

# The Irenical Impact of David Pareus' Work on the Hungarian Protestant Churches

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Portrait of DAVID PAREUS (1548–1622), in *Bibliotheca chalcographica*, text by JEAN-JACQUES BOISSARD, engravings by THEODOR DE BRY (1652–1669).

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THE IMPACT of the conciliatory policy initiated by Philipp Melancthon, which was later called “Philippism,” was felt in Wittenberg until 1575.<sup>1</sup> The movement was replaced by the *Formula Concordiae*, drafted in 1577 and accepted by the Lutheran Churches, which launched a Lutheran dogmatic thinking in Germany that rejected the *Confessio Augustana Variata* accepted by the Lutherans in 1540. By the 17<sup>th</sup> century, in the European context, the “legacy of Philippism” was only continued in Calvinist theology in the work of Zacharias Ursinus, in the Heidelberg Catechism, the Irenicism of David Pareus and generally in the Pfalz-Heidelberg theology, which proves that the conciliatory trend that began in the Reformation era was only continued by the Reformed side.

It is known that the Calvinist theology in Transylvania acquired an ecclesiastical framework especially among the Hungarians, while the Lutheran theology shaped the Church of the Transylvanian Saxons.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the two Protestant Churches of Transylvania

became increasingly estranged from one another also because of their national backgrounds, despite the fact that the pursuit of unity was present within both of them. The Melanchthon–Ursinus–Pareus theology also played an important role in the Transylvanian Saxon Church until the mid–17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>3</sup> For example, it can also be noted in the case of Bishops Matthias Hebler and Lukas Unglerus, who fostered the independence of Transylvanian Saxon Lutheranism.<sup>4</sup>

The irenical movement that started at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century corresponded to the situation of the Transylvanian Reformed and Lutheran Churches of 1566–1570 regarding their interdependence and doctrinal community.

Lukas Unglerus formulated the *Formula Pii Consensus* that was adopted by the Mediaș Synod on 22 June 1572, which “in its Melanchthonian formulation is a clear summary of the legacy of the Reformation.”<sup>5</sup> The importance of the document is also reflected by the fact that the Saxon Church stated in this document that its teaching was the same as that of the *Confessio Augustana*. Their intention with this document was to prove to the whole of Europe that—contrary to popular opinion—not all Transylvanian Protestant Churches had become Antitrinitarian.<sup>6</sup>

Article IX of the creed condemns “sacramentarians,” who deny the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist.<sup>7</sup> The importance of the Melanchthonian heritage became even more evident due to the events occurring at the turn of the 16<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> centuries—by this we mean the re-Catholicization. The religious policies of István (Stephen) Báthory, prince of Transylvania, intensified this relationship, as he entrusted the restoration of the common superintendency of the Hungarian Reformed and Lutheran Churches to the Lutheran Dénes Alesius.<sup>8</sup>

The organization of church services in the mother tongue of the congregation, in those places where this was also linked to confessional divisions, strengthened the popular character of the measure. However, denomination cannot be considered a factor of assimilation. Péter Bod and consequently István Juhász both believe that in places with a Hungarian majority the confessional community assimilated the German minority, while in places with a German majority it assimilated the Hungarian minority.<sup>9</sup>

Education was the foundation of a new era. The works published by people of lower social condition, who made up the majority of the peregrinators, and who were preparing for a career in teaching, respectively ministry, reflect legal, historical, political, and military interests.<sup>10</sup> The Protestant ministers and teachers, who completed their studies abroad and especially at Heidelberg University, represented a group with highly specialized knowledge in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>11</sup>

A real peace among the Protestant confessions was unattainable, for it was believed that Calvinists should stop the practice of Calvinism and should accept the Augsburg Confession and the *Formula Concordiae*. Knowing this, we may

note that peace and religious cooperation were separate matters. This means that the Evangelical believers rejected the religious unification, but accepted to jointly confront the Counterreformation, i.e. a political cooperation in this regard.

The irenical movement in general, the sum of the ideas propagating the unity of faith of the Protestants and proposing their institutional reunification, was a theological system of thought and a church policy movement that originally came into being during the development of German Protestantism.<sup>12</sup>

The theorist of the 17<sup>th</sup> century irenical movement was David Pareus (1548–1622), a professor at Heidelberg University, who taught the Old Testament and the New, and had a great impact on students at the time of religious polemics.<sup>13</sup> The irenical aspirations of Pareus can also be noted in his earlier works,<sup>14</sup> but they are formulated into clear theses in his work called *Irenicum*, published in 1615.<sup>15</sup>

The short summary of the *Irenicum* is the following: everyone who accepts the articles or branches of faith that are necessary for salvation is a member of the Church of Christ. The articles were divided into two parts: common articles of faith and theological articles of faith (*articuli theologici*). To achieve salvation it is enough to know the common articles, i.e. to believe in the crucified Jesus Christ, to keep the laws of God and know the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer and the doctrine of the Sacraments. In addition, of course, the absolute authority of the Holy Scripture had to be accepted. According to irenical authors, these were the fundamentals that everyone had to know and observe in order to achieve salvation. The foundation of unity was considered to be an agreement concerning the basic teachings and the respect of the distinct features of the religious denominations. This does not mean a uniform thinking, but tolerance and unity amid diverse opinions.

