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The evolution of religious identity constitutes a matter of great debate between Protestant churches and secular historians. Antithetical opinions exist in both European and Transylvanian Protestantism. While Reformed church historiographers note the appearance of a written confession of faith of a given religious denomination unambiguously as a defining moment of religious identity, secular historians often consider the confession of faith only as a typical manifestation of the religious élite, i.e. as an intellectual product rather than a personal choice of identity. In this latter view the emphasis lies on the historicity of the religion and not on its spirituality or beliefs. According to the church-historical definition, the Reformation is a belief-continuum, a process of disseminating the gospel in which God is the main acting subject. It is not accidental that the evaluation of the Reformation by secular historians is more focused on prominent personalities, whereas the Reformation of the masses is often considered as hardly being a process of careful deliberation, with doubtful depth of sincere probing. The question is unavoidable: how and when did the Calvinist Reformation manifest itself in Transylvania? Was the Helvetic trend a mere self-definition of the Protestant élite or did it represent a wider social identity?

The publication of polemical tracts and confessions of faith in the first decades of the Reformation are visible achievements of a strengthening identity. Besides the wording of the doctrines, mostly but not regularly, in such publications the external order of the church is considered as being a part of the religion. Numerous tracts and confessions of faith were intended to help the followers of the Swiss Reformation in gaining the same secular recognition as the Lutherans. Nonetheless, even within

reformatory groups, the differences between teachings required clarification in order to avoid confusion. The Confession of Marosvásárhely (Târgu Mureș / Neumarkt) of 1559 does not contain an exposé concerning ecclesiastical order, yet it tries to promote reconciliation with the Lutheran party without abandoning its method of peaceful persuasion. Many of such Reformed publications have begun to surface again by making these documents available to international readership.

In the relevant literature, 1564 is widely considered as the official date of the formation of the Transylvanian Reformed Church. This is due to the January 1564 Diet of Segesvár (Sighișoara / Schäßburg) which initiated the religious debate, and to the following Protestant Synod of Nagyenyed (Aiud / Straßburg am Mieresch) held in April 1564, where the formal separation of Transylvanian Lutheranism and Calvinism occurred. The Transylvanian ethnic and religious polarisation also became evident: the Saxons (Siebenbürger Sachsen) remained Lutherans, while “the church of the Hungarians” followed the Calvinist trend, being labelled as

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“sacramentarian” or even “neo-Nestorian”. This decision, however, had been preceded by councils, confessions, meetings and rowdy political events.4 The fever of religious change is marked also by the fact that even the resolutions of the Lutheran Transylvanian Diet in 1558 still ardently protested against the “sacramentarian” trend.5 This was a further sign that—after Lutheranism—the Helvetic line of Reformation was also loudly rapping on the gates of politics.6

The secular rigorousness which had been guarding the Catholic–Lutheran balance became loosened after Queen Isabella’s death on 15 September 1559. The education of the young reigning prince Johann Sigismund (János Zsigmond) became the responsibility of chancellor Mihály Csáky (1505–1572) and of Giorgio Blandrata (1515–1588), the prince’s personal physician, who was a Socinian thinker. With the decline of firm political control the Transylvanian Reformation gained new momentum. Although in seventeenth-century Transylvania religious matters were mostly a question of power, at the beginning of the Reformation it was the hesitant attitude of politics and this existence of a power vacuum which unequivocally favoured the expansion and development of Protestantism. Transylvanian society, despite all appearances living amidst religious debates, communicated not only at the level of the theological elite, but also at the level of the town as a religion-choosing community that was also actively engaged in these disputes.

The most important and most sensitive topic of Protestant dialogue was the interpretation of the Holy Communion. Although it is outside the main focus of our present study, one has to observe that the main theological difference between Luther’s and Calvin’s view of the Lord’s Supper was deeply rooted in their respective Christological models: the former followed the Alexandrian, the latter the Antiochene tradition. Their answers

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5 See the decisions of the Diet between 27 March–3 April, 1558 in EOE, II, 93.

to the question whether the finite could indeed contain the infinite differed accordingly. Thus, the mode of the Lord’s presence in the bread and wine was predetermined by their assumed Christological system, whether explicitly or not. Any discussion of the so-called “communion-debates” is therefore required to acknowledge this fundamental starting point, i.e. that the dispute over the Lord’s Supper was ultimately a Christological issue. In this sense Transylvania was no exception. It is not at all accidental that the Helvetic trend became labelled as “neo-Nestorian”.

