Unitarians in Háromszék Seat (Trei Scaune) in the 17h Century. Between Conventional Rhetoric and Reality

Abstract:

The Unitarian church historiography goes through a paradigm shift. In the light of these changes, this recent paper tries to break down the conventional rhetoric that took shape around the topic of the forced conversion of the Unitarian congregations in the 17th century in Háromszék (Trei Scaune). At the beginning of the reign of Gábor Bethlen the Protestants in Háromszék seat (Unitarians and Calvinists) were living together in a distinctive symbiosis. The congregations were allowed to freely elect their ministers and teachers. It was not unusual that a congregation had a Unitarian minister and a Calvinist teacher, or vice versa. The members of these villages were living in an apparent peace. The elimination of this integrated Protestant institution and the denominational segregation happened in 1619, during the visit of the Calvinist bishop János Keserűi Dajka. The Unitarian church historiography held for centuries that 60-72 Unitarian congregations were converted to Calvinist confession in Háromszék seat. The reader will see that in reality there were altogether 70-71 protestant congregations in Háromszék. Analysing the minutes of the investigations ordered by Katalin Brandenburgi in 1630, it is evident from the testimonies of the witnesses that only 14 congregations had a Unitarian past. Due to these outcomes, we must reconsider the conventional rhetoric that the notorious Calvinist bishop János Keserűi Dajka converted the Unitarian Háromszék to Calvinism.

Keywords: *Unitarianism, Calvinism, church, history, Transylvania, Trei Scaune.*