinczi.

Adolf's death combined to prevent any concrete conclusion to these negotiations.³⁸ Despite the changed circumstances after the Peace of Prague in 1635, Transylvania was still courted as a potential ally by the Swedes and French in their continuing battles against Habsburg power in Europe. The level of trust in I.György Rákóczi in the 1630s was enhanced by the reputation of his prime negotiator and diplomatic envoy, Johann Bisterfeld. Bisterfeld was a close adviser to the Rákóczi family, and he travelled to western Europe on foreign policy missions between 1637 and 1639. Bisterfeld was in contact with others interested in Transylvanian affairs on these trips such as John Dury. Samuel Hartlib also knew of Bisterfeld's progress, and heard rumours that Habsburg supporters intended to assassinate Bisterfeld because they felt that he was the main instrument in stirring up Rákóczi for war.³⁹

As a result of Bisterfeld's second mission to Paris, proposals were made for an alliance between France and Transylvania. Negotiations reached a final stage in Germany in 1638, but Bisterfeld had not been empowered to conclude an alliance prior to leaving Transylvania, and the opportunity

³⁸ S.Szilágyi (ed.), Okirattár Strassburg Pál 1631-1633-iki követsége és I.Rákóczi György első diplomáciai összeköttetései történetéhez (Budapest, 1882), pp.16-24, and a letter of May 1632 at pp.51-52. Sweden was often seen as fulfilling prophecy from Revelation about a power from the north. A messianic emblem was used about Gustav Adolf of a white pelican feeding its young from its own blood, a sacrificial image also commonly used by the Hungarian Reformed church.

³⁹ Hartl. 2/6, f.6a, Dury to Hartlib, Nov. 1638; Hartl. 9/1, f.95b, Nov. 1639 from Dury; Hartl. 43, f.21a from John Rulice in 1644. For Bisterfeld's role see Hartl. 2/6, f.4a and 37, f.90a; also Hartl. 1/33, f.39a in which Cyprian Kinner passes on greetings from Bisterfeld to Hartlib in 1648.

slipped away.⁴⁰ Rákóczi also used Henrik Meerbott from Hesse as an envoy to the Swedes in 1637. In December 1638 the Swedish Council of State empowered Johann Salvius to bind an alliance with Rákóczi but whether through caution on Rákóczi's part, or because of disagreements over subsidies for Transylvania, no treaty was ever concluded. In June 1641 the French and Swedes renewed their partnership, and from 1642 began once again the seemingly tortuous task of encompassing Transylvania in their alliance. In August 1642 Bisterfeld presented a draft plan to Rákóczi for a treaty with the Swedes, but negotiations dragged on into 1643 over subsidy payments, and the need for Rákóczi to secure Turkish approval for any external military action.⁴¹ In September 1643 Rákóczi received the encouragement of his former chaplain, the Transylvanian bishop István Geleji Katona, that co-religionists in England, Scotland, Germany, Bohemia and the Dutch Republic had placed high hopes in Rákóczi's positive intervention in the current conflict.⁴² I.György Rákóczi finally signed a treaty with the Swedes in November 1643 and with the French in

⁴⁰ Szilágyi, I.Rákóczi György első diplomáciai összeköttetései történetéhez, pp.130-131; S.Gergely(ed.), 'I.Rákóczi György összeköttetése francziaországgal' in TT 1889, pp.686-687 and 692-694, for letters between Rákóczi and Richelieu in 1638 and 1639, with negotiations via the French ambassador at Danzig. Richelieu had drawn up clauses for a potential treaty with Transylvania in the late 1620s shortly before Bethlen's death.

⁴¹ K.Wibling(ed.), 'Magyarország történetét érdeklő okiratok a svédországi levéltárakból' in TT 1892, pp.440-473 and 593-634, with Bisterfeld's plan at pp.594-596, and a 1644 letter from Christina to Rákóczi at pp.621-622; S.Szilágyi(ed.), Okmánytár I.Rákóczi György svéd és francia szövetezéseinek történetéhez (Budapest, 1873), xviii, xxiii and xlv.

⁴² S.Szilágyi(ed.), 'I.Rákóczi György fejedelem és Geleji Katona István püspök levelezéséből' in EPK 1874, pp.21-23.

April 1644, agreeing to continue fighting against Ferdinand III. until such times as there was a universal peace. Rákóczi also gained the consent of the Porte for his attack on Hungary, with permission to reclaim the seven eastern Hungarian counties previously held by Bethlen, and plans for a Turkish army to join Rákóczi's advance from Buda.