While the Lutheran party clung to the principle of *ubiquitas* (omnipresence), the Helvetic interpretation, especially that of Heinrich Bullinger, became gradually publicized through Debrecen. It is precisely the year 1559 which proves to be the landmark in the wider acceptance of the new, Helvetic doctrine concerning the Lord’s Supper. As a result, the positions of Transylvanian conservative Lutheranism were prejudiced in the most unexpected places, namely on the level of the Transylvanian theological élite, which accepted the Helvetic Reformation through German mediation. The conversions of Gáspár Heltai (Caspar Helth, 1510–1574) and Ferenc Dávid (David Hertel, 1520–1579) signalled the new changes of the Transylvanian Reformation regarding Holy Communion. The participation of the previously Lutheran Ferenc Dávid, first in the Nagyvárad (Oradea / Grosswardein) meeting (18 August 1559), and then as a supporter of the Helvetic trend at the Saxon council of Medgyes (Medias / Mediasch), corroborated the spiritual conversion which the bishop himself had also undergone.7

This, however, was not an isolated phenomenon of personal conviction change of a few. The mood swing of the people of Kolozsvár and Marosvásárhely cannot be ignored. According to historians, the debates on Holy Communion led to the mass seclusion of townspeople by means of issuing ‘Holy Tickets’.8 There was an immediate need for clarification in order to harmonize doctrine with practices as well as for preaching and liturgical reasons. This is precisely why the later Nagyenyed Council can be considered as an effect or consequence, through which a formal constitutional framework for the emerging Reformed Church was sought. It is therefore the confession of faith of the earlier (1 November 1559) Council held in the

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7 Kénosi—Uzoni, “Úrvacsoraviták”, 133–145, 140.
8 Kénosi Tőzsér János—Uzoni Fosztó István, “Úrvacsoraviták”, 141.
castle of Marosvásárhely,\(^9\) which unequivocally signals the acceptance and the spread of the Helvetic religious identity in Transylvania, influenced at the time by Bullinger. This was prefigured by Melanchthon’s “media sententia” represented by Mátýás Dévai Bóró (†1545) and István Szegedi Kis (1505–1572), exemplifying an intermediary approach in which the signs of the Holy Communion—the body and blood of Christ—are present in the promise and not physically. Melanchthon’s Transylvanian and Hungarian disciples clarified their views in Marosvásárhely, leaning towards the Helvetic approach, as a consequence of the wider European debate over the issue.\(^{10}\) One needs to bear in mind that the ideas presented in the Consensus Tigurinus of 1549 between Calvin and Bullinger had undoubtedly reached the Transylvanian theologians. Furthermore, Melanchthon’s irenic position may well have prevented the Hungarian Reformers to move towards Zwingli’s more radical doctrine.\(^{11}\)

The confession of faith this article discusses here can be considered as the joint confessio fidei of Transylvanian and Hungarian religious intellectuals, including Ferenc Dávid, Péter Méliusz Juhász (1532–1572) and other signatories who played key roles within the Hungarian Reformation. Furthermore, it is also the expression of a newer religious identity of Transylvanian Hungarians (and Germans becoming Hungarians). Méliusz, a preacher from Debrecen also contributed by continuing the work of his predecessor, the Transylvanian Márton Kálmáncsehi Sánta. Kolozsvár and Marosvásárhely offered the opportunity, whilst Méliusz’s theological training proved suitable for the purpose. The accuracy of the German translation, which was published in 1563 in Heidelberg (in the same year as the Heidelberg Catechism) can be attributed to Ferenc Dávid.\(^{12}\) In order

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\(^{10}\) Buzogány, “Marosvásárhelyi hitvallás”, 20.

\(^{11}\) Buzogány, “Marosvásárhelyi hitvallás”, 29.

to fulfil his aim, Méliusz contacted Ferenc Dávid with the help of Gergely Molnár, the rector from Kolozsvár.\(^{13}\)

The frequency of Transylvanian confessions of faith during this period betrays the intention to settle the identity-crisis of the new community, shaken by the conflict between Lutheran and Helvetic Reformation. The debate in Marosvásárhely was the moment when the Hungarian Reformed Church, following the Helvetic line, separated itself doctrinally from the Lutheran Church of Transylvanian Germans (Saxons). Both the place of venue and the phrasing of the confession are significant. There are indications that, while in 1552 the still mostly Catholic magistrates of the town might have banished the Evangelical preacher,\(^{14}\) they were instead actively taking part in the debates caused by the Reformation.\(^{15}\) It would become one of the strongholds of Helvetic Protestantism, as a result of the work started in 1557 by the preacher Máté Göcsi (†1585).\(^{16}\) The continued success of Anti-Trinitarians made the Reformers in Transylvania and Hungary determined to create a common theological platform. Marosvásárhely (originally Székelyvásárhely) thus became the starting point of the Reformation of the Székely people.\(^{17}\) The Helvetic Reformation of larger Transylvanian towns occurred between 1552–1559, creating an important theological basis for the continuation of Protestant mission towards inner Transylvania, i.e. Székely Land.