According to Pareus, all other issues on which the denominations were arguing (even that of the Eucharist) were in fact irrelevant, mere questions of detail. Pareus believed that the disputes between Calvinists and Lutherans could be settled with a syncretic Eucharist formula.<sup>16</sup> This could be discussed at a syncretic council. Pareus also argued that the world's Protestant leaders should have then followed the collaboration and religious peace of theologians, which would have had consequences in political terms as well.<sup>17</sup> In his view, the *unio civilis* and the *unio ecclesiae* were inseparable.<sup>18</sup>

Pareus' work dealt not only with the theology of Lutheran and Calvinist Churches and tolerance issues, but also with the political implications of church teachings. The roots of the irenical movement should be viewed in relation with religious policy, and thus we can clearly speak of peace among religions.<sup>19</sup> The *Formula Concordiae* was drawn up because of the pursuit of unity. The second aim of the irenical movement was to oppose the Counterreformation through

a Protestant collaboration. It is no coincidence that Article 165 of the *Formula* presented the consenting views of Protestants against those of the Catholics.

János Heltai discussed in detail the polemic of the Hungarian supporters of Pareus, and highlighted the significance of its impact on the irenical views of the era.<sup>20</sup> Heltai states in his research concerning the peregrination of Heidelberg students that Pareus had a great impact on Hungarian students as well, and more than 170 Hungarian peregrinators went to Heidelberg between 1595 and 1621.<sup>21</sup>

Our research has proven that Irenicism can usually be viewed only as a local, community-based manifestation.<sup>22</sup> Despite the fact that Pareus' students were appointed to office at the royal court, e.g. Péter Alvinczi or Albert Szenczi Molnár, their impact was localized, the irenical trends were only carried out for a short time, and mainly meant a common approach, a united front against the Catholic Church.

The irenical documents only circulated in certain erudite religious circles. In the Transylvanian Reformed Church, we can find the ideas of the irenical movement at an institutionalized level in the measures taken by Bishop István Geleji Katona (1589–1649) towards the Orthodox Romanians in Transylvania.<sup>23</sup> In the Transylvanian area, the two Protestant Churches had separated into a Saxon and a Hungarian Church, due to national reasons. However, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century the union of the two Churches resurfaced at a theoretical level. In the following we shall look at those members of the irenical movement whose work towards unity had an impact on the Principality of Transylvania.

One of David Pareus' most outstanding Hungarian students was Péter Alvinczi (1570–1634). We often find the indicator *Enyedinus* attached to the name of Péter Alvinczi, referring to his place of origin. He also inherited a mansion in Enyed, which he bequeathed to his son, the young Péter Alvinczi.<sup>24</sup> In terms of his studies, Alvinczi stood at the boundary between two generations. Due to his studies in Wittenberg, he was bound to the intellectuals having a Melancthonian and later humanist education. Heidelberg, however, connected him to the generation of Reformed Orthodoxy.<sup>25</sup> In addition, it can be assumed that he gained a thorough knowledge of Law and History at one of the universities of Northern Italy. Thus, it was no coincidence that he became the preacher of Várad (Oradea).<sup>26</sup>

Alvinczi is the most prominent religious writer of the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. In 1605, following his studies in Heidelberg and in Wittenberg, he became a priest in Košice, which is when his real career started. Alvinczi had a confidential relationship with István (Stephen) Bocskai and Gábor (Gabriel) Bethlen, princes of Transylvania. This confidential relationship is important because Alvinczi was brought up with irenical ideas, thus he could have an impact on the rulers' anti-

Habsburg policy. As a true follower of the irenical movement, he tried to make peace between the Reformed and the Evangelicals in Košice. He wrote several pamphlets, many of which were lost, but we can infer their contents from the responses of his opponents. On the Catholic side, Péter Pázmány proved to be such an opponent. The first work clearly reflecting the irenical spirit, i.e. the *Itinerarium Catholicum* (Debrecen, 1616) was ascribed to Alvinczi.<sup>27</sup> This work was actually written by Dániel Szegedi, who was also a student of Pareus. In the *Itinerarium*, Szegedi proved the continuity of the Protestant doctrine since the ancient Christians. By this, he aimed at achieving unity within the fight against the Catholics.<sup>28</sup>

Alvinczi is, however, the author of the work *Az Úrnak szent vacsorájáról való rövid intés* (A short exhortation concerning the Eucharist), an irenical example of preaching and teaching published in Košice in 1622. In this work, Alvinczi reflected upon an internal debate of the Reformed. The prelude to this debate was that in 1619 the National Assembly was held in Bratislava, and the Lord's Supper on Christmas was given to the participating aristocrats by Alvinczi and János Kanizsai Pálfi, the preacher of Pápa, who was also a student of Pareus. According to the *Pentapolitana Confessio*,<sup>29</sup> i.e. the agreement that was valid for the Reformed congregation of Košice, and in order to maintain its unity, Alvinczi provided the Sacrament with host (altar-bread), as he usually did in Košice, while Kanizsai used bread according to the general Calvinist tradition. Alvinczi was then slandered at Kanizsai's initiative because of using altar-bread.<sup>30</sup> In spite of the fact that Prince Gabriel Bethlen himself communed with altar-bread, Alvinczi was obliged to justify his actions.

Alvinczi's lengthy works, as well as his collection of sermons published in two volumes (*Postilla*, Košice, 1633–34) are characterized by a dry didactic style adjusted to the formal, logical and theological constraints of Protestant church literature.<sup>31</sup>

However, he had a great impact on his contemporaries with other works written in a political oratorical style, e.g. *Querela Hungariae*, which was published in 1620 and in which he defended Gabriel Bethlen, prince of Transylvania. Many consider Alvinczi's political rhetoric similar to Pázmány's early Baroque eloquence, but this may have been the result of his schooling in Várada (Oradea).<sup>32</sup>

Alvinczi's works unite two facets, the appropriate theology for irenical teachings, which support unity, and the endeavors towards political freedom. In the aims of his political endeavors he explained that the only valid option for the Hungarians was national unity, this being the only way for them to achieve religious and political independence from the Turks and the Habsburgs. Alvinczi's works reflect the situation of 17<sup>th</sup>-century Hungarian Protestantism; they promote the emergence of national culture. We consider Alvinczi's role in political

life since the time he made his debut next to Stephen Bocskai, namely, when he became the court priest of the prince. The abovementioned confidential relationship is also due to this development. He got to know the political situation of the country in greater depth during his time as a court priest, since he was the one to hold the festive worship services at the Hungarian National Assemblies, and he was also a member of the church district deputation at these Assemblies. Alvinczi was the author of *Apológia* (Apology), written to defend Stephen Bocskai, when he was accused of Arianism.