The alliance with the French caused some problems on both sides, with János Kemény for example insisting that the Swedes deserved prior mention in the treaty since the French were not fighting for the sake of religion. The French meanwhile expressed concern over Rákóczi's plans to advance Protestantism in Hungary to the prejudice of Catholics, before finally ratifying the alliance in 1644.⁴³ Within three months of war breaking out The Manifesto of George Racokzkie was published in London, claiming that Rákóczi's rising showed his love for God, the Protestant religion and the liberty of his country. This pamphlet also asserted that the Catholic clergy and Jesuits aimed to deny Protestants their liberty of worship in Hungary. The Habsburg view was soon presented as well in London with a competing tract arguing that Rákóczi had joined with Hungary's enemies, and accusing Rákóczi of wishing to make the Transylvanian princely title hereditary in his family.⁴⁴

⁴³ S.Gergely(ed.), 'I.Rákóczi György összeköttetése francziaországgal' in TT 1890, pp.61-72, 'Instructions donnée par M. D'Avaux et M. Servien a M. Croissy s'en allant vers le prince de Transylvanie 15 September 1644'.

⁴⁴ The Declaration or, Manifesto of George Racokzkie, Prince of Transylvania, to the States and Peeres of Hungarie; together with the reasons added thereunto of his modern taking up of armes (London, 1644), p.7 (also published in German RMK 3/1642); A Declaration or Manifesto, wherein the Roman Imperiall Majesty makes known to the States and Peeres of Hungarie, what reasons

Johann Bisterfeld continued to act as a close adviser to I.György Rákóczi, and leading French and Swedish diplomats wrote to him to encourage the prince to remain faithful to their 1644 alliance.⁴⁵ Bisterfeld indeed had high expectations of the results of the alliance which he had worked so hard to create, after prolonged struggles at court to win the prince over against more conservative advisers.⁴⁶ In a letter to Rákóczi in January 1645, Bisterfeld enthused on the expected arrival of Torstenson and the Swedish army in Moravia. He offered the prediction that the long-awaited days of the fall of the Antichrist were now finally at hand.⁴⁷ However Rákóczi in the end only fought from February 1644 until March 1645, and resigned from the coalition

and motives have compelled him to proceed in open warre against the Prince of Transylvania (London, 1644), p.3; Miklós Esterházy, Rákóczi György erdélyi fejedelemnek irt egynéhány intő leveleinek igaz paríája (Pozsony, 1644), p.33.

⁴⁵ L.Abafi(ed.), 'Naplókönyv, 1632-ből' in TT 1883, pp.519-542 and 645-655; S.Szilágyi(ed.), Erdély és az északkeleti háború- levelek és okiratok (2 vols.), (Budapest, 1890-1), vol.2, p.210, from Skytte at Kolozsvár in Jan. 1652; S.Szilágyi(ed.), A két Rákóczy György fejedelem családi levelezése. Monumenta Hungariae Historica 24 (Budapest, 1875), Sep. 1656, dxcii, p.510; Szilágyi, I.Rákóczi György svéd és francia szövetezéseinek történetéhez, lxxv, pp.155-6 and xci, pp.180-181, Torstenson to Bisterfeld in 1644.

⁴⁶ "Vraijment c'est une singuliere grace de dieu qu'il nous a delivré d'un terrible chaos de nos affaires. Car les meschantes pratticques de quelques Mammonistes, Machiavellistes et poltrons, comme aussi une infinité d'incommodités avoient tellement troublé l'esprit de nostre bon prince, qu'il avoit extremement affaire d'un tel renfort. Voici donc une preuve evidente, que la main du bon dieu gouverne et soustient ceste sainte affaire"; Bisterfeld to Rebenstock, Nov. 1644; Szilágyi, I.Rákóczi György első diplomaciai összeköttetései történetéhez, xlvi, pp.144-5.

⁴⁷ Szilágyi, I.Rákóczi György svéd és francia szövetezéseinek történetéhez, Jan. 1645 Bisterfeld to Rákóczi, pp.229-230, with a comment on the new Pope; "Placet, quod Papa se Innocentium X. vocaverit. Omnes enim Innocenti fuere ambitiosi, bellicosi, contra Caesares ac Principes seditiosi, at vix non furiosi".

with the French and Swedes in August 1645. A separate peace was finalised between Transylvania and the Habsburgs at Linz in December 1645, confirming the freedoms of Hungarian Protestants, and the return of the coveted eastern provinces of Hungary to direct Transylvanian control. In February 1646 Bisterfeld wrote to French diplomatic envoys of his disappointment at the sudden end to hostilities, but firmly believed that the peace could not be permanent. In a letter to Zsigmond Rákóczi, Bisterfeld proclaimed that there would never be real peace until Rome had been completely destroyed.⁴⁸

