

## Foreword

Neither Hungarian nor universal history and culture are conceivable without the values offered by the Reformation and its churches.

Over the past five hundred years, the spirit of the Reformation has been not only a church-forming factor, but also a force of nation-building and salvation. Our common past, our history, creates a strong bond among Hungarians.

Upon thinking of the five hundred years, we all felt that it was our duty to commemorate the event, which for many of us is more than history, more than an event, a date, a process – it is part of the divine plan, which we, ourselves are part and beneficiaries of.

It is true that the historic moment of the Reformation, when Luther proposed his 95 theses for disputation can be linked to a certain date, but we all know that the Reformation itself is not related only to this historic moment. The representatives of the pre-Reformation have already sought to bring back some of the early church elements, principles, actions in which the church of Jesus Christ would be recognizable. The ideal, the original, the real Church, in which the world of God should be focused upon and all the alien elements of godly thoughts conceived by humans are less likely to appear against the Gospel of Jesus. The constant need to avoid any unnecessary frippery in the relationship between God and man, for it to become up to date, fresh, personal, continuous and a mediator of the divine grace, essentially depicts the Reformation as a much longer period than what we celebrate linked to certain dates.

Luther's act was in fact not the beginning, but the moment when the large faith in people's souls, the irreplaceable need for the search of God shoot out with an elemental force and has been flowing ever since. As in the case of volcanoes, this means earlier "magma activity", "earthquakes" and "the emergence of new break lines" in the depths.

The wording of the newly emerged spiritual need flowed through the nailed doors of the churches and continued as scorching lava throughout Europe, then in the New World and is still flowing on each continent. Initially, it redefined not only the boundaries of the Church, but also some of the political boundaries. At the same time, however, it opened a new horizon for cognition, knowledge, social relationships, social responsibility, popular education, music, but occasionally for social form as well. It cut out a number of elements of religious life, which, according to the new religious view, did not help in establishing a God-man relationship and strengthening it in faith, but overshadowed it, made it difficult, and encumbered it with superfluous human factors.

One's personal responsibility in living one's life, the quality of that life, the managing of one's relationships, the strengthening of the community norm and the gaining of one's own salvation were completely re-evaluated. The grace received in advance, the continuity of divine providence did not only bring about duties, like the duty of the need for a committed life and responsibility for one's neighbours, but also the security of a grateful and happy life, and the faith-bound security of salvation. There is no more loss, only victory gained in God, in Christ, for which a life "lost" in faith is not too high of a price: to give up the temporary, the imperfect in return for the everlasting, the perfect. Thus, ordinary people have become heroes - the heroes of faith - who considered what they have given to others to be more important than their own profits, for which sacrificing their own life was not too much to do. Nevertheless, the Reformation has become a force of salvation and spiritual harbour in a period of Hungarian history when the very being of homeland, country, nation and of the individual was endangered. Folk education and nurturing, mother-tongue pastoral care through faith, the use of one's mother tongue in communication with God also made people aware that the boundaries between "great nations" and "small nations" are not heavenly works either, for God speaks and understands all languages in which one speaks to Him. Thus, culture and language have become a divine value for which one can and must fight, as they are the most important and the purest means of interpreting God's Word.

Five hundred years are a long time from the viewpoint of a retrospect. Adding the "years of silent slumber" it should involve even more events. It would be hard to count, to make an inventory of the Reformation's inheritance. It would not be timely either, as one makes a legacy inventory after someone's death.

The Reformation is also a challenge of our times, which warns us that this is not a time of relaxation, of enjoying the abundant wealth, or of frivolous wasting, even if the accumulated legacy is immensely rich. The freshness of the Word obliges us today: to find its topicality in this altered, accelerated world with highly altered values and standards, to see and recognize one's new neighbour, to bear with faith, dignity and humility the immense riches that the grace of Christ and the daily care of the Father provide. These riches mean more than the nationwide product of the welfare society, they are more durable than all human creations, and more necessary than all comforts and luxuries: they can be obtained nowhere else, but in the pursuit of Christ.