\begin{itemize}
  \item[\(^{13}\)] From the Saxon historian Schaesaeus. See Jakab Elek, *Dávid Ferenc emlékezete* [The Memory of Dávid Ferenc] (Budapest: Magyar Királyi Egyetemi Könyvnyomda, 1879), 41.
  \item[\(^{15}\)] See “Borsos Sebestyén Krónikája: Világnak lett dolgairól irott krónika [Written Chronicle about the Events of the World],” in Mikó Imre, *Erdély történeti adatok* [Historical Data of Transylvania] (Kolozsvár: Erdélyi Múzeum Egyesület, 1855), I, 173: “[on 11 August 1556] they were in a great toss about choosing a religion, because almost half of the town, its majority had accepted the new heresy, that of Blandrata”.
  \item[\(^{17}\)] Géza Nagy, “Méliusz”, *Kálvinista jellemképek* [Calvinistic Characters] (Kolozsvár: EREK, 1939), 22.
\end{itemize}
The fact that the *Confession of Marosvásárhely* had been drawn up in Hungarian (and not in Latin, as one could have easily expected at the time) signifies not only a theological, but also a cultural-linguistic or even ethnic separation from the German-speaking Lutherans of Transylvania. Concerning its theological content it is hardly a coincidence that its German translation was sent to Heidelberg, where it was published in 1563.\(^8\) In 1559 Zacharias Ursinus (1534–1584), the Reformed theologian and Catechism-writer in Heidelberg followed the Helvetic Reformation. In 1561, Frederick III (1559–1576) also decided in favour of the Reformed party at the conclusion of a local theological dispute, which had commenced at the beginning of his reign. The publication of the *Marosvásárhely Confession* and of the *Heidelberg Catechism* within the same year in Heidelberg has a double significance: it shows both the urgent need for instructional argumentation and evinces the clear spiritual connection between geographically distant, yet theologically close bodies of Reformation.

The 1559 council of Marosvásárhely represents a remarkably important moment within the history of the Transylvanian Reformed Church. It is understandable that 1 November 1559 is considered the date of birth of Transylvanian Helvetic Protestantism, although the formal establishment of the Transylvanian Reformed Church took place only in 1564. The *Marosvásárhely Confession* became a basic document,\(^9\) creating a spiritual unity between Transylvania and Tiszántúl (Debrecen and its environs). Putting it into the wider perspective of the famous Reformation documents, it is certainly connected not only with Calvin’s *Institutes* of 1536, but also with the *Heidelberg Catechism* of 1563, which was rapidly accepted and used ever since by all Hungarian Reformed communities.

The intention of the council of Nagyvárad (Oradea / Grosswardein) held in August 1559 was to unify the Upper-Hungarian and Transylvanian Helvetic Protestantism. This “small council” ought to be regarded as an important precedent leading up to the council and *Confession of Marosvásárhely.*\(^{20}\) The text was printed in 1559 in Kolozsvár in Heltai Gáspár’s

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\(^8\) Zoványi, *A magyarországi protestantisztmus története*, 60.


\(^{20}\) “A kolozsvári egyház lelkészeinek és az erdélyi egyházkban helyesen tanító több lelkésznek az Urvacsoráról szóló helyes értelmű védelme [Defence of the Right Interpretation of the Lord’s Supper of the Ministers from Kolozsvár and of More Correctly Teaching Ministers within the Transylvanian Churches],” in Kiss, *A XVI. században tartott*
printing house, who labelled it as written by “the Christian teachers from all over Hungary and Transylvania”, i.e. as being the work of preachers gathered from two separate countries.\textsuperscript{21} The Marosvásárhely Confession represents the religious reconciliation of two Hungarian political entities, which for the moment settled the tensions between the Swiss and German trends satisfactorily, and attempted to offer an integrated, Transylvanian interpretation of the Lord’s Supper with a clear Helvetic emphasis.

In 1559 the council of Marosvásárhely had three achievements: first, that the two former theological opponents in questions regarding the Holy Trinity, i.e. Dávid and Méliusz were temporarily reconciled. Secondly, that the Lutheranism of Dávid and of Heltai was replaced by a Helvetic interpretation of the Lord’s Supper. Thirdly, the Transylvanian Helvetic Protestantism brought about a theological harmony in support of the new confessional identity.

The community of Hungarian ministers was united in defending the Helvetic doctrine, enabling itself to embrace the Reformation of Heidelberg and its Catechism a few years later. As recently observed, the teachings of the Heidelberg Catechism and of the Marosvásárhely Confession concerning the Lord’s Supper are consonant as of “having been cut off the same root”.\textsuperscript{22}

In light of the above, the question of religious identity in Transylvania requires a broader interpretation. The fact that towns and regions were seeking for an identity should not be ignored. The formulation of the confession together with the clarification of differences between the opinions of the élite undoubtedly reached its aim. Nonetheless, the confession of faith bears the expression of the masses’ religious identity by the élite and on the one hand provides a starting point for the Protestant mission, whilst on the other hand promotes an active theological solidarity with Protestant Europe.

The Marosvásárhely Confession of 1559 is a unique achievement within the history of Reformation for various reasons. First, it was written and published in Hungarian and not in Latin, which betrays a clear reformatory intention, i.e. to make the Bible as well as the credal statements available to the public in their native tongues, thus integrating them into the

\footnotesize{magyar református zsinatok végzései, 47. Cf. Pokoly, Az Erdélyi Református Egyház története, I, 126.}


\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{22} Buzogány, ”Marosvásárhelyi hitvallás“, 40.}
The teaching concerning the Lord's Supper. Furthermore, it attempted to avoid any separation between the various trends of Reformation already present in Transylvania. Although its function was to reconcile the mainly Helvetic oriented factions with each other, it also attempted (albeit unsuccessfully) to mediate between the Swiss and Lutheran teachings about the Lord’s Supper.