As I have already suggested diplomatic and military cooperation in the Protestant interest had been a rallying cry throughout the period of the Thirty Years War, but Reformed Transylvania seemed most ready to act on that confessional call from around the outbreak of the general European peace. The convention of solid support for a confessional foreign policy was by this stage firmly established at the Transylvanian court, and the decade from 1648 had an almost constant expectation in Transylvania of a resumption of conflict either against Catholic Poland, or directly against the Habsburgs. It was also the period in which Reformed alliances were most strongly advocated with foreign Calvinist and Protestant influence at its peak, and a decade when the atmosphere of apocalyptic and millenarian excitement was at its height. Prominent Reformed figures both within Transylvania

⁴⁸ Gergely, TT 1890, with a letter from Bisterfeld to Mazarin of May 1645, pp.72-76; J.V.Kvacsala, 'Bisterfeld János Henrik élete' in Századok 25 (1891), p.548. Transylvania was therefore not part of the final peace negotiations at Münster and Osnabrück in 1648.

and elsewhere, supported positive action in the Protestant interest by II.György Rákóczi. Johann Bisterfeld continued to attempt to engage Transylvania in alliances with Protestant powers, and to solidify an anti-Habsburg partnership. Meanwhile Jan Comenius, working at Sárospatak from 1650, also encouraged immediate military action on the basis of the prophetic skills of his fellow Moravian exile, Mikuláš Drabík.

Drabík had made initial contact with the Rákóczi family in 1636, and approached I.György Rákóczi about his gaining the Hungarian crown in 1644 and 1645. Drabík was allowed to visit Sárospatak again in January 1651 and in September 1652, and predicted that in 1653 the Rákóczis would ally with the Swedes and the Palatinate, and join with the Turks and Tartars to overthrow the Habsburgs and defeat the Papacy. Drabík claimed that by the end of 1652 II.György Rákóczi would be crowned king of Hungary at Pozsony, and that the Turks would hand Buda back to him. Drabík claimed that his prophecies were not like the uncertain conjectures of astrologers, but truly divine revelations, but Bisterfeld opposed Drabík and incurred Comenius' wrath for doing so.⁴⁹ Comenius was not however without personal

⁴⁹ J.V.Kvacsala, Korrespondence Jana Amosa Komenského (Prague, 1897), cxviii, for Bisterfeld to Zsigmond in 1650 about early problems with Comenius. Records from Kecskemét in 1636 noted that Drabík's early prophecies for the Rákóczi house were "of great encouragement" but also came to bring "dangers"; S.Szilágyi(ed.), 'Kecskeméti ref. anyakönyvi följegyzések' in Sárospataki Füzetek 1 (1857-8), pp.652-659, and 2 (1858-9), pp.65-78. Lux e Tenebris published in 1657 included the predictions of Drabík alongside earlier prophecies which gave a messianic role to Friedrich V. and Gustav Adolf; J.V.Kvacsala 'Egy álpróféta a xvii-ik században' in Századok 23 (1889), pp.745-766; J.V.Kvacsala 'A xvii. századbeli chiliasmus történetéhez' in Protestáns Szemle 2 (1890), pp.428-450; N.Mout, 'Chiliastic Prophecy and Revolt in the Habsburg Monarchy during the Seventeenth Century' in M.Wilks(ed.), Prophecy and

influence within the ruling family, over Zsigmond Rákóczi in particular. In 1651 it was Comenius who conducted Zsigmond's marriage to Maria Henrietta, the daughter of Frederick V. Comenius also addressed an appeal to Zsigmond in support of Drábík's prophecies in a 'Secret sermon of Nathan to David'. Comenius laid out the role which he foresaw for Zsigmond as the liberator of central Europe, who would spread light from Hungary into Moravia, Bohemia and Poland. Comenius presented Zsigmond as a new king David set against Goliaths, in an apocalyptic battle of the lamb against the beast. Comenius predicted that Zsigmond would free his people from the yoke of the Antichrist and Turkish oppression, and then move on to free neighbouring peoples from the same fate in Austria, Moravia, Bohemia, Silesia, Poland and Ruthenia. According to Comenius, Zsigmond would then achieve the liberation of Europe and the conversion of the Turks.⁵⁰

After 1648 the attention of the Transylvanian court indeed turned to Poland, towards which Transylvanian princes had a tradition of acquisitiveness. I.György Rákóczi tried to gain support to have Zsigmond crowned king of Poland in the late 1640s, and Zsigmond inherited a large swathe of the Rákóczi family lands in north-eastern Hungary which it was hoped would provide a successful springboard to the Polish throne. However

Eschatology. Studies in Church History (Oxford, 1994), pp.93-109; K.Péter, 'Drábik Miklós, a lehoktai próféta' in Világosság 18 (1977), pp.36-41.