The speakers of the conference enjoyed an abundance of treasures. They were trying to move within a frame of interpretation which now, after centuries, offers a glimpse at some true values that have accompanied our past as reformed values, divine gifts. As evidenced by the

title and the purpose of the conference, along facts and ideas we have tried to walk through a process, by which we could show at least one pathway of this wide historical stretch. Thus, we can perhaps show, how the mustard seed grows into a large tree, on which the birds will rest. How the spark of the Word of God grows into a tremendous tree, on which the next generations can rest, where they can be refreshed, strengthened in spirit, when the world becomes inhuman, and as one gets weary easily, the Word may be concealed by the cloud of human ambition, grandeur, vanity, pridefulness and egotism, which may tear one away from the only Lord of one's life. All of this happened on the basis of thoughts and ideas of specific fields of science, sometimes on the borderlines of the fields of science, where, next to Theology, social, historical, legal, literary, political and musical approaches were also involved in presenting those altering events, processes, creations, documents, which have been essential and decisive stages of the spreading and the establishment of the Reformation. Cluj-Napoca was, became and remained an important centre of the Reformation, as significant events took place in its surroundings as well. The Faculty of Reformed Theology of the Babeş-Bolyai University and the Protestant Theological Institute always function in an environment, where the challenges of multi-confessionalism and multiethnicity are also present beside interdisciplinarity. However, these can only be regarded as opportunities in this part of the world and of the country, where the rough road to the development of religious tolerance was already successfully walked on, with lots of lessons learned, thanks to the Reformation itself.

Therefore, we can say that the speakers of the conference were not searching for ways of looking into the past, but for ways of pointing towards the future: ways of leaving an inheritance, and of building a bridge between the past and the future, by the crossing of which we can pass on our riches of culture and faith to the next generation. The goal is to enrich the created world by glorifying God with human gratitude for the immense gifts received within the Reformation.

The editors

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**Károly Zsolt Nagy**

## **The Heritage and the Heirs<sup>1</sup>**

Motto:

“The continuous habit of comparison that is part of our present identity is a clear sign of the inferiority complex permeating our community, which is in a peculiar contrast with the earlier sense of being the chosen ones.”

(László Kósa)

### **Summary**

As the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of reformation is approaching, we hear a lot about what the legacy of reformation constitutes of, what we inherited from our ancestors. However, we hear surprisingly little of how this heritage is taken care of by the heirs, and how they avail themselves of it, how they live it. In my study, this is the question I strive to reflect upon. I consider the heritage of reformation to be a set of preconditions theoretically determining the life and thinking of those, who embrace this legacy, that is, Calvinists. Via the results of my survey-based researches conducted over the previous years I, try to present how this is manifested in practice.

*Keywords:* heritage, identity conceptions, Calvinism in practice, survey, Bible reading, religious minority, ethnicity.

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The central narrative of reformation is heritage. We collect it, process it, interpret it, write about it, film it, exhibit it, and use it along different lines – many times for hardly covert political objectives. However, we speak surprisingly little of how this heritage is taken care of by the heirs, and how they avail themselves of it, how they live it. This is also remarkable, because the concept of heritage *ab ovo* includes this “us” (the heirs) and “them” (the ancestors) relationship; moreover, without this we cannot even talk about heritage. This is what distinguishes heritage from inheritance. Inheritance is a very broad notion, including everything what is “left to us,” even if by chance. Inheritance includes both old rubbish and valuables, things we continue using and cherish, and things we leave to ruins. It includes things that make us proud and things we’d rather just hide. We consciously reflect on these different elements, we consciously construe the remembrance of our personal past or common history, and this inheritance taken possession of is what we eventually call heritage. The

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<sup>1</sup> The research was supported by the Bolyai Research Fellowship.

guiding principle of the selection is generally not the separate intellectual or material value of the inheritance element, but the memory it evokes. In some cases, and if we must choose, we let go of our grandmother's silver for the worn tin powdered sugar sprinkler, because although the first is definitely more "valuable," the latter evokes the sweets of our childhood. This is because the essence of heritage is that it carries a meaning and a significance. This meaning is what we seek or look to recognize in the objects, ideas, words, motions, habits and rituals selected as parts of the heritage. The exploration and discovery of this meaning is also a meaning-making activity, as we relate the heritage element to ourselves. We turn it into our heritage, and thus, we become parts of its symbol system. "In the course of this process, the original content is enriched by something new, the interpretation of those, who seize it. Thus, the heritage is connected with the remembrance, both being parts of the identity, which needs to be found, dug out, preserved, or rediscovered. In this sense, the heritage actually does not only serve the purpose of mapping the possessed assets, but also of delineating, determining the identity of the ancestor/heir, many times without them being aware of it."<sup>2</sup>