The main authors of this important historical-theological documents were Ferenc Dávid and Gáspár Heltai from Transylvania as well as Péter Mélíusz Juhász and a few of his fellow-ministers from the region of Tiszámtúl in Royal Hungary. The contribution of Mélíusz must have been significant, since quite a few formulae within the Confession are very similar to some of the statements in his sermons uttered at Debrecen or in his published works. The Marosvásárhely Confession as a common achievement of various Hungarian ministers strengthened and furthered the tradition of theological collaboration amongst spiritual leaders who were living in remote areas of the one-time Hungarian Kingdom, even after its collapse which had taken place earlier, during the same century.

The theological input of this Confession is that it follows the more irenic and flexible line of Melanchthon's teaching concerning the Lord's Supper. It is a clear sign that by the middle of the sixteenth century the Transylvanian Hungarian Reformers came to accept the Helvetic and Melanchthonian interpretation. The following Hungarian–English bilingual edition is accompanied by annotating footnotes in order to explain the most important aspects of textual tradition and theological message. The Hungarian text follows the 1559 edition of Gáspár Heltai, with some minor orthographical adjustments.

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23 The present annotated translation of István Pásztori-Kupán should be considered as being the definitive one in comparison to the text in James T. Dennison, Jr., ed., Reformed Confessions of the 16th and 17th Centuries in English Translation: Volume 2, 1552–1566 (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2010), 134–139, which was published with a few errors and lacunae due to the inaccessibility of some relevant sources at the time.

Cf. with Question 75 of the Heidelberg Catechism: “How are you admonished and assured in the Lord’s Supper, that you are a partaker of that one sacrifice of Christ, accomplished on the cross, and of all his benefits? Answer: Thus: that Christ has commanded me and all believers, to eat of this broken bread, and to drink of this cup, in remembrance of him, adding these promises: first, that his body was offered and broken on the cross for me, and his blood shed for me, as certainly as I see with my eyes, the bread of the Lord broken for me, and the cup communicated to me; and further, that he feeds and nourishes my soul to everlasting life, with his crucified body and shed blood, as assuredly as I receive from the hands of the minister, and taste with my mouth the bread and cup of the Lord, as certain signs of the body and blood of Christ.”


The Hungarian term “állat” in this case does not mean “animal”, but rather “állapot”, i.e. “state” or, as in most of the similar cases in the relevant sixteenth century theological literature, “essence” or “substance”.

Table (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Krisztus Jézusnak testével és vérével való igaz Részesülésről, az Úrnak vacsorájaban</th>
<th>Concerning the true partaking in the flesh and blood of Christ Jesus in the Lord’s Supper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Micsoda az Úrnak vacsorája?</td>
<td>What is the Lord’s Supper?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Az Úrnak vacsorája (amint szent Pál szól) a Krisztus Jézus Testével és Vérével való igaz részesülés, mely részesülés lézsen a kenyérnek és a bornak vevőjétől, hitnek általa, mely hit az ígéretben a Krisztus Jézust hozzá kapcsolja, és teljes reménységgel és bizadalommal ragaszkodván ez ígérethez: „az én Testem tiérettetek halára adatik, az én Vérem tiérettetek kiontatik”, részesül a Krisztus Jézussal és mindenjavaival, melyeket szent halálával és vére kiontásával szerzett, tudniillik az örik boldogsággal.</td>
<td>The Lord’s Supper (as Saint Paul says) is the true partaking in the flesh and blood of Christ, from the side of the recipient of the bread and wine through faith, a faith which connects Christ Jesus to him/her in the promise, whilst [the recipient] clings to this promise with full hope and confidence: “My body is given over to death for your sake, my blood is shed for your sake”24—[which means, that the believer] partakes in Christ Jesus and in all his benefits, that is, in the eternal happiness, which he [Christ] procured by his sacred death and the shedding of his blood.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miképpen lészen ez a részesülés?</td>
<td>How does this partaking take place?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lészenigazhítnékeáltala.Mertmiképpen az ígéretet hittel vesszük, azonképpen az ígérethez állatyát [lényegét]26 és</td>
<td>It happens through true faith. For in the manner in which we receive the promise by faith, in the same fashion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
we also have to receive by faith the essence and fruit of promise, which is the Body of Christ Jesus broken for our sake and his Blood shed for the forgiveness of our sin. How this happens, we shall explain in a short discourse, as follows.28

God, willing to fulfil all his promises he had made to the human race from the beginning, gave his Son for our sake. And taking on the human flesh for us, he suffered death for our salvation. Both his incarnation and death happened for our sake and all its benefits became ours to the extent that the assumption of his Body became the reason for our own body not to perish altogether. His death and resurrection became the reason for us to live eternally. Therefore, his incarnation, death, and resurrection are our eternal life.

