

Media and Literature
in Multilingual Hungary
1770–1820

Edited by
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Catholic and Protestant Union-Plans in the Kingdom of Hungary between 1817 and 1841

The Golden Age of “Public Opinion” and the Memory of the Reformation in Veszprém County*

The first half of the nineteenth century was the classic period of public opinion and the last golden age of political thinking, too. If we accept John Lukacs’s statement, we also accept that “public opinion, at that time, in western Europe and to some extent even in the United States, meant the opinion of a politically conscious minority.” On this basis, we can distinguish between “public opinion” and “popular sentiment”.¹

Public opinion, in its classical sense, was in its prime during the early nineteenth century, when it was taken for granted that the public was the more articulate portion of the people; that it was almost always a minority; that public opinion was, simply, opinion made public; and that it was articulate, active and actual, while popular sentiment was potential rather than actual, and its expressions usually depended on the ideas presented to it by public opinion.²

* The author is a research fellow in the Hungarian Academy of Sciences – National Széchényi Library Res Libraria Hungariae Research Group (Budapest). The National Széchényi Library supported the preparation for this study with a weekly research day.

1 John LUKACS, *Historical Consciousness: The Remembered Past*, with a new introduction by the author and a foreword by Russell KIRK (New Brunswick – London: Transaction Publishers, 2009), 76; cited by GYÁNI Gábor, “Sajtótörténet a társadalomtörténész szempontjából” [“History of Journalism from The Viewpoint of a Social Historian”], *Médiakutató* 7, Vol. 1 (2006): 57–64. See more about “public opinion” and “popular sentiment” in: John LUKACS, “Közvélemény és néphangulat” [“Public Opinion and Popular Sentiment”], *Kommentár* 12, Vol. 4 (2017): 5–9.

2 LUKACS, *Historical Consciousness...*, 78; cited by GYÁNI, *Sajtótörténet...*

Gábor Gyáni expanded on Lukacs's statement. A hermeneutical examination of the press can help historians understand the way in which it used language. According to Gyáni, we should understand the press as a symbol and as "one of the most important manifestations and material supports of the discourses which create reality".³ We can seek to answer a question then: what purpose did the press serve in its own time?

The period of the extension of rights was long,⁴ but my investigation focuses on 1817 to 1841. During this time, and during the nineteenth century as a whole, the gap between the received religions and other denominations⁵ temporarily grew deeper and neither confessionism did disappear. However, various unionistic ideas did emerge. These ideas, in various ways and to differing extents, carried the utopia of a community of free and legally equal individuals.

In this issue, Veszprém County played a unique role, as it was home to Pápa, with its famous Protestant and Catholic students and the Catholic bishop's see, and the city of Veszprém, which made József Kopácsy the county's new primate after the national Council of 1822. Bearing these things in mind, it is no coincidence that an interconfessional dialogue was able to take place, based on enlightenment principles and the experience of coexistence and modern political tolerance. This being so, texts about the county, which reflect on each other, present how the largely coercive sanctions were becoming, step by step, insufficient to enforce an efficient legal system. These sanctions began to become increasingly inconsistent with the inner requirement of objective justice of society.

Focusing on how language is used in a specific geographical area can play a significant role in explaining both unifying, general trends like religion and nationality and micro-context such as local conditions and relationships.

3 GYÁNI, *Sajtótörténet...*

4 See the process of denominational-legal transformation between the articles of 1791:26 and 1895:43.

5 The "received denomination" has never been defined: it is based on customary law and its interpretation has changed from denomination to denomination. The "received denomination" can have its own funds and can also resort to state support. GYÁNI Gábor and KÖVÉR György, *Magyarország társadalomtörténete a reformkortól a második világháborúig [A Social History of Hungary from the Age of Reforms to the 2nd World War]* (Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 2006), 140.

*(Re)Union in religion: The memory of the Reformation
in Veszprém County (1817–1830)*

In the first third of the nineteenth century, while denominational struggles continued with varying intensity, some discussions on a Catholic–Protestant union also emerged in Hungary. These discussions were novel as they stemmed from the utopia of the “spiritual national unity”. The 300th anniversary of the Reformation reinforced the religiosity of the restoration period and emphasized the issues of reunion and conversion among Catholics. On the other hand, Protestants were focusing on plans for a union. At the same time the denominations were fighting to hold themselves together from within and trying for unified teachings (e.g. Immanuel Kant, Georg Hermes). Ferenc Kazinczy⁶ said “There is no need for Union!” Kazinczy was inspired by the idea of religious freedom. He was close friends with Izidor Guzmics, the abbot of the Benedictine monastery in Bakonybél, but he thought that the question of faith belonged entirely to the private sphere. Ferenc Kölcsey,⁷ on the other hand, accepted “the idea of unification”, in which he saw the possibility of significant progress.⁸

Guzmics was the best-known Catholic exponent of the idea of a denominational union. Building on the demand for tolerance from Protestants, Guzmics committed himself to the “policy of opening”. As he wrote:

I ask those Catholics who are eager to label their own fellow citizens as heretics as soon as they do not understand and feel their arguments not to do so because they do not have the right to do this. Otherwise, I require the Protestants not to look for a problem where there is no problem at all. [...] I’m free to be liberal.⁹

You are free in your thoughts, in your judgment, but let both derive from certain clear principles.¹⁰

6 Ferenc Kazinczy (1759–1831) Reformed poet and writer, the leader of Hungarian neology.

7 Ferenc Kölcsey (1790–1838) A reformer of the Hungarian language, politician, and the author of the national anthem.

8 KULIN Ferenc, “Kölcsey vallásbölcselete: (Töredékek a vallásról)” [„Kölcsey’s Theology: (Fragments on Religion)”], in *Irodalomtörténeti Tanulmányok* ed. FARKAS Péter and NOVÁK László, Studia Comitatensia 19, 59–78 (Szentendre: Pest Megyei Múzeumok Igazgatósága, 1989), 61, 64.

9 GUZMICS Izidor, *A’ keresztényeknek vallásbeli egyesülésekről írt levelek az evangéliumi keresztény toleranzsiának védelmezőjéhez* [Letters on the Union of All Christians in Their Religion Written to the Guardian of Evangelical-Christian Toleration] (Pest: Trattner, 1822), 40.

10 Ibid., 35.

János Ágoston, who was also affiliated to Veszprém, took over Guzmics's concept of a "national religion", which recalled Gallicanism.¹¹ His tone, however, was not so gentle and moderate. In fact, the work of the Benedictine monk provoked a positive echo on the Protestant side. This took the form of the dissertation of the Calvinist pastor, István Vámosi Pap in 1823. The essay was published in Veszprém.

Let everyone believe that of which he is convinced; because subjectively this is the true faith. Objectively, faith is the ideal truth we, people with finite minds strive for and approach to but do not reach.¹²

Networks of personal contact I: Periodicals

The first Hungarian scientific Catholic journal, *Egyházi Értekezések és Tudósítások* [Ecclesiastical Essays and Reports], was published between 1819 and 1824. It took *Tudományos Gyűjtemény* [Scientific Collection] as its model. The editor of *Egyházi Értekezések és Tudósítások*, János Horváth, a canon from Veszprém, created a vernacular, purely theological magazine based on enlightenment ideas.¹³ Horváth relied primarily on his acquaintances in Veszprém, and he organized the *Scientific Society of Veszprém* to help his enterprise succeed. However, there was a dearth of local authors and he needed to spread his net further afield. This is when Guzmics, and various others, joined in the work. As abbot, Guzmics initiated the *Vallási és Egyházi Tár* [Religious and Church Library] in 1832 in the city of Pest. This periodical was primarily a theological journal, although it had significant public content as well. For example, it defended the inseparabil-

11 ÁGOSTON János, *Megbővítettett mágnes, vagy is kifejtése azon tiszta igazságoknak, mellyek indító okul szolgálhatnak minden keresztény felekezetbeli magyaroknak arra: hogy az igaz, nemzeti római keresztény katolika religióban, Anyaszentegyházban egyesüljenek a boldogságra* [The Extended Magnet, or: Explanation of Pure Truths, Which Will Cause for Hungarians of Any Churches to Unify in the True, National, Roman Catholic Church to Be Happy] (Pest: Eggenberger, 1823).

12 PAP István, *A vallási egyesülés ideája s ezen idea realizáltatásának eszközei, melly munkában az Ev. K. Tolerantiáról s az egy idevezítő Ekklesiáról írott Prédikációk is, az ezekre tett Recenziókkal együtt, a mennyiben ezen Munkát illetik, rövideden s rézrehablás nélkül megvizsgáltatnak* [The Idea of the Religious Union] (Veszprém: Szammer Nyomda, 1823), 18.

13 See KÓKAY György, "A felvilágosodás eszméinek továbbélése a reformkori katolikus sajtóban" ["The Effect of the Ideas of Enlightenment in the Catholic Press at the Age of Reforms"], in *Nem súlyed az emberiség!*... *Album amicorum Szörényi László LX. születésnapjára*, ed. CSÖRSZ Rumen István and SZABÓ G. Zoltán, 1059–1062 (Budapest: MTA Irodalomtudományi Intézet, 2007).

ity of state and religion.¹⁴ Even though Horváth's co-editor, Ferenc Verseghy,¹⁵ firmly opposed the idea of Christian union, the journal was enriched by contributions from numerous Protestants including Lutheran pastors János Ángyán and György Hrabovszky, Calvinist pastor István Sebestyén,¹⁶ and the Rector of the Lutheran Lyceum of Pressburg [Bratislava], Karl Georg Romy.¹⁷