The heritage, together with its delineation and construction are important constituents of the identity-construction processes of the person or community – and below I shall discuss the latter. The common identity is constructed within the processes of social communication.<sup>3</sup> In these processes, members of the community create, maintain and pass on the peculiar consensus related to the heritage of the community – providing the content of the community's cultural memory as well as of its history – in a more refined, fixed form<sup>4</sup> – via the harmonizing of the individual remembrances and meanings.<sup>5</sup> In this communication<sup>6</sup> process, heritage has at least two meanings, or functions, besides its establishment itself raising the problem, which the communication process is organized around. On the one hand, it can be interpreted as a scene, but also as a precondition.

The concept of the scene is not to be interpreted geographically in the communications sense, but as a medium, the elements of which are all important from the aspect of the realization of

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<sup>2</sup> SONKOLY GÁBOR (2000), A kulturális örökség fogalmának értelmezési és alkalmazási szintjei, *Regio 4*, 47.

<sup>3</sup> PATAKI FERENC (1989), Identitás – személyiség – társadalom, in: *Az identitás – kettős tükörben*, edited by Váriné Szilágyi Ibolya and Niedermüller Péter, Budapest: MTA Néprajzi Kutatócsoport – Magyar Pszichológiai Társaság Szociálpszichológiai Szekciója – TIT Országos Elnöksége.

<sup>4</sup> ASSMANN JAN (1992), *Das Kulturelle Gedächtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und Politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen*, Munich: Verlag C.H. Beck.

<sup>5</sup> HALBWACHS MAURICE (1980), *Collective Memory*, New York: Harper.

<sup>6</sup> The analysis and terminology of the following sections is based on the participatory theory of communication. HORÁNYI ÖZSÉB (ed.) (2007), *A kommunikáció mint participáció*, Budapest: Typotex Kiadó.

the communicative event. Thus, it means an environment, in which the communicative actions themselves take place,<sup>7</sup> and the knowledge of which is important for understanding the event happening there, or within. The scenes are created by those preconditions – cognitions, attitudes, etc. – which are made available in this environment jointly and mutually by the agents participating in the solution of the given problem. And this joint and mutual availability – essentially, communication itself – is the process, during which the lifeworld (or living environment, “Lebenswelt”) of the agents is (partly) reorganized with the life-worlds of other agents. “The space takes in the event, accommodates it – and in turn, the event takes in, or accommodates, other events, and starts »behaving« like a space.”<sup>8</sup> The scene offers an opportunity for the taking place or creation of events, actions, and activities. This is how heritage may be interpreted in this reorganization procedure as a conceptual space on the one hand, which is established by the agents themselves, and which means a framework and assist for them in the course of their problem solving<sup>9</sup>, and as a discourse on the other hand, which also makes it possible or necessary to have the given heritage-narrative tap into other narratives and discourses.

The heritage concept created during the communicative process of the reorganization operates as a precondition for recognizing and solving the relevant problems of those agents, who participated in the process on the one hand, and, on the other hand (but also related to it), establishes a peculiar community of meaning among them; after all, in the context of the specific problem, the heritage carries more or less the same meaning for them. In the communication theory context, we usually talk about the notion of precondition as knowledge, or the analogy of knowledge; at the same time, it is possible that it covers more than skills and a certain set of knowledge.<sup>10</sup> The preconditions are more complex: “they

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<sup>7</sup> HORÁNYI ÖZSÉB/P. SZILCZI DÓRA (2001), Az egyház(ak)ról, in: *Közéleti kommunikáció*, Edited by Buda Béla/Sárközy Erika, Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 83.