⁵⁰ J.V.Kvacsala, 'Comenius irata Rákóczi Zsigmondhoz' in MPEA 4 (1905), pp.128-143; Jan Comenius, The Labyrinth of the World and the Paradise of the Heart (eds.) L.Dobossy and J.Mayer, (Budapest, 1990); J.C.Davis, 'Formal Utopia/Informal Millennium: The struggle between Form and Substance as a context for Seventeenth-Century Utopianism' in K.Kumar and S.Bann(eds.), Utopias and the Millennium (London, 1993), pp.17-31.

these plans were brought to nothing with the election of Jan Casimir as Polish king, and in 1651 Zsigmond told a Swedish envoy, Berndt Skytte, that the Swedes could not find better partners in a war against the Poles and the Emperor than Transylvania, since the French as Catholics could not share many of their common Protestant aims. Skytte reported back to the Swedish chancellor, Axel Oxenstierna, that the Transylvanians would certainly be willing to attack Habsburg Hungary, only needing the encouragement of permission from the Porte.⁵¹

The logic behind Comenius' plans for the future of the Rákóczi house, with Zsigmond at the centre of Protestant ambitions in central Europe, unravelled with the latter's early death in 1652. Comenius' faith in Drabík as a prophet was badly undermined by Zsigmond's death. However when Drabík correctly predicted that II.György Rákóczi would name his son Ferenc to succeed him as prince, Comenius tried to get Drabík's other prophecies to the Transylvanian court through János Kemény, and also through András Klobusiczky. From 1652 the focus of attention and expectation lay on the shoulders of II.György Rákóczi alone. In 1654 György commented on Drabík's prophecies that he did not believe them to be divinely inspired, but that if some God-given road opened for action abroad, he was ready to take it.⁵²

⁵¹ Szilágyi, Erdély és az északkeleti háború, vol.1, pp.200-202. Bisterfeld and the Transylvanian bishop György Csulai discussed the ethics of a possible war in Poland in 1651; S.Szilágyi(ed.), Okmánytár II.Rákóczi György diplomáciai összeköttetéseihez (Budapest, 1874), pp.64-65 and 66-73.

⁵² "az cseh ember látási, hogy revelationes divinae sint, nem hihetjük, holott sokakban, többire mindenekben ellenkező dolgok találtattak, ...higyje el azt kld jó Menanszki uram, valamiben istenes út, mód adatik, ad omnes occasiones készen találtatunk", Szilágyi, Erdély és az északkeleti háború, vol.1,

Comenius further encouraged such sentiment in 1654, suggesting that II.György Rákóczi was a political Messiah, blessed with a heroic spirit passed down from Moses which would enable György to liberate his country and its neighbours, and reform religion like a new Gideon;

"And who will it be, if not you György Rákóczi, most noble Transylvanian prince? You are the one, you alone, you the last hope of your own! Of your home, land, people, the only holy anchor. Do you not hear God searching for the man...Oh, be open to being discovered! Your Israel, all your people, tremble before the Turks, groan before the Jebusites! they cry aloud with the perpetual oppression of the Antichrist approaching, that God himself should send a Messiah. Do you not hear?...Oh may God uncover your ears, and your heart, that you may hear! Oh do not reject such signs as Saul did because of disobedience!"⁵³

Zsigmond Rákóczi had offered an appraisal of Transylvania's diplomatic situation in a letter to György in January 1652, in which he doubted that any of Transylvania's immediate neighbours whether Austrians, Poles, Moldavians, Wallachians, Turks or Cossacks could be relied upon as allies. Zsigmond therefore concluded that Transylvania was forced to think in terms of long-distance allies, but recognised that such partners might not

pp.334-335, a letter of Aug. 1654 from Rákóczi to Jónás Mednyánszky.

⁵³ "Quis autem ille erit, si non Tu Georgi Racoci, Celsissime Transylvaniae Princeps? Tu unus, Tu solus, Tu ultimus, ultima Tuorum spes! Tuae inquam Domus, Tuae Terrae, Tuae Gentis, solus unus Anchora sacra. Audis Deum quaerere Virum,...Ah patere Te inveniri!". "Israel Tuus, tota Gens Tua, trepidat a Turcis, gemit a Jebusitis! clamant oppressi anti-Christiano jugo vicini etiam, ut sibi Deus mittet Salvatorem. Non audis?...O aperiat Deus aures Tuas, et cor Tuam, ut audias! O absit omen rejecti propter inobedientiam tandem Saulis!"; J.V.Kvacsala, 'Comenius irata II.Rákóczy Györgyhez' in MPEA 4 (1905), pp.144-168. Samuel Hartlib had a copy of a draft of 'Gentis Felicitas'; Hartl. 114/1, f.19a and 7/72, July 1654 to Hartlib. Figulus wrote to Hartlib in 1654 on Drábik's prophecies; Kvacsala, Korrespondence Jana Amosa Komenského, cxlii, p.187.

always be able to help Transylvania with force of arms in a crisis.⁵⁴ The focus of Transylvanian diplomacy throughout the 1650s indeed lay in cultivating distant Protestant allies, but Zsigmond's concerns about Transylvania's international position proved eventually to have been fully justified after the Polish campaign of 1657.