In 1834, Imre Szalay was appointed canon alongside József Kopácsy, who was born in Veszprém and from 1825 had been the head of the Transdanubian Diocese. Szalay was the editor of the homiletics journal *Magyar Egyházi Beszédek Gyűjteménye* [Collection of Hungarian Church Speeches], published between 1832 and 1845. Szalay used religious rhetoric to argue for the unity of the nation and the fear of God. He disagreed with Guzmics, who defended Judaism and praised it as a religious practice,¹⁸ and supported both Christian and profane philosophy. Szalay, on the other hand, sometimes used sharp phrases, criticism, and generalizations. He linked the nation and religion to the protection of the throne. For him religion *was* Christianity, and sometimes only Roman-Catholicism, and in terms of freedom, he described non-believers negatively, especially materialists.¹⁹

- 14 See BÁRÁNY Zsófia, "A religio és a nemzet elválaszthatatlansága: A bencés rend szerepe a modern Magyarország kialakulásában" ["Inseparability of Religion and Nation: The Role of the Benedictine Order in the Emergence of Modern Hungary"], in *Collectanea Sancti Martini: A Pannonhalmi Főapátság gyűjteményeinek értesítője VI*, ed. DÉNESI Tamás and DEJCSICS Konrád, 119–132 (Pannonhalma: Pannonhalmi Főapátság, 2016).
- 15 HORVÁTH Konstantin, *Az "Egyházi értekezések és tudósítások": Az első magyar katolikus teológiai folyóirat története 1820–1824: Verseghy Ferenc és Horváth János levelezése 1819–1822* [The 'Ecclesiastical Reports and Tractates': The History of the First Hungarian Catholic Theological Periodical: The Correspondence of Ferenc Verseghy and János Horváth 1819–1822] (Veszprém: Egyházmegyei Nyomda, 1937), 39*.
- 16 KOPPÁNYI Júlia, "Egyházi Értekezések és Tudósítások: Az első hazai katolikus folyóirat" ["The 'Ecclesiastical Reports and Tractates': The First Hungarian Catholic Theological Periodical"], *Magyar Könyvszemle* 119, Vol. 2 (2003): 188–202, 190; HUDI József, "A Veszprémi Olvasótársaság története 1841–1844" ["The History of the Reading Society in Veszprém 1841–1844"], in *A Veszprém Megyei Múzeumok Közleményei* 18, 451–476 (Veszprém, 1986), 453; BADICS Ferenc, *Horváth János püspök 1769–1835* [Bishop János Horváth 1769–1835] (Veszprém: Egyházmegyei Nyomda, 1927), 56–58.
- 17 HORVÁTH, *Az Egyházi értekezések...*, 57; HUDI József, *Könyv és társadalom: Könyvkultúra és művelődés a XVIII–XIX. századi Veszprém megyében* [Book and Society: History of Books and Culture of Veszprém County in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries] (Budapest: Gondolat – Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, 2009), 174–178.
- 18 Guzmics demonstrated the Jewish religion through the practice of religion and he restricted not only to the fulfilment of the laws.
- 19 "Even in the pagans, we must honour gratitude". PAP, *A vallási egyesülés ideája...*, 20.

For there is no order without power; there is no freedom without order; no civil life without freedom.²⁰

The kind of public courage there is where irreligiosity has become predominant, I will present in a historical example. In America, in this proclaimed home of freedom, where all religious denominations find shelter, and due to which religion cannot grow [...].²¹

Here is a zealous Christian, over there a freethinker; here is a chaste person, over there is an impious one.²²

However, Szalay focused on community objectives and regarded the institutional core of “civil society”, namely volunteering, as compulsory for everyone.

National prosperity can thrive [...] where public welfare is perceived by every citizen as his own welfare, where the public spirit [!] inspires sacrifice.²³

In addition to a linguistic work, Szalay also published a number of articles in Ottó Wigand's encyclopaedia, *Közhasznú Ismeretek Tára [The Store of Useful Knowledge]*, which was started in 1831. In this publication he worked with Guzmics, the Catholic priest and astronomer Pál Tittel, who had studied in Göttingen, the evangelical superintendent János Kis, and the Calvinist diocesan deputy churchwarden József Teleki. So Szalay, like Horváth, may well have already experienced some co-operation between denominations before 1841 when he published twice (!) his work about mixed marriages *Észrevételek a vegyes házasságokról [Comments about Mixed Marriages]*.

20 SZALAY Imre, *Magyar Egyházi beszédek Gyűjteménye [Collection of Hungarian Ecclesiastical Sermons]*, Vol. III (Buda: Trattner és Károlyi Nyomda, 1841), 258.

21 *Ibid.*, 260.

22 *Ibid.*, 7.

23 *Ibid.*, 262.