Nevertheless, in order that the remembrance of this benefaction not to fall out from our minds and souls, Christ instituted the last supper, in which he reminds [us] of his benefactions through external signs, and, simultaneously, he communicates these goods to his believers through faith, in the same manner as he communicated them to the Apostles during the Last Supper.

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27 See e.g. the following passage from Chapter 21 of the Second Helvetic Confession: “By this sacred rite the Lord [...] feeds us with his flesh, and gives us his blood to drink, which, being received spiritually by true faith, nourish us to eternal life”. http://www.ccel.org/creeds/helvetic.htm (accessed: 2 September 2010).

28 This and other similar signs suggest that the Confession may well have emerged from sermons concerning the Lord’s Supper.
At this point one might claim that the reference to Jn. 6:48 betrays the influence of Zwingli’s explanation at the Marburg Colloquy in 1529 as opposed to Luther’s literal interpretation of “hoc est corpus meum”. Nevertheless, the subsequent sentences clarify that the authors have moved far beyond a mere symbolic or rational understanding of the sacrament.

Cf. with Question 76 of the Heidelberg Catechism: “What is it then to eat the crucified body, and drink the shed blood of Christ? Answer: It is not only to embrace with believing heart all the sufferings and death of Christ and thereby to obtain the pardon of sin, and life eternal; but also, besides that, to become more and more united to his sacred body, by the Holy Ghost, who dwells both in Christ and in us; so that we, though Christ is in heaven and we on earth, are notwithstanding ‘flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone’ and that we live, and are governed forever by one spirit, as members of the same body are by one soul.”
The teaching concerning the Lord’s supper 515

are also heavenly and spiritual goods, not bodily ones. In addition, the channel of this partaking of ours with Christ Jesus is the Holy Spirit, by whom Christ Jesus bestows upon us as well as communicates with us all his benefactions, as Saint John says, "By this we know that he dwells in us, and we [dwell] in him, because he has given us of his Spirit".31

Table (cont.)

| Vesszünk, mennyei és lelki javak, nem testiek. Továbbá, ennek a Krisztus Jézussal való részesülésünknak csatornája a Szent Lélek, ki által minden javait is reánk ötlí, és velünk közli a Krisztus Jézus, mint szent János mondja, „eBBől ismerjük meg, hogy ő mibennünk lakozik, és mi Őbenne, hogy az Ő Lelkéből adott minekünk”. |
| How many kinds of eating are in the Lord’s Supper? |
| Itt azt is meg kell értetniünk, hogy az Úrnak vacsorájában kétféle eledel vagyon: lelki és testi. A lelki avagy mennyei, Krisztus Jézusnak szent Teste és szent Vére. A testi a kenyer és a bor. És miképpen kétféle az eledel, azonképpen az étel is kétféle: testi és lelki. A test veszi a testi eledelt, a |

Hányféle étel légyen az Úrnak vacsorájában?

Itt azt is meg kell értenünk, hogy az Úrnak vacsorájában kétféle eledel vagyon: lelki és testi. A lelki avagy mennyei, Krisztus Jézusnak szent Teste és szent Vére. A testi a kenyer és a bor. És miképpen kétféle az eledel, azonképpen az étel is kétféle: testi és lelki. A test veszi a testi eledelt, a

31 Cf. 1 Jn. 4:13. As pointed out above, the authors follow Calvin’s and Bullinger’s argumentation, speaking of the soul’s nourishing by Christ’s body and blood through faith, and adding that the channel of this partaking is the Holy Spirit. Cf. with Article 23 of the Consensus Tigurinus: “Christ, by our eating of his flesh and drinking of his blood, which are here figured, feeds our souls through faith by the agency of the Holy Spirit”. See Henry Beveridge’s translation in: http://www.creeds.net/Tigurinus/tigur-bvd.htm (accessed: 2 September 2010). Cf. also with Question 79 of the Heidelberg Catechism: “Why then does Christ call the bread ‘his body’, and the cup ‘his blood’, or ‘the new covenant in his blood’; and Paul the ‘communion of body and blood of Christ’? Answer: Christ speaks thus, not without great reason, namely, not only thereby to teach us, that as bread and wine support this temporal life, so his crucified body and shed blood are the true meat and drink, whereby our souls are fed to eternal life; but more especially by these visible signs and pledges to assure us, that we are as really partakers of his true body and blood by the operation of the Holy Spirit as we receive by the mouths of our bodies these holy signs in remembrance of him; and that all his sufferings and obedience are as certainly ours, as if we had in our own persons suffered and made satisfaction for our sins to God.” http://www.ccel.org/creeds/heidelberg-cat.html (accessed: 2 September 2010). See also Ch. 21 of the Second Helvetic Confession: “by the work of Christ through the Holy Spirit they [the faithful] also inwardly receive the flesh and blood of the Lord, and are thereby nourished unto life eternal”. http://www.ccel.org/creeds/helvetic.htm (accessed: 2 September 2010).

32 For a detailed discussion of the ‘kinds of eating’ see Ch. 21 of the Second Helvetic Confession.
kenyeret és a bort, mely étel mondatik szentség szerint való ételnek is. A lélek veszi az ígéretben a Krisztus Jézusnak szent Testét, szent Vérét, hit által.