In 1654 II.György Rákóczi sent Constantin Schaum as an envoy to the Protestant powers of northern and western Europe, galvanising Transylvania's friends abroad into activity. These included Comenius who had left Hungary for Lissa in Poland in 1654, frustrated with the lack of prompt action from II.György Rákóczi in response to his proposals. Comenius put Schaum in touch with a series of contacts on his voyage from Poland to England in late 1654, via Sweden and the Dutch Republic. Comenius also wrote to Samuel Hartlib in January 1655 commending the "Transylvanian agent" to him in London. In November 1654 Schaum sent news from London of the progress of his diplomatic mission to II.György Rákóczi, including the prophecies of an "astronomical doctor" which had been given to him by Comenius. These predictions threatened the imminent destruction of central Europe in war, to be followed by a return to true religion, and offered Transylvania the prospect of acquiring Habsburg Hungary.⁵⁵

In early 1655 Schaum travelled to Sweden to meet Karl X.,

⁵⁴ S.Szilágyi(ed.), 'Herczeg Rákóczy Zsigmond levelezése' in TT 1891, cclxxxi, Zsigmond to György, pp.232-233.

⁵⁵ Szilágyi, Erdély és az északkeleti háború, vol.1, pp.340-343, a letter with news from England in Nov. 1654; 'Prognosticon impartialis cujusdam astronomiae doctoris. Ex novis dni Comenii ad me scriptis'.

returning to England by May 1655 through Denmark and the Dutch Republic. John Dury was greatly interested by Schaum's progress, and wrote to Hartlib in May 1655 that "I hope that the Transylvanian gentleman is gone long ago with good satisfaction: when you write to him tell him that I will endeavour in my sphere to satisfie his expectation." Hartlib was sufficiently encouraged himself by Schaum's stay in London in 1655 to include news in a memorandum to Oliver Cromwell that the Transylvanian prince was "to give a prooffe of his zealous activity and devoted services, as in bearing witness of the uprightness and zeale of your Highn[ess] intentions towards the whole Protestant interest."⁵⁶ Schaum, perhaps aided by Hartlib's good offices, was able to address Oliver Cromwell on 4 May 1655, proposing a correspondence between England and Transylvania towards building up an alliance between Protestant countries to protect the freedom of religion. Cromwell's response to this initiative was a letter to Rákóczi at the end of May 1655, agreeing with the principle of a brotherhood between Protestant princes, and highlighting the plight of Alpine Protestants as an example of how such cooperation could be brought to good effect.⁵⁷

As we have seen the mid-1650s were years of high apocalyptic expectation amongst Protestants, with demands for immediate action against the Habsburgs and other Catholic powers. Peter

⁵⁶ Hartl. 4/3, f.97a, 99, 98a, 101a, 105a and 106a; Hartl. 34/4, f.15a, letters from May to July 1655; Hartl. 54, f.72a.

⁵⁷ MSS. Rawlinson A.261, f.46 in the Bodleian library, Oxford; Szilágyi, II.Rákóczi György diplomaciai összeköttetéseihez, pp.182-183, a letter of May 1655 from Westminster; also a letter from Thurloe to Rákóczi in May 1655 in MSS. Rawlinson A.26, f.81; E.Simonyi, Londoni Magyar okmánytár (Pest, 1859), pp.216-217 and 219-221.

Figulus, Comenius' travelling secretary, brought news to Hartlib in 1654 of "Jesuits...forced to entertain themselves with the Tragical objects which God hath set before them: of the vanishing of their hopes...of the Transylvanian Army which is on foot; of some terrible signes from heaven such as is an earthquake". In 1655 Comenius wrote to Hartlib of the imminence of the destruction of Babylon and the reconstruction of Zion, and in late 1655 Comenius was convinced that Rákóczi was about to act.⁵⁸ Figulus informed Hartlib that at this time "Mr.Comenius hath every month his owne cursor into Hungarie to his Brethren et[sic] corresponds likewise with the praefectus Dominarum Principis Transylvaniae". Comenius also corresponded with András Klobusiczky at Sárospatak, and in September 1655 Comenius asked Klobusiczky about the state of negotiations with Sweden, and on opinions at the Transylvanian court of Drabík as a prophet, and whether Drabík's prophecies had been translated into Hungarian. In 1656 an offer from Comenius to act as an honest broker between Transylvania and Sweden was passed on to the prince by another of his contacts at the Gyulafehérvár court, Jonás Mednyánszky.⁵⁹

In March 1656 Sweden invaded Poland, and Karl X. sent Gothard Welling to Transylvania to ensure Rákóczi's favourable neutrality during the invasion. This call to inaction from the Swedes after such lengthy manoeuvring between the Protestant

⁵⁸ Hartl. 43, f.45a from Zurich in July 1654.