Networks of personal contact II: translations and essays

In the first third of the century, the canons of Veszprém played a prominent role in the Catholic party's approach towards the other denominations.²⁴ They were familiar with Gallicanism, which arose from the national opposition, and with Jansenism, which was close to Protestantism. In 1815, János Horváth translated Pierre Nicole's work (*Traité de la prière*) at the encouragement of Bishop György Kurbély,²⁵ while in 1801, Kopácsy translated the Jewish historian, Claude Fleury's, Gallican work, *Az izraeliták és a keresztények szokásaik és erkölcsaik* [*Habits and Morals of Israelites and Christians*].²⁶ We can see how significant Horváth and Kopácsy were in the diocese as they held prominent positions at the seminary. Kopácsy worked there between 1806 and 1816 as the theological director alongside the rector, and Horváth took over the position and held it between 1816 and 1832.

János Horváth probably mentioned the idea of the union between Catholics and Protestants based on civic tolerance at the diocesan council of Veszprém in 1821.²⁷ One year later, the idea emerged again in a draft of the National Council of Pozsony. In July 1820, King Ferdinand V entrusted Chancellor Ferenc Koháry with proposing further issues to be discussed at the planned National Council. On August 20 the Chancellor recommended four more points for the Council. The fourth point concerned getting Protestants to return to the Catholic Church. The document argued that the fragmenting of the denominations, which had been going on for three hundred years, had been disadvantageous to state power. Chancellor Koháry thought that the time had come to speak once

24 EBERHARDT Béla and HERMANN Egyed, *A veszprémi egyházmegye papságának könyvkultúrája és könyvvállománya a XIX. század elején* [*Clerical Book Culture and Libraries in the Veszprém Catholic Diocese at the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century*], *A veszprémi egyházmegye múltjából* 8 (Veszprém: Egyházmegyei Nyomda, 1942), 18–19.

25 HERMANN Egyed, *Kurbély György veszprémi püspök (1755–1821)* [*György Kurbély, Bishop of Veszprém (1755–1821)*], *A veszprémi egyházmegye múltjából* 11 (Veszprém: Egyházmegyei Nyomda, 1947), 19.

26 LADÓCSI Gáspár, "A janzenista Kopácsy József" ["The Jansenist József Kopácsy"], in *Egyházak a változó világban: Nemzetközi Egyháztörténeti konferencia előadásai*, ed. BÁRDOS István and BEKE Margit, 549–552 (Esztergom: Komárom-Esztergom Megye Önkormányzata, 1991), 550; HERMANN, *Kurbély György...*, 38; HOPP Lajos, "Mikes Kelemen Fleury-fordításai" ["The Translation of Fleury by Kelemen Mikes"], *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények* 93, No. 5–6 (1989): 511–513.

27 About the diocesan council of Veszprém in 1821 see additional information in: *Egyházmegyei zsinatok és tanácskozások Veszprémben* [*Synods and Councils in Diocese of Veszprém*], ed. GÁRDONYI Máté, *Magyar Történelmi Emlékek, Okmánytárak – Egyháztörténeti Források* 6 (Budapest: MTA Bölcsészettudományi Központ, 2017), 15–19.

again about union. He supposed that “clear-thinking” Protestants would also admit that their version of Christianity had led to rationalism, which contradicted Christian doctrines. For Chancellor Koháry, discussing the terms of a possible union would be desirable. He saw the National Council as an unrepeatable opportunity even though his plan faced numerous obstacles. As it turned out the National Council was in fact never repeated and the 1822 event was the last one in Hungary. However, Koháry was unable to push his idea through and the subject was omitted from the Council’s agenda.²⁸ Abbot Martin Lorenz, state counsellor and religious referent, may have played a role in this decision. He thought that “religious tolerance [...] would lead indisputably to indifferentism, and this would lead to deism.”²⁹

The desire for peace, and the pursuit of community, and national interests, had also increased the need for a greater protection of individual freedom of conscience. Here the Protestant side, which rejected the reunion but accepted the union, played a significant role. In 1823, István Pap, a Calvinist pastor, anonymously published an essay based on the Kantian doctrines, entitled *A vallási egyesülés Ideája [The Idea of the Religious Union]* in Veszprém.³⁰ He envisaged a rational dialogue between equal partners based on the freedom of conscience. He proposed that a committee be set up whose “enlightened” and “intelligent” members should sum up the previous drafts, which would contain, on the one hand, the barriers to the union and, on the other hand, proposed solutions. According to Pap’s plan, this committee would subsequently formulate a proposal for a Christian council of all denominations to discuss the subject. In examining the prepared materials, the “learned” delegates of this Christian council would focus not on violent conversion but rather on:

28 HERMANN, *Kurbély György...*, 192; *Az 1822. évi magyar nemzeti zsinat története [History of the 1822 Hungarian National Council]*, ed. FEJÉRDY András, the council documents translated by RIHMER Zoltán (Budapest: MTA Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont Történettudományi Intézet, 2018), 34–36.

29 BALÁZS László, *A felekezetek egymáshoz való viszonya 1791–1830 [Relationship between Different Denominations, 1791–1830]* (Budapest: Medika Nyomda, 1935), 15.