Nevertheless, researchers are divided in two groups when it comes to his authorship in the *Apológia*: there are those who deny Alvinczi's authorship, while others believe that the apology of Bocskai displays a line of thought which is characteristic to Alvinczi's other works as well.

We encounter the first such unit of thought in the title of the work: *Adversus iniquissimas Monacho-Iesuitarum criminationes*. He also opposes the Jesuits in the *Machiavellisatio*, the authorship of which Alvinczi assumed by a statement, as well as in the *Resultatio* and especially in the *Defensio*, which defended the *Querela* by *Adversus corruptelas Jesuiticas*.<sup>33</sup> The main criterion of Alvinczi's authorship lies in the uniform ideological image found in his works, indicating a theological, historical, political culture and education above the average. The *Apológia*, of course, does not contain irenic thoughts in a direct manner. He simply states that the vast majority of Hungarians belong to the Helvetic Confession, and only a few counties and free cities claim to belong to the Augsburg Confession; however, there are still relations of peace and Christian love with the latter. There are Unitarians only in Transylvania, but their numbers are decreasing.<sup>34</sup>

Following the death of Bocskai, Alvinczi permanently became a member of the Hungarian high society. He gained vineyards, bought a house in Košice to which his family life is also connected, and Matthias II granted him a title of nobility. In Košice, Alvinczi prevented the return to the Catholic religion, which means the purest realization of his irenic ideas, as it resulted in the free practice of the Reformed religion and strengthened the Calvinist principles against the Counterreformation. Alvinczi was therefore greatly respected, and because of his proximity to the prince, his work became known abroad as well. This was also aided by his testamentary work carried out at the princely court, which linked him to politics.<sup>35</sup> Alvinczi's work was known abroad thanks to the active publishing activity of Albert Szenczi Molnár. This is how his work became known to both Europe in general and David Pareus in particular.

Nevertheless, the Reformation did not bring composure to the believers, as it was a time of debates and accusations. It did not create a new world order, nor a universal religious concordia. It was an attempt to explain the truths of faith by reason.

Alvinczi's politically oriented preaching activities did not end after the death of Bocskai. At Bocskai's court Alvinczi met Prince Gabriel Bethlen, with whom he maintained a close friendship.<sup>36</sup> Although he was not in the immediate proximity of the prince, he became his counselor in matters of religion and school development. Alvinczi also provided help in instructing the peregrinators studying abroad. Furthermore, Alvinczi was entrusted with the supervision of the educators of young Stephen Bethlen. Alvinczi was also actively involved in political life; thanks to his knowledge of German he attended the peace negotiations of Nikolsburg as a diplomat. Gabriel Bethlen also sought Alvinczi's opinion in strategic matters, and he founded a royal library in Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia) following the example of King Matthias. The relationship between the monarch and the renowned professor was shaped by the Hungarian students of Heidelberg, who presented Bethlen to the European intellectual elite as the protector of the true religion and a generous patron of culture.

Bethlen also got to know Pareus' ideas and thinking through his diplomats and preachers, and they even corresponded with the help of Szenczi and others.<sup>37</sup> Bethlen zealously attempted to create a diversified liturgy full of gradual songs, and was committed to involving the artistic church choir and the organ in the life of the Reformed Church.<sup>38</sup> David Pareus, a professor at the University of Heidelberg, regularly sent complimentary copies of his works to the royal library.

**O**THER STUDENTS from Heidelberg also took part in the theoretical justification of Bethlen's Transylvanian reign and role in Hungary.<sup>39</sup> After Bethlen's death Alvinczi's political activity ceased. He tried to fulfill the will of the prince of Transylvania, i.e. to prevent the counties that were attached to Transylvania from falling under Catholic Habsburg rule, but this was—as we know from historical events—an impossible task. In the last years of his life Alvinczi wrote volumes of sermons.<sup>40</sup>

Above we mentioned the name of Albert Szenczi Molnár (1574–1634), who was also a peregrinator in Heidelberg and a great admirer of David Pareus's work.<sup>41</sup> Despite the fact that Szenczi brought Pareus' letters to his Hungarian followers,<sup>42</sup> or that in 1611 Lukács Szigyártó asked Molnár to send him Pareus' works,<sup>43</sup> and despite the fact that Pareus wrote a poem for Albert Szenczi Molnár's wedding,<sup>44</sup> we find no reason to discuss the irenical ideas of Szenczi Molnár, as no works of his obviously support them.