<sup>8</sup> DOMBSCHITZ MÁTYÁS/HAMP GÁBOR (2006), A kommunikáció színtereiről, in: *A kommunikáció mint participáció*, edited by Horányi Özséb, Budapest: AKTI – Typotex Kiadó, 102.

<sup>9</sup> It is important to remark here that heritage marks a unique conceptual space regardless of the scene or the specific discourse of the recognition or resolution of a problem; this space includes for example the professional literature related to the heritage. However, in a specific case, a specific conceptual space is created in the matrix of the specific problem and the specific agents establishing the scene; this space may partly be independent of everything that we usually think of as something related to the concept of heritage.

<sup>10</sup> PETE KRISZTIÁN (2008), Felkészültség, in: *Kommunikációtudományi Nyitott Enciklopédia*, edited by HORÁNYI ÖZSÉB, <http://ktnye.communicatio.hu/index.php?title=Felk%C3%A9sz%C3%BClts%C3%A9g> (Last download: 09.05.2017.)



partly consist of pieces of knowledge, partly of beliefs, but also of various attitudes, for example emotions, intentions, etc.”<sup>11</sup>

Preconditions determine the acting, problem recognizing and problem solving capabilities of the agent. Namely, the agent is only capable of recognizing and solving a problem, if it possesses the necessary preconditions. Thus, the lack or restrictions of the public and mutual availability of certain preconditions naturally render certain problems unrecognizable or unsolvable for the specific agents. The function of the heritage is to provide preconditions applicable in the present, and thus to determine the identity of the community as well; after all, the heritage answers exactly the essential question of identity: who we are. We are the ones who usually do and think about this or that in this or that way etc. The heritage is the socially/culturally captured description of this “usually.”<sup>12</sup>

All this is important, because among the several ways of making the preconditions available, one of the most important is capturing them in various forms, or “places,” of the social remembrance; that is, making them heritage-like. A parallel may be drawn between the operation of social remembrance – especially in the context of what Assmann writes about the differences between the communicative and the cultural memory, the transition from the first into the latter, and the possibilities of the remembrance turning into history – and the notions of inheritance and heritage. Assmann believes that historical remembrance is fixed, and its elements and narratives are hardly rewritable; mostly only as a result of social cataclysms. On the other hand, the cultural remembrance exists primarily in objects, places, rituals, and other cultural formations, as well as the related narratives. It is a typically actualized form of the contents of the remembrance, and this actualization suggests exactly that the “reorganization” of the agents is in an intensive process; this is the process, during which the experiences that may be interpreted as the preconditions of the individual agents, presented and reflected upon within one scene, become impregnated with meanings organized on a higher level, differing

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<sup>11</sup> HORÁNYI ÖZSÉB (2015), *A kommunikáció mint állapot*, [http://www.ozseb.horanyi.hu/kozelet/tanulmanyok/a\\_kommunikacio\\_mint\\_allapot\\_150607.htm](http://www.ozseb.horanyi.hu/kozelet/tanulmanyok/a_kommunikacio_mint_allapot_150607.htm) (Last download: 09.05.2017.)

<sup>12</sup> This study does not explore this in detail, but based on the above, heritage may be considered an institution as well. Namely, the precondition may be determined as a set of concepts and skills, the spatial and temporal transmission of which creates a common experience for the members of the community/society with respect to a problematic situation. Such a precondition, assuming it is stable, and made available by the agents permanently and collectively, can be considered to be an institution. These permanently existing preconditions are modifiable for the agents to a limited extent. Such an institution-like precondition and heritage is for example the mother tongue. These institutions constitute of a set of the agents’ preconditions, which are present not only in one, but in many scenes (permanent or *ad hoc*, created by the preconditions of individual or non-individual agents), and function as a code. PETE KRISZTIÁN/P. SZILICZI DÓRA (2007), A kommunikáció intézményeiről, in: *A kommunikáció mint participáció*, edited by Horányi Özséb, Budapest: AKTI–Typotex Kiadó, 50.

in structure – and sometimes competing with each other. While the cultural aspect of the cultural remembrance is marked by that the deposition of the siltage of the days in the individual memories start converging to the culturally determined forms, the key questions of the communicative remembrance is what is deposited in the individual memories. However, inasmuch we consider the historical remembrance to be the heritage, communicative remembrance as an inheritance – especially in the social context emphasized here – contains a lot of "rubbish," that is, personal-random elements. Thus, the various forms and the processes of the settling of the cultural remembrance may be interpreted as a – many times fragmented – process pointing from the communicative remembrance (the inheritance) focusing on the individual agents to the historical remembrance (the heritage) focusing on the collective agent.