Miképpen legyen jelen Krisztus a vacsorában?

Továbbá, azt is eszünkbe vegyük, miképpen legyen a mi Urunk Krisztus Jézus a vacsorában jelen. A szentegyháztól soha a Krisztus Jézus el nem távozik, Isteni természete és hatalmassága szerint, miképpen ő maga mondja: „én veletek vagyok mind világ végezetig”. Én, én visellem titket még vénésétekben is. Efféle ígéreti szerint a szentegyházban mindenka jelen vagyon a mi Urunk Krisztus Jézus. De e jelen voltának főlőtte a vacsorában az ő teste, vére is jelen vagyon a hitnek, az ígéretben. Mert a hitnek oly ereje vagyon, hogy a távol való állatokat [valóságokat] is jelenvalóképpen veszi az Igében. Mert a hitnek mind a távol való, s mind a közel való hely egy.

In what manner is Christ present in the Supper?

Further, we should also bear in mind in what manner is our Lord Christ Jesus present in the Supper.

Christ Jesus never departs from the holy church according to his divine nature and power, as he himself says: “I am with you always, to the end of the world”.33 I, I take care of you even in your old age. According to such promises of his, our Lord Christ Jesus is always present in the holy church. Nevertheless, beyond this presence, his body and blood are also present in the supper, for the faith, within the promise. [This happens] because faith has such a great power, that it receives even the remote realities as being present in the Word. Since for the faith both the remote and the nearby places are one.34

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33 Mt. 28:20. Cf. with Question 47 of the Heidelberg Catechism: "Is not Christ then with us even to the end of the world, as he has promised? Answer: Christ is very man and very God; with respect to his human nature, he is no more on earth; but with respect to his Godhead, majesty, grace and spirit, he is at no time absent from us.” http://www.ccel.org/creeds/heidelberg-cat.html (accessed: 2 September 2010).

34 Although the doctrine of impanation or a local inclusion of Christ’s body and blood in the elements of the Lord’s Supper in the sense of an extra-sacramental conjunction was rejected by Lutherans as well, they still maintained the ubiquity of Christ’s body. The Marosvásárhely Confession, however, beside refusing the inclusio localis, adheres to the Antiochene Christological model represented by the Swiss Reformers in regard to the fact that both natures of Christ retain their specific properties. Therefore, the attribute of omnipresence of Christ’s divine nature is not transferred to his human nature, i.e. to his
It is in this sense what Saint Paul writes to the Galatians, that Christ Jesus was crucified before their eyes, although Christ Jesus had not been crucified in Galatia, but in Jerusalem, a long time before.

The Lord Christ Jesus says about Abraham also, that Abraham had seen his day, i.e. his time, in which Christ Jesus lived in this world in the flesh, yet Abraham had died many hundred years before the birth of Christ Jesus. Similarly, the holy Body and holy Blood of our Lord Christ Jesus is also present for the believers today within the promise, through faith, in the same manner as the crucifixion of Christ Jesus was present for the Galatians, and as the day of Christ Jesus [was present] for the patriarch Abraham. Nonetheless, understand this as happening through faith, spiritually, and not in a corporal sense. For according to the body, Christ Jesus is sitting on the right hand of the Father, whence he shares all his benefits with us, according to his promise, vivifying, nourishing as well as protecting us.

It is in this manner that we say also about the benefactions [availed to] his believers that Christ Jesus is present [through them], since these [benefactions] derive upon us from his Body, according to his promises.
Mondja magát a szentegyház fejének. Mert miképpen a tagoknak a főtől vagyon indulatjok [kezdetük] és életük: azonképpen mi a Krisztus Jézus testének érdeme miatt élünk. Mondja magát szőlőtőnek. Mert miképpen a szőlővessző a szőlőtőtől él, és onnan vészen zsírt és erőt, azonképpen mi is a Krisztus Jézus Testének érdeméből vett éettel élünk.

Mondja továbbá a szentegyház vőlegényének magát. Mert miképpen a vőlegény táplálja és oltalmazza az ő hites társát, azonképpen a Krisztus Jézus őrzi és táplálja az ő szent egyházát.

De ezeknek e jótéteményeknek mind feje a Krisztus Jézusnak megtestesülése, miért hogy a mi testünket vette fel és testünket közöltük ővele, úgyannyira, hogy (amint szent Pál szól) hűsünk az ő húsából legyen, csontunk az ő csontjaiból. Annak okáért lehetetlen, hogy minket elhagyjon, és ne oltalmazzon hatalmával, miképpen ember az ő tagjaitól, csontjaitól és testétől el nem távozhatik. Annak okáért e sok jótéteményekért és javakért is, melyek mireánk a Krisztus Jézusnak Testéből áradnak, mondjuk, hogy a Krisztus Jézus e Vacsorában jelen vagyon, és közli mivelünk minden javait, az ő ígéretében.