At times, paradoxical situations developed around irenical documents, when an anti-Catholic pamphlet received criticism within Protestant circles. Such was the case of the irenical work of István Tolnai Pap, the court priest of György (George) Rákóczi. In 1632, István Tolnai Pap translated in the Calvinist spirit the consolation sent by Wittenberg University to the Czech-Moravian brothers persecuted because of their religion.<sup>45</sup> The aim of the work was the consolation

of the Czech-Moravian brothers settled in Transylvania, who were persecuted because of their religion. This work assured them of the compassion of the Calvinists. This was written in a kind of anti-Catholic tone, as they had had to flee because of the Catholics. The translation was challenged by Royal Judge Ferenc Nádasdy in his letter of 9 March 1636, in which he claimed that Tolnai's work was full of errors and lies. He wrote that he himself would translate the original work, however, there is no information on the publication of such a book.<sup>46</sup> Thus, the Calvinist irenic work written against the Catholics received a remedial response from the Evangelicals.<sup>47</sup>

The Lutheran and Reformed denominations mutually influenced each other, all the more so because they started out from a common basic rite. An example in this respect is the work of Gál Huszár *Az keresztyén gyülekezetben való isten dicsérete és imádságok* (The praise of God and prayers in the Christian congregation) (Komjáti, 1574), in which he follows Luther's *Formula Missae* in its entirety, with minor modifications, thus actually following the Lutheran antiphon type of mass.

Even after their separation, the two Churches retained the same liturgical framework. In the early 17<sup>th</sup> century there were no significant differences in the exterior, interior and inventory of a Lutheran and a Calvinist church. The Reformed churches contained an altar or a table of the Lord.

Consenting to Vilmos József Kolumbán's opinion, we may say that despite the attempts of the followers of the Reformation and despite the synod decisions, the 16<sup>th</sup>-century Transylvanian Reformed Church did not have a unified worship regime providing it with an institutional character, as they took up the abovementioned "cleaned" Catholic mass.<sup>48</sup>

Despite the efforts of the Reformed, in the 1620s it seemed like the Lutherans had turned away from the idea of the two Churches approaching one another. Nevertheless, the Reformed did not give up. This is evidenced by the work *Magyar Harmónia* (Hungarian harmony) by János Samarjai (1585–1652), the Reformed superintendent of the Upper Danube area, published in 1628 in Pápa.<sup>49</sup>

In his work Samarjai combines the ideas of the Swiss Théodore de Bèze (1519–1605) and those of David Pareus. Théodore de Bèze considered it sufficient for a rapprochement between the churches to print the creed of the various Protestant denominations in a single volume, as he believed that these were already in harmony concerning the issue of salvation.<sup>50</sup> Starting from this point of view, Samarjai placed the relevant articles of the Augsburg Confession and the Second Helvetic Confession next to each other, and, as an appendix, he added the reasons for reconciliation from Pareus' *Irenicum*, chapter XXVIII.

The considerable similarity between the external elements of the mass listed in the *Magyar Harmónia* was also surprising. Both churches rejected the priestly alb, the cope, the stole, the decoration of altars, church images, daytime candle



lighting, church singing accompanied by the organ or violin, polyphonic church songs, and the carrying of the cross in funeral processions. According to Samarjai, there was only one difference between the rites of the two Protestant churches, namely regarding the Eucharist: the Calvinists used leavened bread, while the Lutherans used altar bread.<sup>51</sup> However, even this difference sometimes disappeared, since in the early decades of the 17<sup>th</sup> century many Reformed churches used altar bread for the Lord's Supper. Such was the case of the Nagyszombat (Trnava) congregation—thus it is not a coincidence that he dedicated his book to one of the leading members of the Reformed congregation of Trnava, Orsolya Écsy, the wife of Gáspár Szegedi.<sup>52</sup>

Thus it can be concluded that the dual congregations of the Upper Danube District of the Reformed Church were veritable centers of the unification attempts. Samarjai's aspirations were based on an earlier synod, which was convened on 17 June 1615 in Ujlak (Ilok) by Miklós Pálházi Göncz, an Upper Danube Lutheran bishop. The aim of the synod was that the representatives of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches discuss the common way of taking the Lord's Supper, which was the foundation of the union.<sup>53</sup> We shall not go into details with regard to the synod—at which Samarjai probably also participated—but only say that it was unsuccessful because of the Lutheran representatives' sternness. Therefore, the council was adjourned to 8 September 1615, and was held in Komját (Komjatice). The Komját synod achieved tangible results, as the representatives of the two Churches agreed on a four-point formula concerning the Eucharist. This formula is noteworthy because this is how David Pareus' unionist perception of the Eucharist gained contour in Hungary for the first time. The Consensus of Komját proved to be ephemeral. Nevertheless, conceptually it was of great importance because, as Géza Kathona puts it, "the honest wish for a union begins to emerge in the case of both Churches."<sup>54</sup>

Just like other such works,<sup>55</sup> Samarjai's initiative was unsuccessful among the Lutherans. Examples include the work of István Lethenyi, the Csepreg preacher, called *A kálvinisták magyar harmóniájának meghamisításában* (The falsification of the Calvinists' Hungarian harmony) published in 1633.<sup>56</sup> In this work he pointed out the differences between the Reformed and the Lutheran creed in 21 articles. Finally, he concluded: "We do not accept the Calvinists as our spiritual brothers, nor do we ever want to."<sup>57</sup>

A similar tendency towards a rapprochement is reflected in Bishop János Samarjai's agenda of 1636. Ilona Ferenczi also clearly evaluates this agenda as an attempt at a union.<sup>58</sup> Samarjai's agenda is little different from the agenda "inherited" from Luther and from the basic principles of the Lutheran service called *Ordnung des Gottesdienstes in den Gemeinden* (Order of worship in the communities),<sup>59</sup> respectively from the 16<sup>th</sup>-century model in general,<sup>60</sup> and one can even find Catholic elements in it.<sup>61</sup>

The agenda written according to the *Rituale Strigoniense* showed a significant Catholic and Lutheran impact, mainly concerning its content. As an example, we emphasize the teaching of the agenda concerning the sanctuary. Samarjai believed that the *sanctuarium* was named like this because “the Sacrament of the Lord’s holy body and blood is handed out and taken there.”<sup>62</sup> This trait is clearly built on Catholic doctrine, according to which Catholics look towards the altar in the sanctuary with the highest respect, as they believe that Christ is physically present in the altar’s holiness.<sup>63</sup> In this respect Samarjai’s belief neared Roman Catholic teachings, as he considered a part of the church “holier” than its other parts. With his mind’s eye he could permanently see the sacrament worthy of “adoration” in the church sanctuary.