⁵⁹ Kvacsala, Korrespondence Jana Amosa Komenského, cliv, clv and clx; Szilágyi, Erdély és az északkeleti háború, vol.1, pp.384-385, Klobusiczky sending news in Mar. 1655 of a possible Anglo-Swiss confederation and vol.2, pp.95-96, Apr. 1656.

powers left János Kemény and others at the Transylvanian court frustrated. The death of Bisterfeld in 1655 was keenly felt, and Zsuzsanna Lórántffy wrote to György in 1656 of how much Bisterfeld's advice and loyalty were missed at such a delicate time.⁶⁰ II.György Rákóczi's desire for activity was hardly satiated by a campaign in Wallachia in 1655, and he ardently wished to realise long-standing Transylvanian ambitions in Poland. Negotiations began with the Swedes in 1656, which finally led to a formal alliance in December. This treaty envisaged the future division of a conquered Poland between Sweden and Transylvania, and the promotion of Protestantism in Poland. Rákóczi was to gain much of Little Poland, Lithuania, and the titles of king of Poland, and grand Duke of Lithuania.⁶¹

In January 1657 II.György Rákóczi invaded Poland with an army of 40,000 under his command. Almost immediately however the advance went drastically wrong, with the opposing forces unexpectedly strong, and then in July 1657 the Swedes abandoned the Polish enterprise to face an attack from Denmark. The main Transylvanian army under Rákóczi was left with no option but to retreat to north-eastern Hungary. Recriminations in Transylvania began almost immediately, with claims that the attack on Poland

⁶⁰ Szilágyi, A Rákóczy családi levelezése, Sep. 1656, dxcii, p.510; Szilágyi, Erdély és az északkeleti háború, vol.1, pp.518-519 and vol.2, pp.73.

⁶¹ Szilágyi, Erdély és az északkeleti háború, vol.2, pp.190-196 for the text of the Dec. 1656 treaty between Sweden and Transylvania; K.Wibling(ed.), 'Diplomáciai okmányok II.Rákóczy György uralkodása történetéhez' in TT 1893, pp.421-423; R.I.Frost, After the Deluge. Poland-Lithuania and the Second Northern War, 1655-1660 (Cambridge, 1993); S.Akerman, 'Queen Christina of Sweden and Messianic Thought' in D.S.Katz and J.S.Israel(eds.), Sceptics, Millenarians and Jews (Leiden, 1990), pp.142-161.

was ill-considered and badly prepared. Worse still Rákóczi had completely ignored standard Transylvanian diplomatic practice, and had undertaken the campaign without first seeking the agreement of the Porte. The Turks took advantage of Rákóczi's weakness, exacting their retribution by sponsoring an invasion of Transylvania from 1658. Rákóczi also had to face significant internal opposition from Ákos Barcsai, and from János Bethlen, captured along with part of the army by the Tartars, who charged that Rákóczi had recklessly endangered Transylvania.⁶²

In 1657 Comenius reacted to the news of Rákóczi's disastrous retreat from Poland; "Alas! We hoped for alleviation from the never failing tyranny of the Antichrist, and behold we have fallen deep into a trap".⁶³ Comenius wrote to the Transylvanian prince in June 1657 of his attempts to get help in Germany, England and Switzerland, and of efforts to get peace between the Danes and Swedes. Activity continued to try to assist Transylvania, and hope remained alive into 1658 that the situation could still be saved from total catastrophe. In February 1658 peace was reached between Sweden and the Danes, and Constantín Schaum was sent to Sweden to persuade them to take up arms again in Poland. In March 1658 Schaum passed messages from Comenius to II.György Rákóczi detailing contacts which Hartlib had made with Cromwell, and of Cromwell's efforts to assist Rákóczi through the Porte, and to involve the French and Swedes.

⁶² Szilágyi, Erdély és az északkeleti háború, vol.2, pp.320-322, Karl to Rákóczi in Aug. 1657; János Bethlen, Innocentia Transylvaniae (Kolozsvár, 1659), f.A4.