30 BALÁZS, *A felekezetek...*, 31; ÁCS Anna, “A felekezeti viszonyok változása Nemesvámoson a XVII. századtól napjainkig: (A H. N. adventista gyülekezet megalakulása és működése)” [“The Changing Situation of Denominations in Nemesvámos from the Seventeenth Century to the Present Day: (The Establishment and Action of the H. N. Adventist Congregation)”], *A Veszprém Megyei Múzeumok Közleményei* 19–20 (1993–1994): 419–440, 421.

Forgetting one's own denomination, everyone should have for their religion the Truth and the Love of the public welfare.³¹

So the proselytizers also leave everyone free in matters of conscience, [...] that does not subvert the repose and happiness of the commonwealth [...] From the point of the view of the Union, we should rather show that the difference is not so big between us that conversion would be needed.³²

But István Pap³³ was not the only Protestant in Veszprém County to react to the issue of union and the Catholic National Council. The Lutheran preacher, Pál Edvi Illés, arrived in Vanyola, addressing the Council in a poem published in a supplement to *Tudományos Gyűjtemény*.³⁴ The poem welcomes Hungary's centre of Catholicism, Esztergom as the "Spiritual Sion located north of the Vatican". He emphasized that, over the centuries, the Catholic Church had become involved in the Hungarian "government machine" as the educator of the monarchs and as an influential political power. But he highlighted that in contrast the priests on the Council at the time were discussing mainly spiritual matters at the neglect of civic issues. The author praised this apolitical act, as he believed that it would attract many followers and admirers to the Catholic Church.³⁵ He also published another work on this topic, this time in Pest, in 1826. It was entitled *Vallástüredelem példája a legújabb időkből [The Example of Religious Tolerance from Recent Times]*. He admitted that he would like to expand the existing extensive and diverse literature only to demonstrate the beneficial effect of religious tolerance on the nation.

31 PAP, *A vallási egyesülés ideája...*, 44–45.

32 Ibid., 15.

33 The dedication of István Pap to the idea of Christian unity is proven by the fact that in 1840 he prepared his collection of denominationally neutral prayers for prisoners. These prayers were published by Gyula Szikszay, a Catholic priest, in 1874. PAP István, *Afegyházi lelkész erkölcsi beszédei és imádságai rabok számára [Moral Sermons and Prayers of a Prison Chaplain for the Prisoners]*, revised by SZIKSZAY Gyula (Budapest: Zilahy Sámuel bizománya, 1874).

34 BALÁZS, *A felekezetek...*, 34.

35 EDVI ILLÉS Pál, "A katolika magyar egyház: Az 1822. Pozsony Sz. Kir. Városában, Nemzeti Zsinatra öszvegyült Fő tisztelendő Papsághoz" ["The Hungarian Catholic Church: To the Reverend Priesthood Assembled Together on Pozsony/Bratislava to the National Synod in 1822"], *Koszorú: Szépliteraturai ajándék a Tudományos Gyűjteményhez* (1822): 129–131.

Religious tolerance is both politically and in a moral sense the most well-marked barometer of the spirituality, free heart, and mind of any nation and people.³⁶

However, Illés, unlike Szalay, put more stock in the American model based on the freedom of religion. His work presented the practice of “mutual tolerance” through 156 domestic and international examples which “bring reconciliation between patriots”.³⁷ In 1818 János Naszályi published *Keresztyéni Szeretet és Értelembeli Egyezés* [*Christian Love and Intellectual Agreement*], based on a German model. However, this related more closely to the county than the Catholic–Protestant union. The reformed preacher of what is now Várpalota wanted the Lutheran and Calvinist Churches to unite.

Union for the nation: “let one citizen go to the right and the other to the left, nevertheless, we can meet on friendly terms in public life” (1841)

The subject of tolerance and the freedom and equality that results was kept alive in the theoretical literature and the Veszprém County press through the practice of mixed marriages. János Horváth’s periodical also published articles on the civil and ecclesiastical view of marriage, linking it to the interests of the nation.³⁸

Although people differ as regards their gender, the unity of nature, freedom, deeper feeling, and reason make husband and wife equals in their rights and mutual obligations.³⁹

Imre Szalay’s work *Észrevételek* [*Comments*], published in Veszprém in 1841, tackled the same problem but unlike his previous publications this one tried harder to suggest practical solutions. In his introduction, the canon positioned himself with the official catholic position on Diet when he warned that both secular and ecclesiastical laws had to be respected. He emphasized that the nature of the Church’s sovereignty is spiritual and showed an awareness of the in-

36 ILLÉS PÁL, *Vallás-Türedelem példái a legujabb időkből, melyeket e folyó Század második Negyede kezdetére ajándékuul gyűjtött és szerkesztett Edvi Illés Pál. [The Examples of Religious Tolerance from the Present Time, Which Were Collected and Edited as a Gift for the Beginning of the Second Quarter of the Nineteenth Century]* (Pest: Trattner, 1826), III.