In Samarjai’s agenda only the items of the liturgy contained Helvetic characteristics. According to Kolumbán, Samarjai’s agenda “did not become popular and is still just an interesting element of the history of liturgy”<sup>64</sup> because of its syncretism.

Two Transylvanian bishops, János Keserői Dajka and István Katona Geleji, also belonged to the circle of Pareus’ followers. The first one was influenced by Pareus’ irenical approach, but his works do not contain practical results in this respect. The name of István Katona Geleji can be mentioned in connection with the Romanian Reformation. His work transcends politics, as he sought to approach the Romanian Orthodox Church due to his irenical beliefs. István Geleji Katona’s irenical efforts are also proven by the presence of Pareus’ *Irenicum* in his library,<sup>65</sup> as well as by the response letter guided by him that was written in 1634 to John Dury (Duraeus), who was pleading for a Protestant union.

John Dury was a Scottish Presbyterian minister, serving in Germany, who acted as a mediator in order to unite the two Protestant denominations and visited universities, kings and princes for this purpose. During his research in the British Museum in London, Mihály Révész found three of his letters related to Hungary. He published the letters in the *Magyar Protestáns Egyházi és Iskolai Figyelő* (Hungarian Protestant Church and school observer), booklets V–VI, in 1887. Mihály Révész considered that Duraeus foreshadowed the ideas propounded 200 years later by Schleiermacher, who presented his thoughts on the union in a question-answer form according to the style of the era. He then sent his work to the Transylvanian church leaders, so that they could express their views in this respect.<sup>66</sup> The questions are connected to liturgy, church discipline, theological education, the way of holding titles in the church, and he concluded with a statement whereby the church he addressed could contribute to the implementation of the “peace among Churches” in order for “that to be the ordinary and practical manifestation of Christian brotherhood built on the fundamental chapters of the doctrine . . . We believe that peace and brotherhood will be permanent.”<sup>67</sup>

It is quite clear from his reply to Duraeus that István Katona Geleji, as a main supporter of Protestant Orthodoxy, would have especially agreed to the general things concerning the union and did not address doctrinal issues. He showed willingness to negotiate, but mostly according to Reformed criteria. In the letter Geleji assures Duraeus that he would do everything in his power to convince George Rákóczi I, the prince of Transylvania, to support the Protestant union.<sup>68</sup>

Regarding the correspondence, József Kurta concludes that the liturgical issues were not included in the basis of negotiation because at that time the worship ceremonies of the Transylvanian Lutherans and Calvinists were the same.<sup>69</sup>

At the end of the letter he states that he would want a union with the Saxon Evangelical Church, all the more so because in addition to the Catholics there were a number of other denominations around the two Churches, and this would strengthen the common brotherhood.<sup>70</sup> It is interesting to note that the letter was drafted in Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia), and was signed by eighteen people, including then-famous professors of the Alba Iulia Collegium Academicum: Johann Henrik Alstedius, Ludwig Piscator, Johann Henrik Bisterfeld, Dean Tamás Tiszabecsi, and Dean György Csulai.<sup>71</sup>

István Geleji Katona, together with Pareus' other main supporters, Péter Alvinczi, and István Tolnai, tried—as promised—to convince the prince of Transylvania to support the cause of the union. However, due to the historical events taking place, he adopted a passive approach.

In conclusion it can be noted that the stage of the Transylvanian and Hungarian irenic movement that we have primarily examined covered the time period from about 1604 to the early 1630s. During this period, a socially and sociologically well-defined group of Reformed preachers, who graduated from Heidelberg University, held leadership positions in the Reformed Church, and they had a decisive ideological impact on the Transylvanian royal court as well as on the aristocratic circles in Hungary. The union was present as a desideratum, however, due to the historical context and the Thirty Years' War, the attempts in this respect were unsuccessful. This also proved the need for a military alliance, as a joint Protestant front was to be created against the Catholics.



## Notes

1. Cf. Heinz Scheible, *Melanchthon in seinen Schülern* (Wiesbaden, 1997).
2. Cf. Géza Nagy, *A Református Egyház története 1608–1715* (Budapest, 2008); id., *Akik kősziklára építettek* (Cluj, 1938); id., *Fejezetek a magyar református egyház 17. századi történetéből* (Budapest, 1985); Katalin Péter, *Papok és nemesek: Magyar művelődéstörténeti tanulmányok a reformációval kezdődő másfél évszázadból* (Budapest, 1995); Jenő