The precondition-based and identity-forming characteristics of the heritage may most easily be identified in those narratives, which are called identity programs.<sup>13</sup> I consider the identity program to be the discursive representation of an identity model<sup>14</sup>, which is capable of organizing one or more discourses into one coherent narrative, in which the social identity of the individual is shaped. Identity programs may appear in several various forms. An identity program may be a fairy tale, a folk song, an archaic prayer, an image, or visible symbol, the author or presenter of which is unknown, gaining its authentication and validity exactly from its collective characteristic. However, a product of a known author or presenter may also be an identity program; in such cases the source of the authentication and validity is the status of the individual in the given community. Still, an identity program will not present an identity model in its complexity, but always showcases one of its aspects in the context of the problem in the specific scene of the given discourse. It basically "translates" the more abstract identity model into the given problem. For example, an archaic prayer does not provide a general answer to the question what it means to be a Calvinist, but it shows how a Calvinist should or could manage or process a life situation – like the daily routine of rising in the morning or going to bed in the evening, or extraordinary situations like losing a child or experiencing a flood. Thus, an identity program may also be considered a precondition; after all, one of its most important functions is to position the agent in the "social field" of its existence for a relatively permanent period.<sup>15</sup> Identity programs often manifest in sayings or proverbs of

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<sup>13</sup> PATAKI FERENC (1989), 26–27.

<sup>14</sup> An identity model is a possibly hierarchic but definitely structured system of identity elements organized in a certain way, describing the horizon of a given community's social expectations.

<sup>15</sup> The same wording may be applied to the collective and the coalition agents as well.

religious context that members of the community learn and recall as a guiding principle in certain life situations.

### **Image 1.**

The proverb determining the social position of young people on the guard rail of the lad gallery of the Reformed church in Körösfő<sup>16</sup>. This quote from the Bible<sup>17</sup> appears in many churches in this same spot, probably serving the same purpose.) Thus, an identity program may appear for an agent as an institution. In other words: these identity programs make the items “stored” by the community in the heritage as elements of an identity model available in specific situations.

Consequently, when examining the identity of a social group, the heritage construction of that group may play an outstanding role, together with which identity programs constituting their cultural inheritance are expressed and applied by members of the group in specific life situations. Based on these considerations, I started a comprehensive research of Calvinist identity in 2008. The research is basically positioned in the intercepting region of the different subsections of cultural (and historical) anthropology, communication studies, and theology. Its methodology is mostly determined by ethnography; however, beyond the qualitative methods like content analysis, discourse analysis and interviewing, it also utilizes a quantitative method, that is, questionnaires.

This survey-based data acquisition covers the Calvinist population of the whole Carpathian Basin; the sample consist of 7,000 already confirmed members of the church, with a professional, layered sampling. Based on the regional distribution of the Hungarian Calvinist population, the sample is representative. The survey is based on a version of the Glock-Stark<sup>18</sup> five-dimensional model of religiosity expanded with the dimensions of the communication within the community, and the representation of the community. The first part of the questionnaire contains 95 statements, which partly come from the different public scenes of Calvinist life (from the press, popular religious publications, sermons of influential preachers), and may be considered partly as the historical identity program identified on the basis of researches on the history of the church. In the following, I will attempt to establish

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<sup>16</sup> Izvoru Crişului or Krieschweij in Transylvania, Romania.

<sup>17</sup> Eccl 11:9 “Have joy, O young man, while you are young; and let your heart be glad in the days of your strength, and go in the ways of your heart, and in the desire of your eyes; but be certain that for all these things God will be your judge.”