37 Ibid., XIII–XIV.

38 KOPPÁNYI, *Egyházi Értekezések...*, 196–197.

39 *Egyházi értekezések és tudósítások*, 1 (1821): 105; cited by KOPPÁNYI, *Egyházi Értekezések...*, 197.

dependence of the secular sphere.⁴⁰ Szalay's goal was to define, compare, and reconcile different views, an attitude he presented as a duty for everyone rather than an option. For him, diverse ideas would highlight areas for improvement, and he recommended that the parties should respect one another in this process. His framework was a sober freedom of speech based on argumentation and he rejected the absolutism of liberalism. Consequently, he drew attention to the reciprocity of the freedom enjoyed by all. He condemned the "noisy, bold minority" of the French-Hungarian press who "are envious of the government" and "criticize the social order". He thought that liberalism and indifferentism, which were inseparable in his opinion, not only restricted religious freedom but that they were unconstitutional as well. To reinforce his words, he quoted the former Jesuit Alajos Batthyány, "who may be remembered with much grateful respect even by Protestants"⁴¹ as he supported the nationalization of church property, the dissolution of religious orders, as well as the freedom of the press and the religious freedom of Protestant and Greek Orthodox people.

In the relationship between the State and the Church, he committed himself to the model of "a free church in a free state". Thus, defending well-defined territories (state, church), he stated that the state had the right to remove everything that was detrimental, even against the interests of the Church. The state should also have the right to investigate the Church's provisions in the defence of the public good, while theory and practice were off limits.⁴² Emphasizing the need for internal sovereignty (theory, practice), he considered Catholic teachings compatible with civil law but mentioned that individuals were abusing this. He wanted the same "free protest" for Catholics that Protestants considered important. Thus, he defended Art. 1791: 26, declaring that it did not aim to restrict religious freedom of the Protestants but rather to preserve the freedom of the Catholics.

Szalay said that "what the law does not prohibit, can be done."⁴³ József Lonovics, the most famous Catholic religious speaker of reform Diets, said the same thing at the Diet of 1832–1836. The canon of Veszprém shared the views of the Bishop of Csanád, who pointed in the direction of Catholic autonomy

40 [SZALAY Imre,] *Észrevételek a' vegyes házasságokról. Az Igaznak egy hű Barátjától [To a True Man from His Loyal Friend: Comments on the Mixed Marriage]* (Veszprém: Jesztány Totth Nyomda, 1841), 1–6; "The ecclesiastical order can and must have influence only with regard to spiritual objectives, while the civil order with regard to worldly ones." *Ibid.*, 26.

41 *Ibid.*, 14–15, 20–21, 23, 25.

42 *Ibid.*, 47.

43 *Ibid.*, 31–33.

in his speeches. He also pressed ideas formulated in the Primate's circular, surrounding the correct ecclesiastical procedure being independent of civic process. The main point of the debate was the issue of ecclesiastical blessing and voluntary commitment (obligation for both the Catholic and Protestant party to raise their children in the Catholic faith). On this issue Szalay drew attention to the responsibility assumed by the spouses. Similarly, he denounced the procedure in Hungary, which was 50 years old and in his eyes incorrect.⁴⁴ He identified the "freedom of speech and of the press" as a catchphrase for the age, and he also highlighted freedom of conscience and religion in ecclesiastical terms, which would lead to "a free church in a free country, among free nations".⁴⁵

Like the Bishop of Csanád, who tried to defend the Catholic position at the Diet of 1839–1840, Szalay, as a Zala County magistrate (*tabulae regiae judiciariae assessor*) and a dean, attempted to defend it at the Zala County Assembly on January 11, 1841.⁴⁶ On the one hand, he asked for moderation and, on the other, like Lonovics, he set the goal of separating secular and ecclesiastical powers, saying "the one cannot have penal power over the other". Ferenc Deák retorted by referring to the Primate's circular to prove "the existence of an insult, an obstacle", asking why the Catholic Church was revoking what it had allowed to its members before. In this way Deák placed the act performed by Catholics, to their own disadvantage at the centre of his speech, while he expounded the sacramental character of Catholic marriage from the perspective of civil law.⁴⁷ The canon of Veszprém responded to Deák's speech in a book. He acknowledged that according to his church, women who neglected the Catholic assurances of mixed marriages and who

44 Act. 1790/91: 26 stipulated that mixed marriage should always be made before a Catholic priest; it also forbade Catholic priests from hindering marriage. From the ecclesiastical aspect, however, a Catholic priest could serve as a passive assistant at such a marriage only with the permission of the Pope, certain cautions having first been formulated. In Hungary, Catholic priests often used the form of passive assistance in mixed marriages regardless of the cautions.

45 [SZALAY], *Észrevételek...*, 45.

46 For more information on this General Assembly see: FAZEKAS Csaba, *Deák Ferenc egyházpolitikája a reformkorban [Ferenc Deák's Church Policy in the Reform Age]* (Budapest: Lucidus Kiadó, 2008), 35–62.