- Zoványi, *A magyarországi protestantizmus története 1895-ig* (Budapest, 2004); Imre Révész, *A magyar protestantizmus problémája* (Cluj, 1914); id., *A magyarországi protestantizmus története* (Budapest, 1925).
3. Dezső Buzogány, “Melancthon úrvacsorátana levelei alapján,” *Erdélyi Református Egyháztörténeti Füzetek* (Budapest, 1999), 94.
  4. Edit Szegedi, “Konfessionsbildung und Konfessionalisierung im städtischen Kontext: Eine Fallstudie am Beispiel von Kronstadt in Siebenbürgen (ca. 1550–1680),” *Berichte und Beiträge des Geisteswissenschaftlichen Zentrums Geschichte und Kultur Ostmitteleuropas an der Universität Leipzig* (2006): 126–297; id., “The Reformation in Transylvania: New Denominational Identities”; “Confessionalization,” in *The History of Transylvania*, vol. 2 (*from 1541 to 1711*), eds. Ioan-Aurel Pop, Thomas Nágler, and András Magyarai (Cluj-Napoca, 2009), 229–254; id., “Hungarian and Saxon Culture in the Sixteenth Century,” in *The History of Transylvania*, 2: 273–279; id., “Saxon Culture in the Seventeenth Century,” in *The History of Transylvania*, 2: 299–304.
  5. Gerhard Schullerus, “A püspöki hivatal az erdélyi szász ágostai hitvallás szerinti evangélikus egyházban,” in *A püspöki intézmények kialakulása és fejlődése Erdélyben 1740-ig I.*, eds. Nicolae Bocşan, Dieter Brandes, and Olga Lukács (Cluj-Napoca, 2010), 91.
  6. Mihály Balázs, “A hit hallásból lézön: Megjegyzések a négy bevett vallás intézményesüléséhez a 16. századi Erdélyben,” in *Tanulmányok Szakály Ferenc emlékére* (Budapest, 2002), 51–73; id., *Az erdélyi antitrinitarizmus az 1560-as évek végén* (Budapest, 1994); Edit Szegedi, “Un oraş unitarian în epoca principilor reformaţi/Az unitárius Kolozsvár a református fejedelmek idején,” in *Orăşe şi omăşeni/Városok és városalakók*, eds. Ionuţ Costea, Carmen Florea, Judit Pál, and Enikő Rűsz-Fogarasi (Cluj-Napoca, 2006), 431–437; Olga Lukács, “Apologia et Protestatio,” *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* (Budapest) 4 (2004): 1259–1272; János Kénosi Tözser and István Uzoni Fosztó, *Unitario-Ecclesiastica Historia Transylvanica II* (Budapest, 2002); Sándor Kovács, “Az erdélyi unitárius egyház rövid története,” in *Az erdélyi egyházak és vallási közösségek rövid története*, eds. Dieter Brandes, Vasile Grajdian, and Olga Lukács (Cluj-Napoca, 2008), 153–163; id., “Az erdélyi unitárius püspökség kialakulásának története,” in *A püspöki intézmények kialakulása és fejlődése Erdélyben 1740-ig I.*
  7. Dezső Buzogány, “Együttélés a felekezetek és etnikumok között a 17–18. századi HunyadZarándi Református Egyházmegyében,” in *Vallás és etnikum Közép-Európában* (Pécs, 2008), 57–69; András Juhász, “Ökumenikus törekvések az Erdélyi Református Egyház XVI. és XVII. századi történetében,” *Református Füzetek* (Cluj-Napoca) 1994: 31.
  8. Schullerus, 88.
  9. This vacillating relationship is outlined by Péter Bod in his Latin Church history. This work was used as a source by András Juhász and István Juhász in their works presenting the coexistence of the Saxon and Hungarian churches. Péter Bod’s perceptions are characterized by the Reformed confessionality, which considered it natural that Szászváros (Orăştie), Vízakna (Oena Sibiului), Kóbor (Cobor) became Reformed, or that the Reformed in Fogaras (Făgăraş) should rule over Bethlen (Beclean) and Sárkány (Şercaia). However, he considered the conversion of some Hungarian churches in the Saxon area into Lutheran churches the result of the impatience of

17<sup>th</sup>-century Lutheran orthodoxy. He does not correlate this with the feudal power of the Saxon Universitas carried out at the level of religions in the case of Kóhalomszék (Rupea seat) or Brassó (Braşov), but with the spirit of the *Formula Concordiae* that had become dominant in 1659. István Juhász, however, has presented the coexistence of the Hungarian and German churches in the Saxon area based not only on matters of faith, but also on Church law and social issues. He concludes that the separation ending the debates on the Eucharist strengthened the religious peace, which provided the religious community of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches with a variety of traditions and local elements. Cf. István Juhász, *A reformáció az erdélyi románok között* (Cluj, 1940); id., “Nyugati missziós törekvések a románoknál,” in *Magyarok és Románok I–II*, eds. József Deer and László Gáldi (Budapest, 1943).