[Christ] calls himself the head of the holy church, because as the members have their beginning and life from the head, in the same fashion, we live by the merit of the Body of Christ Jesus. He calls himself the vine, because as the branch has its life from the vine, thence receiving its nourishment and energy, in the same fashion we live by a life taken from the merit of the Body of Christ Jesus. Further, he calls himself the bridegroom of the holy church, because as the bridegroom nourishes and protects his faithful companion, in the same manner Christ Jesus guards and nourishes his holy church. Nonetheless, the fountainhead of all these benefactions is the incarnation of Christ Jesus, inasmuch as he assumed our body and we imparted our body to him, to the extent that (as Saint Paul says) our flesh is of his flesh, and our bones are of his bones. For this reason it is impossible for him to leave us and not to protect us with his power, just as one man cannot depart from his members, bones and body. Consequently, due to these many benefactions as well as benefits, which are pouring upon us from the Body of Christ Jesus, we say that Christ Jesus is present within this Supper and shares all his benefits with us in his promise.

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38 Cf. Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18.
39 Jn. 15:5.
40 Cf. Mt. 9:15; Mt. 25:1–13; Mk. 2:19–20; Lk. 5:34–35; Jn. 3:29.
41 Eph. 5:30.
42 See e.g. Chapter 36 of the French Confession of La Rochelle, published in the same year 1559: “We confess that the Lord’s Supper, which is the second sacrament, is a witness of the union which we have with Christ, inasmuch as he not only died and rose again for us once, but also feeds and nourishes us truly with his flesh and blood {nous repaît et nourrit vraiment de sa chair et de son sang}, so that we may be one in him, and that our life may be in common. Although he be in heaven until he come to judge all the earth, still we believe that by the secret and incomprehensible power of his Spirit he feeds and strengthens us with the substance of his body and of his blood {par la vertu secrète et incompréhensible de son Esprit il nous nourrit et vieifie de la substance de son corps et de son sang}. We hold that this is done spiritually {spirituellement} not because we put imagination and fancy in the place of fact and truth, but because the greatness of this mystery exceeds the measure of our senses and the laws of nature {ce mystère surmonte en sa hautesse la mesure de notre sens et tout ordre de nature}. In short, because it is heavenly {céleste}, it can only be apprehended by faith {ne peut être appréhendé que par foi},” http://www.creeds.net/reformed/frconf.htm (accessed: 2 September 2010).

43 Cf. 2 Cor. 6:15.
Annak utána szent Pál is szólóván
a Vacsorabeli méltatlan ételről és
itáról, nem ezt mondja: „aki a Krisztus
Jézusnak Testét méltatlanul eszi”,
hanem: „aki a kenyérből méltatlanul
eszik, és a poháról méltatlanul iszik,
vetkezik a Krisztusnak Teste és Vére
ellen”. Mi legyen ez, [úgy]azon
szen Pál megmagyarázza: Kárhozatot
vészen, ügymond, magának. Tudjuk
pedig azt, hogy a Krisztus Jézusnak
Teste nem kárhozat, hanem élet.

Azért a hitetlenek a Krisztus Jézus
Testét nem veszik állattya [lényege]
szerint, és lélek szerint, hanem csak
a Krisztus Jézus Testének és Vérének
jeleit, a bort és a kenyeret.

Végezetre, haszontalan dolgot a
Krisztus Jézus sehol nem parancsol,
mely minekünk veszedelmünkre
volna. A Krisztus Jézus Testének vétel
hit nélkül haszontalan, ezért azt nem
parancsolja. Ha nem parancsolja,
 nem is akarja; tehát erővel tőle el nem
vehetjük, akár mint [i.e. bármennyire
is] adjuk szóval a hitetleneknek.

Az Úr vacsoráját mi végre kell
gyakorlanunk?

Utolszor, azt is mondjuk és valljuk,
 hogy az Úr Testének és Vérének
vételere a szent Vacsorában intést és
kényszerít minket.

Először, a mi Urunk Krisztus Jézusnak
parancsolatja, aki azt mondja:
„Vegyétek, egyétek. Igyatok ebből
mindnyájan”. És „tegyétek ezt az én
emlékezetemére” stb.

Table (cont.)