<sup>18</sup> GLOCK CHARLES Y./STARK RODNEY (1965), *Religion and Society in Tension*, Chicago: Rand McNally & Co.

some conclusions based on a self-contained segment of this research, the surveys taken in Hungarian Calvinist secondary schools in the Carpathian Basin<sup>19</sup>, by 792 sixteen-seventeen years old students. The regional distribution of the sample approximates the regional distribution of the examined population (in this case, Calvinist secondary school students).

### **Figure 1: Regional distribution of the sample**

My research is of an exploratory nature, so I did not establish strong hypotheses, and even those that I did establish, I continuously reviewed via the method of the grounded theory. One of these hypotheses is the one represented by Miklós Tomka and Ferenc Gereben in Hungary, which claims that the religiosity of a social group shows a significant correlation with the ethnic status of the given group. The minority status results in a higher level of religiosity, especially when the religious identity is a sign of the ethnic identity as well. This is the situation of the Hungarian Calvinist population living among the Orthodox or Greek Catholic majority in Romania and in the Ukraine.<sup>20</sup> Namely, the results of Tomka and Gereben show that we find a stronger religiosity in the non-Hungarian Calvinist regions (Satu Mare county), and among these, the religiosity is even stronger in the Orthodox and Greek Catholic environment of Transylvania and Partium, as well as Carpatho-Ukraine; while in Upper Hungary, where the Roman Catholic church is dominant, and a large number of Hungarians belong to it, a weaker religiosity of the Calvinists is manifested. For these researchers, the concept of religiosity means the relationship with religious institutions. Their conclusions may be a result of that the primary institution of preserving the Hungarian ethnic and cultural identity in the regions outside of the Hungarian borders was the church. The researchers did not cover the experience or content (in a denominational sense, the confessional aspects) of the religion; they only asked questions related to the faith in God, the reading of the Bible, and the going to church, generally examined in sociology. In order to get a more tangible result, I separated the denominational and the ethnic situation, and I introduced a third category for both along the traditional distinction of the minority-majority issue: the group of those in similar ratio to other denominations, or ethnicities. The question was phrased like

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<sup>19</sup> Due to the various education systems of the countries in the Carpathian Basin, I use the term secondary schools, but I do not include in this category the relatively new type of secondary schools providing a trade, because they are too new to be relevant for this study; thus, I only consider the classical secondary schools providing a maturity certificate.

<sup>20</sup> GERE BEN FERENC/TOMKA MIKLÓS (2000), *Vallásosság és nemzettudat, Vizsgálódások Erdélyben*. Budapest: JTMR Kerkai Jenő Egyházzociológiai Intézet. TOMKA MIKLÓS (2005), *A legvallásosabb ország? Vallásosság Szatmárban, Erdélyben, Romániában*, Budapest/Piliscsaba: PPKE BTK Szociológiai Intézete/TIMP Kft.

“according to your feeling or knowledge” what is the ratio of these groups in your place of residence; that is, I did not ask for specific data, but I was curious to see, what attitude the subject has towards his or her status, or the situation of his or her community. Namely, as the answers from Hungary pointed out, the factual census data and the mental representations of the terms of dominance do not necessarily coincide.

In the following section, I will present the results related to a key topic in the context of Calvinist denominational identity, Bible reading. This subject is not only important because of the obvious religious/theological aspects; after all, the Bible is also a tool of socialization, it conveys cognitive structures, behavioral patterns, exemplary attitudes – that is, it makes certain preconditions available. Here I will only consider one of the questions related to this issue in more detail.

One of the most important programs of reformation was the emphasis on expansive Bible reading in one’s native language. Following the Trianon peace treaty, the disconnected parts of the Calvinist Church continued living among very different circumstances. While in the “severed territories” the authorities tried to restrict Hungarian native-language Bible reading, or render it impossible, partly as the institution of preserving the Hungarian culture, and also as a key component of practicing religion, in Hungary this happened only for the second reason and rather confined to the 1950s and 1960s. Thus, Hungarian language Bible reading was impregnated with different, not primarily religious contents in the different contexts. To the question related to Bible reading (“How do you read the Bible?”), the respondents could choose from a total of 11 options in two reply categories.