47 In his view, since the provisions of Act. 1790/91: 26 referred to mixed marriage as a sacrament, they regarded it not only as a civil but also as a religious bond. Therefore, it was mandatory for priests in both senses. According to the Latin ritual, however, the sacrament of marriage is not given to the priest but to the married couples. In the traditions of Eastern Churches, however, priests or bishops witness the exchange of reciprocal consensus between the betrothed. However, the blessing is not necessary for the validity of sacrament, whether in the Latin rites of the Catholic Church or in the Eastern rites.

lived under civil law contrary to church requirements were most reprehensible.⁴⁸

Deák cited the French Revolution in defending equality before civil law, but Szalay wanted equality of conscience based on Reformation ideals.⁴⁹ He argued that the law on mixed marriages could only be interpreted by a civil authority. The validity of mixed unions was indisputable even without a blessing and through *assistencia passiva*, a procedure both Protestants and Catholics objected to.⁵⁰ Deák, however, called for a consistent “observance” of the law. He mentioned the denominational inequality in civil law, which stated that every mixed marriage had to be officiated by a Catholic priest, who was obliged to ensure the full legal process, giving a blessing which the council had “only proposed”.⁵¹

Ignác Udvardy, a professor of church history and law in Veszprém, *defensor vinculi*, offered a more universal view than Szalay. In an essay he published in Szalay’s book he went beyond the phenomenon of the “state church”, recommending the separation of state and church, referring to Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz and Charles-Louis De Secondat Montesquieu. However, he did recall the state’s fundamental moral stance, which derived from religion. He judged that the one true faith that granted salvation, as the truth, did not belong exclusively to one side. He recommended accepting pluralism and leaving aside personal conviction.

No one has the right to condemn or judge those who have different opinions or beliefs.⁵²

For this reason, he publicly admitted the Catholic position which claimed the moniker “the only salvific religion”, but he also noted that Protestantism said the same thing. Without this claim, religion would lose its essence: the belief in discovered truth. In his response to the work of the “scholarly superintendent” Gábor Báthory,⁵³ he explained that Catholics should aim not only for

48 [SZALAY], *Észrevételek...*, 54.

49 Cf. 1790/91: 26. 4§., cited by Szalay. [SZALAY], *Észrevételek...*, 56.

50 [SZALAY], *Észrevételek...*, 58–59.

51 It can be seen that Szalay separated the civil and ecclesiastical marriage in accordance with the slogan “a free church in a free state”, even if not consciously. In his writings, he also complained about the Viennese government, which had eliminated the direct relations between Hungary and the Holy See. Meanwhile, he urged his readers to discover the truth “right and left”. However, his propagandistic closing words were in contradiction with this latter statement.

52 [SZALAY], *Észrevételek...*, 83.

53 BÁTHORY Gábor, *Az evangéliumi keresztyén tolerantzia: két prédikációkban elől adva, mellet*

their own salvation, but should assume responsibility for everyone in their prayers.

In the second edition, the editor complemented Udvardy's sentences with the thoughts of Imre Szabó. As Gergely Czuczor's⁵⁴ former student and *moderator studiorum* at the seminary of Veszprém (and later bishop of Szombathely), Szabó affirmed, in light of the freedom of religion, the essential role the denominations played in upholding the faith. He then drew attention to Protestant autonomy, intending for his own church the same independence. Finally, he suggested reciprocity as the single, exclusive solution to the stalemate around mixed marriages formed under bilateral prohibitions. He believed that only every person practicing reciprocity arising from patience would succeed in purging politics of religious clashes.

Let the Protestant theologian teach in Pápa, the Catholic in Veszprém or anywhere, when we go to church, let one citizen go to the right and the other to the left, nevertheless, we can meet on friendly terms in public life.⁵⁵

Finally, Szalay considered the encyclical letter of the Primate, containing the common demand⁵⁶ that civil and ecclesiastical marriage be separated, a good basis for arguing in favour of reasonable pluralism in his publication with the *de jure* support of the episcopacy. In this way he made it possible for rational pluralism to become part of official Catholic political culture. However, diverse opinions made the collision the letter was trying to minimize inevitable.

[...] let nothing occur in the actions regarding the mode in which these marriages are concluded which can be explained as a disdain for those belonging to other religions and faiths or which could give rise to irritation [...] regarding religion, let the laws of Holy Mother Church be preserved; in those things which fall under the civil order, let the law of the country be fulfilled.⁵⁷

közzüli: az elsőben az mutatattik meg, hogy a' keresztyéneknek a' vallás dolgábann [!] egy értelemre való jutások lehetetlen: a' másodikban, hogy a' vallások közt lévő külömbségek ellent nem állván, a' hazafjjak nyúgodalmasan, tsendesen, és boldogul élhetnek együtt. [Toleranz of Evangelical Christianity...] (Pest: Petrószai Trattner János Tamás betűivel, 1822).

54 Gergely Czuczor (1800–1866) Benedictine monk, poet, linguist, member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

55 [SZALAY], *Észrevételek...*, 154.