10. János Heltai, *Alvinczi Péter és a heidelbergi peregrinusok* (Budapest, 1994), 9.
11. Cf. János Heltai, “Adattár a heidelbergi egyetemen 1595–1621 között tanult magyarországi diákokról és pártfogóikról,” in *Az Országos Széchényi Könyvtár Évkönyve* (1980); András Szabó, “A heidelbergi egyetem levéltárának magyar vonatkozású iratai (1560–1622),” in *Nem súlyed az emberiség: Album amicorum Szőrényi László LX. Születésnapjára* (Budapest, 2007), 1413–1421.
12. Heltai, *Alvinczi Péter*, 50.
13. Cf. the doctoral dissertation of János Heltai, *Irenikus eszmék és törekvések Magyarországon a XVII. század első harmadában* (Budapest, 1980).
14. Wilhelm Holtmann, *Die pfälzische Irenik in Zeitalter der Reformation* (Göttingen, 1960), 213–222.
15. *Irenicum: sive de unione et synodo evangelicorum concilianda liber votivus paci ecclesiae et desiderii pacificorum dicatus* (1615).
16. Heltai, *Alvinczi Péter*, 51.
17. Günter Brinkmann, *Die Irenik des David Pareus* (Hildesheim, 1972), 69.
18. Judit Vásárhelyi, *Eszmei áramlatok és politika Szenczi Molnár Albert életművében* (Budapest, 1985), 27.
19. *Ibid.*, 26.
20. János Heltai, *Műfajok és művek a XVII. század magyarországi könyvkiadásában, 1601–1655* (Budapest, 2008), 156–175.
21. János Heltai, “A heidelbergi egyetemjárás 1595–1621,” in *Régi és új peregrináció*, eds. Békési Imre et al. (Budapest–Szeged, 1993), 540–549.
22. Buzogány, “Együttélés a felekezetek,” 57–69.
23. On 24 September 1640 István Geleji Katona wrote to George Rákóczi I that except for a few superficial issues there were no significant differences concerning the religious-theological essence between the Orthodox and the Protestant religions: “Apart from the veneration of the saints and the images and the origin of the Holy Spirit, I can hardly see any difference between the true Greek religion and us regarding the branches of faith; the differences are only in the external ceremonies, which can only be set aside by shaping a new ecclesia like the Popish one.” Ágoston Ötvös, “Geleji Katona István élete s levelei,” *Új Magyar Múzeum* (Budapest) 9, 1 (1859): 215. Geleji clearly stated that in terms of fundamental elements the Protestant and the Orthodox Church are not different from one another. The differences (i.e. the ceremony, the veneration of sacred images, the teachings on the origin of the Holy Spirit) do not belong to the

fundamental (i.e. ordinary) branches of faith, thus a union with the Orthodox Church is not impossible, because they also belong to Christ's Church, opposing the Catholic Church, which is the Antichrist. Geleji thus claims that the liturgical differences are insignificant, and the ignorance of the priests and the superstitions do not stand in the way of the Reformation. If we look at the legal situation of the Romanian Orthodox Church in the age of the Principality, the *Approbatae Constitutiones* violated the obvious right of the Romanian people and of the Orthodox believers to be represented in the Transylvanian ecclesiastical landscape. Geleji's program contains the teachings of the Heidelberg Catechism, church services in the Romanian language, the consideration of sacred images only as decoration, the establishment of Orthodox schools, and the fact that with regard to organizational issues the Romanian bishop should take into account the position of the Reformed superintendent. See István Juhász, "Az erdélyi egyházak XVII. századi együttélésének kérdései a fogarasi vártartományban," in *Hítvallás és türelem: Tanulmányok az Erdélyi Református Egyház és teológia 1542–1792 közötti történetéből* (Cluj-Napoca, 1996), 133–149; László Makkai, ed., *Bethlen Gábor emlékezete* (Budapest, 1980), 143.

24. Kálmán Révész, *Százéves küzdelem a kassai református egyház megalakulásáért, 1550–1650* (Budapest, 1894), 86. The book is available at <http://www.archive.org/details/szzveskzde00rv>.
25. Cf. Gábor Incze, ed., *Alvinczi Péter 1570–1634* (Budapest, 1934).
26. Heltai, *Alvinczi Péter*, 100.
27. The whole text can be found in the book edited by Gábor Incze, and it is attributed to Alvinczi. The same way, Géza Nagy believes it to be Alvinczi's work: *Akik kősziklára építettek*, 118.
28. Heltai, *Műfajok és művek*, 162.
29. Based on the disputes concerning the year of drafting of the *Confessio Pentapolitana*, as well as on recent studies, it can be concluded that the *Confessio* was signed in 1560 at the synods of five cities: Bardejov, Prešov, Košice, Sabinov and Levoca. The creed was the key to unity. They wanted to resolve the existing Lutheran-Calvinist dissension. They tried to keep the Lutheran orthodoxy, but some clauses on issues affecting the Catholic Church were carefully formulated, allowing Protestant practices in Upper Hungary. Why didn't the cities take up the Augsburg Confession without any changes? The answer to this question was given by Ferdinand I personally: the *Confessio Augustana* is the creed of the German Protestant provinces, which could not have been joined by Hungarian cities even if they wanted to since it was only valid up to the border of Germany, therefore, they had to form a new independent alliance. Cf. Zoltán Csepregi, "A Confessio Pentapolitana újabb datálási kísérteit," *Lelkipásztor* 79, 8–9 (2004): 300–303.
30. Only the title of the Kanizsa pamphlet is known: *Sárvári konyhárul Lethenyi Istvántól Pápára némely csemege-kívánóknak . . . küldetett fekete lében főtt nyúlhúsának abálása*.
31. Imre Bán and Tibor Klaniczay, eds., *A Magyar Irodalom Története 1600-tól 1772-ig II* (Budapest, 1964).
32. Incze, 40–54. This volume also contains the whole text.
33. Heltai, *Alvinczi Péter*, 102.
34. *Ibid.*, 103–104.