⁶³ Kvacsala, Korrespondence Jana Amosa Komenského, clxxxii, p.224, Oct. 1657; "Levamen sperabamus a juga anti-Christianae tyrannidis et ecce profundius in laqueos incidimus! eheu!".

The resumption of war between Sweden and Denmark in September 1658 marked the end of the road for II.György Rákóczi, and peace treaties between Poland, Sweden and Denmark in 1660 came too late to save him. Ákos Barcsai was appointed as Transylvanian prince by the Turks in September 1658, and II.György Rákóczi eventually died of his wounds after a hopeless battle in Transylvania in June 1660.⁶⁴

Comenius' belief that Transylvania would spark a revival of the Protestant interest in central Europe was crushed by the failure of Rákóczi's Polish campaign. Comenius firmly attached blame for this disaster to the Rákóczi family, charging Zsuzsanna Lórántffy with holding back first Zsigmond and then György from action, and cited as an example of her lack of commitment to religion a refusal to pay for the translation of the Bible into Turkish;

"the Crown of Hungary was promis'd to them; it is true; but the condition often iterated, that they would purge this land from idolatry; deliberating and consulting upon this matter, with the Eastern and the Northern: But what did it profit to be admonish'd? When neither They, nor the King of Swede, would do any of those things; they drew themselves by their disobedience headlong into destruction."

Comenius believed that II.György Rákóczi had personally failed because he had acted out of ambition to gain the Polish crown, rather than to advance the interests of his faith. Comenius gave credence to a story that Rákóczi had acted on the false prophecy of a dying soldier, and not according to Drabík's instructions.

⁶⁴ Hartl. 7/100, f.1a, June 1657, Comenius to Rákóczi, and Comenius to Hartlib in 1657 trying to get help for Rákóczi; also Hartl. 9/17, f.28b and 31a, Figulus to Hartlib, Oct. 1658; also Hartl. 54/14 and Hartl. 52, f.14a and 29a; J.V.Kvac sala, 'II.Rákóczy György fejedelemsége történetéhez' in TT 1893, pp.673-677; Szilágyi, Erdély és az északkeleti háború, vol.2, pp.498 and 506.

The soldier had urged the prince to attack the Turk, and that God would raise an army up from Russia to save him, and Comenius concluded that;

"it may be well thought, that this was a satanical mockery... seeing nothing fell out accordingly, but rather the ruin of the Prince, who was seduced, like Ahab by Zedekiah and his companions. God giving them up to believe a lye, who will not believe the Truth."⁶⁵

The eschatological character of early modern Calvinism has been mostly neglected by historians, but events were seen by Calvinists in an apocalyptic perspective. This characteristic was indeed strongly represented in the Reformed religion of east-central Europe. I have shown that Transylvania's participation in the Swedish invasion of Poland in 1657 was against a background of extensive expectations that an eschatological revolution and the Last Judgment was at hand. In the 1650s expectation had moved into a higher gear, with the weight of precedent of good and faithful Transylvanian princes growing steadily heavier on the shoulders of II.György Rákóczi. Apocalyptic expectation in Hungary and Transylvania added to pressure for military action, with godly princes supposed to lead Hungary in spiritual renewal, bring freedom from the Turks and defeat the Antichrist. There was a widespread consciousness in Hungary and Transylvania of the footsteps of providence leading inexorably to an imminent universal regeneration. By 1657 it may

⁶⁵ J.A.Comenius, A Generall Table of Europe representing the Present and Future state thereof (Amsterdam, 1669), pp.202 and 279. Compare Comenius' judgement on Bethlen as the "northern whirlwind", "which to this day shakes the welles of this wicked Babylon" in J.A.Comenius, History of the Bohemian Persecution (London, 1650). Drabík was arrested and executed by the Habsburg authorities in 1671.

therefore have seemed a short step for Rákóczi, from being a Transylvanian prince standing as it seemed in divine favour, in a tradition of being paralleled to Biblical kings, and encouraged by Reformed leaders to play the role of leading a chosen people, to combine dynastic and religious interests and accept a messianic part in an apocalyptic struggle directed firstly against Catholic Poland.