56 “[Act. 1791/91: 26. and the common principles of Protestants and Catholics] were based on the clear distinction between marriage as a civil treaty and marriage as a sacrament.” [SZALAY Imre], *Észrevételek...*, 103.

57 *Ibid.*, 109–110.

Only one question remained. How would the Catholic–Protestant social consensus evolve in the light of Rome’s response (Lonovics-mission)?⁵⁸ Would it be a compulsory, normative system forced by state intervention, or would it become a basic principle in society through wide-scale, voluntary consent, which would be able to integrate believers and non-believers into civic life? Considering the certain result, Pap recommended for this second solution when considering the tools for religious unity the following:

It should not come to pass all at once and by command, but the people must be prepared in advance [...] so that they should feel no aversion towards it, but indeed they themselves should urge us.⁵⁹

Conclusion

In 1823 in Veszprém County, responding to the national (re)union plan of the Catholic Izidor Guzmics, the Calvinist István Pap considered Christian union possible on the basis of religious tolerance. He called his readers’ attention to general practice (*religio practica*) instead of supposition (*religio speculativa*). In 1826, following Pap, who complemented the unionist plan with the liberty of conscience, the Lutheran Illés Edvi commented on the capacity for action which was created by person and situation, and which was evolving on the grounds of “mutual tolerance”. The unionist theory was increasingly being emphasized through the proliferation of mixed marriages. At the end of the 1830s and the beginning of the 1840s the discussions finally came to a head and in 1841 Szalay, a Catholic, emphasized rational pluralism based on freedom and equality. The only way to realize this rational pluralism was proposed by the former Benedictine student Imre Szabó in the second edition of Szalay’s work: the necessary formation of reciprocity.

While the reciprocity of free and equal parties slowly came to the fore in ecclesiastical publications, political topics did neither remain untouched. In 1841, the most significant movement of the era started, namely, the unsuccessful Protestant union movement, which was in a symbiotic relationship with the

58 József Lonovics, bishop of Csanád, was in Rome from October 1840 until the spring of 1841. There he negotiated with the Holy Apostolic See, primarily about Hungarian mixed marriages. However, the scope of the mission shifted to a much wider scale.

59 PAP, *A vallási egyesülés ideája...*, 45–46.

Slavic nationality issue.⁶⁰ A “compromise” between the Habsburg Empire and the Catholic Church was also established in the same year. One of the results of this agreement was that Rome recognized the validity of mixed marriages concluded before Protestant pastors in Hungary. While Metternich, who had created the Lonovics-mission, opposed the Protestant union, he also wanted to make certain personal rights independent of denomination. This would be a comprehensive doctrine for the political unity and governability of the empire.⁶¹ Subsequently, the Hungarian Diet also passed the civil validity of mixed marriages contracted before a Protestant minister into law (Art. 1843/44: 3).

The continuation of political polemics is marked by Metternich’s 1845 opinion,⁶² which was the result of a series of talks which prepared the second mission to the Holy See. The opinion states that the existing relationship between the State and the Church was no longer rooted in the struggle between denominations. He claimed that the question was actually what the positive principles of religion were, and what happens if they were denied. For example, the spread of communism and socialism in civil society all over the world.

60 KERTÉSZ Botond, “Protestáns uniókísérlet Magyarországon az 1840-es években” [“Protestant Attempt at Ecclesiastical Union in Hungary in the 1840s”], *Protestáns Szemle* 4 (1997): 256–281.

61 See the copy of Heinrich Wilhelm von Werther’s (Prussian Foreign Minister) letter to Count Mortimer von Maltzan, Prussian emissary of Vienna, detailing the freedom of conscience (October 28, 1839, Berlin). S.I. s.d. S.RR.SS.AA.EE.SS: Archivio della Congregazione degli Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari, Vatican, Austria e Ungheria – Raccolta dei rapporti delle Sessioni tenute nell’anno 1814 della S. Congregazione, 7.I.II. Austria, Pos. 88–96. Fasc. 39. foll. 109r–113r. cit. VÁRADY L. Árpád, *Lonovics József római küldetése. Függetlenül Lonovics római naplója. [József Lonovics’s Delegation in Rome. His Diary as an Appendix]* (Budapest: Szent István Akadémia, 1924), 194. According to the letter, the principles of the Protestant Church were “gentler”, “milder” towards the Catholics than those of the Catholic Church towards the Protestants. Therefore, in a family resulting from a mixed marriage, all advantages were granted to the “older church”. Therefore, if the Civil Code did not intervene, the freedom of Catholic fanatics would have been used against Protestants. Metternich remarked that, whereas Protestants seemed to have remained the underdog in an equal battle, the power necessary for their survival must be secured by civil law. According to Metternich the Catholics derived this power from their religion.

62 Metternich’s views about the results of secret negotiations. 1845. June 22, in National Széchényi Library, Budapest, Manuscript Collection, Fol. Lat. 4065. IV. foll. 12r–15v.