

Here I want to explain a cultural undercurrent that is rarely revealed to a non-Hungarian speaking visitor to Transylvania. That cultural undercurrent is the Szekely cultural identity of many of the people active in Transylvanian unitarian circles.

When foreign (American, Canadian, British, Dutch, tec.) cultures want to learn about people of Transylvania, unitarians included, this cultural identity, and its effect on the world view of Transylvanian unitarians rarely gets mentioned in the learning process.

Transylvania is home to several millions of Hungarian speaking people, who form the largest minority in any country of the European Union. They are a minority in Romania, a country where Transylvania was attached to after the first, and the second world wars. The Hungarian cultural and linguistic heritage has been under assault ever since that attachment.

Within the Hungarian-speaking peoples of Transylvania, a group of people, the Szekely people, have resisted most fiercely such assault, the dilution and erasure of their culture, and in recent decades they have been fighting for more control over their destiny within Romania.

The Hungarian cultural roots of the Szekely people go back to the 11th century. Their alphabet (rovásírás) and wood carved gates, burial markers, and utilitarian objects, their light blue national flag, and their national anthem may be the most visible distinctive cultural characteristics. However, the pride of Szekely people live deep in their hearts.

For those who want more details, two Wikipedia pages offer fairly accurate picture. Search for "origin of the szekelys" and for "history of the szekely people"ithin Wikipedia.