International Calvinist contacts had assisted the efforts of Transylvania's princes to become engaged in alliances with western powers, but these proved to some extent to be a destabilising force for the Transylvanian principality. Whilst international Calvinism was a sustaining and formative ideology and support for Transylvania, international Calvinist connections encouraged Transylvania's clergy and princes to aspire to grander European designs than the principality's limited resources could support, and the Transylvanian principality emerged greatly weakened after the Polish crisis of the late 1650s. Faith amongst Hungarian Protestants in an imminent apocalypse however remained unshaken despite the shocks and traumas of the late 1650s, with parallels made between the fate of the Hungarian nation and Israel central to the understanding of Reformed writers about their predestined role both in triumph and disaster. Resilient ideas about the end times were based on this imaginatively recorded past projected into an imaginatively predicted future. Changed circumstances led to altered predictions, without removing the assumption that the ends of the ages were approaching. Reformed writers easily found explanations for the disastrous results of the venture by II.György Rákóczi into

Poland. A critical and pessimistic mood in the late 1650s identified the failures of church and state to reform morality, wipe out idolatry, and push through plans and projects for further reformation as the causes of divine displeasure, Transylvanian defeat, and the reverses which the Reformed church was to endure in the second half of the seventeenth century. The moral imperatives provided by apocalyptic reasoning which had informed religious reformation in Hungary, therefore continued to hold significant sway within the Reformed church in Hungary and Transylvania.

CONCLUSIONS

The portrait which I have drawn in this thesis has been of Transylvania as a Reformed state in the early seventeenth century, led by Reformed princes, and with Calvinism as its ruling ideology. This opened Transylvania's leaders and clergy to the world of international Calvinism, in this period heavily influenced by anti-Catholicism and eschatological beliefs. Transylvania's increasing attachment to Reformed religion was accompanied by a programme of Protestant cooperation abroad, and commitment to spiritual renewal at home. The identity of Reformed Transylvania was shaped by a high idealisation of its ruling princes, and of a chosen Hungarian people. Awareness of ethnic cohesiveness within the Hungarian Reformed church was a central thread in solidifying religious identity, especially in the parallels drawn with Israel and Biblical history in the Old Testament. The motif of Israel served to balance a sense of being chosen based on a noble and ethnic community with support for, and participation in the wider world of international Calvinism, since Israel could represent both one principality and the whole true church, either one tribe or all twelve.

Transylvania became a more Reformed state from the accession of Gábor Bethlen to the death of II. György Rákóczi, more linked to radical, international Calvinist ideas and personalities. International links with sister Calvinist churches abroad solidified commitment to Reformed religion in Hungary and Transylvania, assisting Transylvania's confessionalisation as a

Reformed principality. The heightened expectancy of many within the Reformed church in Transylvania in the 1650s that providence had placed them on the verge of an age of renewal, was crushed by the military defeats suffered by II. György Rákóczi. Reformed ideology also however provided explanations for this disaster, with the prospect of apocalypse as judgement, caused by a failure to complete the reformation of life.

[sic]

"This was the end of that vain leerus,¹ who attempted to fly with feigned wings and borrowed Feathers; this is the fate of ambitious spirits, whom Pride elevates and exhales like a vapour, unto that height, until it dissolves them into showers, or precipitates them into the abyss of all confusions."¹

In the second half of the seventeenth century military defeats and Catholic pressure heightened the sense within the Transylvanian Reformed community of being an embattled Israel, yet crucially denied Transylvania the same extent and range of international contacts which had been afforded during the early seventeenth century. In 1661 John Dury wrote to Samuel Hartlib of the fate to which the Hungarians were now abandoned;

"The Protestants in Hungarie and Transylvania will bee a prey on the one side to the Turck on the other to the Jesuits, and that of the Turck will be the less burdensome by how much the conscience is left free without constraint which the Jesuits put in practise. The Lord in his owne time will send relief and breake the power of all that will establish religion by violence."²

In subsequent periods the weakened Reformed community of Hungary and Transylvania was no longer ideologically dominant as in the early seventeenth century, reacting to more powerful Catholic and non-Hungarian neighbours. The inherited Reformed religious

¹ Paul Rycaut, The History of the Turkish Empire from the year 1623 to the Year 1677 (London, 1680), pp.69-82, his verdict on Rákóczi's death in 1660. For leerus, learus?

² Hartl. 4/4, from John Dury in Dec. 1661.

identity from the early seventeenth century Hungarian and Transylvanian Calvinist community bequeathed a sense of ethnic cohesion and destiny, later relocated in a Magyar nationalism based more narrowly on anti-German, anti-Slav and anti-Romanian sentiment, which predecessors in the early seventeenth century would not have recognised.

Mint a szép hives patakra, a szarvas kívánczik
Lelkem úgy óhajt Uramra, és hozzád fohászkodik
Te hozzád, én Istenem, szomjuhozik én lelkem
Vajjon színed eleiben, mikor jutok élő Isten?

Én lelkem, mire csüggedsz el? Mit kesergesz ennyire?
Bizzál Istenben s nem hágy el, Kiben örvendek végre.
Ki nekem szemlátomást, nyújt kedves szabadulást,
Nyilván megmutatja nékem, hogy csak ő az én Istenem.³

³ Psalm xlii: 1, and 7; translated by Albert Szenczi Molnár.

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