35. “Péter Alvinczi was not only the leader of Bocskai during his life, but did the testamentary work after his death . . . He intruded in the estate of Széplak, he seized the house of the Prebend of Eger in Košice and he got so many of the wandering cattle, that his beautiful golden swords are hanging on the coat-peg even now.” *Pázmány Péter Összes Művei* 2: 578 (<http://www.ppek.hu/k600.htm>).
36. Makkai.
37. Cf. János Herepei, *Bethlen Gábor kiválasztottjai* (Cluj, 1939); Sándor Tonk, “Erdélyiek egyetemjárása a korai újkorban 1521–1700,” in *Fontes Rerum Scholasticarum IV* (Szeged, 1992).
38. Nagy, *Akik kősziklára építettek*, 272.
39. Dezső Buzogány, “Bethlen Gábor és a vallási türelem,” in *Studia Doctorum Theologiae Protestantis* (Cluj-Napoca) 6 (2015): 239–248; Heltai, *Alvinczi Péter*, 155.
40. Nagy, *Akik kősziklára építettek*, 123–124.
41. Judit Vásárhelyi, *Eszmei áramlatok és politika Szenczi Molnár Albert életművében* (Budapest, 1985).
42. Lajos Dézsi, ed., *Szenczi Molnár Albert naplója, levelezése és irományai* (Budapest, 1898), 106, 292.
43. *Ibid.*, 370.
44. *Ibid.*, 371.
45. “Az wittenbergai académiának az evangelika religióért számkivetést szenvedő csehökhöz és morvaiakhoz küldött vigasztalása...” (Gyulafehérvár/Alba Iulia), 1632, *Régi Magyarországi Nyomtatványok 1636–1655* (Budapest, 2000) (hereafter cited as *RMNY*), 1534.
46. Dániel Havrán, “Irodalomtörténeti adalékok,” *Magyar Könyvtörténeti Szemle* (Budapest), 1899: 368–369.
47. Heltai, *Műfajok és művek*, 164.
48. Vilmos József Kolumbán, *Törvényhozó egyház* (Cluj, 2002), 45.
49. *Magyar Harmónia, azaz az Augustana és a Helvetica Confessio artikuluszainak egyező értelme, melyet Samaraeus János . . . rendölt össze, hogy az artikuluszokban fundamentumos ellenközés nem lévén az két confessiot követő atyafiak is az szeretet által egyesek legyenek. Ez mellé Pareus David D. Irenicumjából XVIII. Rágalmas artikuluszokra való feleletek és az egyeségre kétféle indító okok adattanak* (Pápa, 1628), *RMNY*, 1419.
50. *Harmonia confessionum fidei orthodoxarum et reformatarum ecclesiarum, quae in . . . Europae regnis . . . profitentur* (Genevae, 1581).
51. József Szathmár, “A ref. templomi énekeskönyv története,” *Protestáns Szemle* (Budapest), 1892: 325–327. *Javasolva az egyzséget, amely’ Lutherus és Zwinglius között lett Marburgumban anno 1529. A wittenbergi, egyzsége, mely Luther Márton és a helvetiai városokban levi evangélikusok között köttetett* (Pápa, 1628).
52. *Magyar Harmónia*, Introduction letter to the readers. Letters 5/b-6/a.
53. Géza Kathon, “Samarjai János gyakorlati teológiája,” *Theológiai Szemle* (Budapest), 1939: 24.
54. *Ibid.*, 26.
55. Imre Pécseli Király’s *Catechism* was published in 1624 and 1634 as a synthesis of the Heidelberg *Catechism* and Luther’s *Catechism*, in which he tried to reasonably approach disputed issues.

56. Csepreg, 1633, *RMNY*, 1560.
57. Az *Calvinistac magyar harmóniájának, azaz az augustana és Helvetica confessiók articulusainak meghamisítása, melyet a Szentírás megmagyarázása lutheránus doctoroknak közönséges írásokból magyar nyelven világra bocsátott* (Csepreg, 1633).
58. Cf. Ilona Ferenczi, “Kísérlet a liturgia egységesítésére az Erdélyi Fejedelemségben (a 17. század első felében),” *Magyar Egyházzene* (Budapest) 1 (1993/94): 22.
59. Luther published this document in 1523. Here he stated that at the Sunday worship and at religious celebrations the whole congregation participated, while on weekdays only a small part was present at the so called “Kleiner Haufen” (small mass).
60. Mihály Bucsay, *Der Protestantismus in Ungarn 1521–1978. Ungarns Reformationskirchen in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Pt. 1, *Im Zeitalter der Reformation, Gegenreformation und katholischen Reform* (Vienna–Cologne–Graz, 1977), 209; id., *A protestantizmus története Magyarországon 1521–1945* (Budapest, 1985), 132–133.
61. Kathoná, 324–544.
62. *Rituale Strigoniense, seu formula agendorum in administratione sacramentorum ac ceteris Ecclesie publicis functionibus*, 11, I.II.7.
63. Kathoná, 57.
64. Kolumbán, 55.
65. József Koncz, “Geleji Katona István könyveinek lajstroma,” *Magyar Könyvtörténeti Szemle*, 1899: 271.
66. Mihály Révész, “Protestáns unió és az erdélyi reformátusok,” *Protestáns Lap* (Budapest), 1887: 168.
67. *Ibid.*, 171.
68. *Ibid.*, 181.
69. József Kurta, *Az Öreg Graduál századai Erdélyben* (Cluj-Napoca, 2002), 100.
70. Révész, 181.
71. *Ibid.*, 182.

## Abstract

### The Irenical Impact of David Pareus’ Work on the Hungarian Protestant Churches

The irenical movement was the sum of the ideas concerning the unity of faith of the Protestants and proposing their institutional reunification. The theorist of the 17<sup>th</sup> century irenical movement was David Pareus (1548–1622), a professor at Heidelberg University, whose irenical aspirations are formulated in the work called *Irenicum*. During the Transylvanian and Hungarian irenical movement (from about 1604 to the early 1630s) a socially and sociologically well-defined group of Reformed preachers, the followers of Pareus, held leadership positions in the Reformed Church, and had a decisive ideological impact on the Transylvanian royal court and the aristocratic circles of Hungary. The union of the two Transylvanian Protestant Churches was circulated as a possibility but, due to the unfolding historical events, the attempts in this respect were unsuccessful.

## Keywords

David Pareus, Philippism, Irenicism, Calvinist theology in Transylvania, *Itinerarium Catholicum*