| Annak utána szent Pál is szólóván a Vacsorabeli méltatlan ételről és itáról, nem ezt mondja: „aki a Krisztus Jézusnak Testét méltatlanul eszi”, hanem: „aki a kenyérből méltatlanul eszik, és a poháról méltatlanul iszik, vetkezik a Krisztusnak Teste és Vére ellen”. Mi legyen ez, [úgy]azon szent Pál megmagyarázza: Kárhozatot vészen, ügymond, magának. Tudjuk pedig azt, hogy a Krisztus Jézusnak Teste nem kárhozat, hanem élet. | Saint Paul also, when speaking about the unworthy manner of eating and drinking at the Supper, does not say that “whoever eats the Body of Christ Jesus unworthily”, but that “whoever eats the bread or drinks from the cup unworthily will be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord.” The same Saint Paul explains the meaning of this, saying that [the one who eats or drinks unworthily] takes damnation to himself/herself. Yet we know that the Body of Christ Jesus is not damnation, but life. |
| Azért a hitetlenek a Krisztus Jézus Testét nem veszik állattya [lényege] szerint, és lélek szerint, hanem csak a Krisztus Jézus Testének és Vérének jeleit, a bort és a kenyeret. | Therefore, the unbelievers do not receive the Body of Christ Jesus according to its substance and spiritually, but merely the signs of the Body and Blood of Christ Jesus, the wine and the bread. |
| Végezetre, haszontalan dolgot a Krisztus Jézus sehol nem parancsol, mely minekünk veszedelmünkre volna. A Krisztus Jézus Testének vétel hit nélkül haszontalan, ezért azt nem parancsolja. Ha nem parancsolja, nem is akarja; tehát erővel tőle el nem vehetjük, akár mint [i.e. bármennyire is] adjuk szóval a hitetleneknek. | Finally, Christ Jesus never commanded anything useless, which could be harmful for us. The reception of the Body of Christ Jesus without faith is useless—so he does not command it. If he does not order it, then he does not want it either. Thus, we cannot take it [i.e. his Body] from him by force, regardless of how much we might give it verbally to the unbelievers. |
| Az Úr vacsoráját mi végre kell gyakorlanunk? | For what purpose do we have to perform the Lord’s Supper? |
| Utolszor, azt is mondjuk és valljuk, hogy az Úr Testének és Vérének vételere a szent Vacsorában intést és kényszerít minket. Először, a mi Urunk Krisztus Jézusnak parancsolatja, aki azt mondja: „Vegyétek, egyétek. Igyatok ebből mindnyájan”. És „tegyétek ezt az én emlékezetemére” stb. | Finally, we also say and confess that within the Holy Supper the Lord exhorts and compels us to receive his Body and Blood. First, it is a commandment of our Christ Jesus, who says, “Take, eat; drink from it, all of you”. And “do this in remembrance of me” etc. |

44 Cf. 1 Cor. 11:27.
45 Cf. Mt. 26:27; Mk. 14:22; 1 Cor. 11:24–25.
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<th>Text</th>
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<td>521</td>
<td>Then the benefits we receive within the Lord’s Supper: First, our reception of the Supper of Christ Jesus strengthens our faith in the promises of Christ Jesus. For as the external elements do not deceive the senses of our mouth and eyes, in the same fashion, within the promises of Christ Jesus, the holy Body and holy Blood of Christ Jesus is truly given to the believers through faith. From these [i.e. from his Body and Blood] renewal and redemption descend upon us, as saint Augustine says, “whoever wants to live, has whence to live: let him/her come near, believe, and unite with Christ in order to be revived.” Further, this Holy Supper urges us also to thanksgiving, thus to give thanks to our Lord Christ Jesus concerning his benefactions and benefits he provided for us, acquiring these by his death and resurrection. About which Christ Jesus speaks, saying, “Do this in remembrance of me.” Also Saint Paul, “As often as you eat of the bread, proclaim the Lord’s death.” Thirdly, it also urges us to brotherly love. For as the bread by which the body lives is made of many seeds of wheat, and the wine of many seeds of grape, in the same manner, we, who are members of one head, have to become one. Saint Paul speaks about this, saying, “There is one bread, and we who are many are one body.”</td>
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45 Cf. Augustine, Tractatus in Johannis evangelium [Tractate on the Gospel of John] 26, 13: “He who would live, has where to live, has whence to live. Let him come near, let him believe; let him be embodied, that he may be made to live.” See Migne, Patrologia Latina 35, 1613: “Qui vult vivere, habet ubi vivat, habet unde vivat. Accedat, credat; incorporeetur, ut vivificetur.”
46 Lk. 22:19.
47 1 Cor. 11:26.
48 1 Cor. 10:17.
In the fourth instance, it distinguishes us from the unbelieving Pagans, who are not members of the Holy Church. Simultaneously, it also comforts us concerning the continued existence of the Holy Church until the end of the world, according to the words of Saint Paul, who says, "As often as you eat of the bread and drink of the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes". By seeing and understanding this, the faithful and God-fearing Christians should not despise this sacred and salvific doctrine, but rather ought to meditate upon it frequently for the consolation of their souls. From within a devoted heart and soul they should pray together with us, in the name of Christ Jesus, for the Holy Spirit, who will guide us into all truth and make us one in Jesus Christ so that he may have some pleasing achievements among us. Amen.

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50 The message of this sentence can be understood better in a historical context. The victory of the Turks (i.e. “the unbelieving Pagans” as the Hungarians regarded them in the sixteenth century) at Mohács (1526) and their conquest of Buda, the Hungarian capital (1541) marked the end of the mediaeval Hungarian Kingdom and imposed a serious threat upon the relative independence of the Transylvanian Principality. The subsequent consolation in the text concerning the continued existence of the Holy Church bears an important historical and theological message: regardless of the present fate of the nation, the believers, who are distinguished from the pagans by their very access to the Lord’s Supper, must cling to the promise of the returning Christ. The Marosvásárhely Confession gives here a theologically adequate answer to a highly complicated and dangerous historical situation.

51 1 Cor. 11:26.