### **Figure 2: How do you read the Bible? (Graph)**

The first category focused on the usual, temporal frequency of Bible reading. Besides choosing from the daily, weekly or monthly Bible reading, or the “other” option, the respondents could select two additional answers as well: the first was “I don’t regularly read the Bible,” and the other was “it is enough what I hear in church.” Basically, this is an alternative wording for “I don’t read the Bible at all.” As regularity is not the only way to read the Bible, even if it is significant, I provided a way to manifest the other methods as well – the first option with the “other” answer, and the possible answers in the second category.

The other question category focused on the specific attitudes related to Bible reading. The sentences provided as possible answers are common phrases familiar to the internal public of the church. The Bible is the most important “spiritual food” of the believers; it is the word of

God that the religious person “pants for,” with the metaphor of Psalm 42, which is especially popular among Calvinists. Although according to the religious reasoning evolving from the metaphor we need the spiritual nurturing daily, just as the physical one, this metaphor rather emphasizes the religious needs of the individual, his or her desire for God, and not necessarily the rigorous methodology of living a religious life. The concept of the quiet time is similar, but characteristic of other forms of pietism. The quiet time is an opportunity to grow quiet in front of God; a private devotional, during which the believer looks for a personal relationship with God via prayer and Bible reading, and which is characterized by an openness towards the transcendent manifesting in the silence. Besides the private or individual quiet time, a popular form of reading the Bible is studying it in small communities. This is usually centered around sharing the personal “messages” and realizations received during the reading of the Bible, together with the discursive control carried out by the small community. These occasions often apply the normative Bible interpretation of sermons to the specific real-life situations, and are especially important, because believers – regardless of the level of their commitment and religiosity – many times prefer reading and interpreting the Bible in such communities to doing it alone, because of the difficulty of the text and the possible obstacles of the interpretation. The answers “when I find the time” and “I take it out several times a day” mark two basically opposing attitudes: while the first handles Bible reading as a recreational activity, the latter points to a supposedly intensive religiosity.

The respondents could mark several options at the same time, so, on the one hand, there is no easy way to calculate the statistics due to the multiple answers, but on the other hand there is a possibility for a much more refined image to evolve from the results than if we had just used some simple statistics. As it is evident from Figure 3., the multiple responses show a peculiar distribution:

- a) the ratio of multiple answers is always the highest in the majority (T – “többségi”)<sup>21</sup> groups, and
- b) the ratio of multiple responses is much higher in the “across the border” (ht – “határon túli”) regions than in the Hungarian (hu) ones.
- c) In the case of multiple answers, the ratio of those choosing from both of the main categories (related to regularity and attitudes or needs) seems to be once again the highest in the majority (T) groups.

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<sup>21</sup> For the abbreviations for each group, see the end of this study.

- d) For the non-mixed multiple answers, the majority almost always constitutes of people who chose a reply related to an attitude besides the “I don’t regularly read the Bible” option. Although the sample may be very small, it is still peculiar that 72% chose the “it is enough what I hear in church” option as the second answer.

### **Figure 3: How do you read the Bible? (Table)**

Thus, it seems that in terms of the Bible reading habits, two relatively well discernible groups emerge, but the main difference is not along the aspect of reading/not reading, but in the motivation behind reading.

Examining the ratio of the answers, the first peculiarity that one sees is that if we assess the replies to each option separately, we find that in each group the “I don’t regularly read the Bible” option was chosen by the most people, that is, the lack of “conditioning” Bible reading is generally characteristic of this population. As the Hungarian Reformed Church identifies itself primarily as the church of the Word, that is, as a church with a significant heritage of putting the Bible in the center, as the most important precondition for its members, this result is definitely remarkable.

Examining the answers in more details, we can see that the ratio of those reading the Bible daily is somewhat higher in (f) situation in the (K) group, and in (e) situation in the (T) group. However, when we sum up the results of those giving any kind of positive answer to Bible reading, we can see that in both situations it is highest among members of the (T) group.

Next, analyzing the results in a regional breakdown, we first notice that in accordance with the Tomka-hypothesis, the (ht) groups everywhere present a higher ratio of Bible readers than members of the (hu) group. However, when taking a closer look, we can see that the ratio of those reading the Bible daily or several times a day is exceptionally high in Carpatho-Ukraine, while considering the answers phrased from the aspect of regularity, Transylvania showcases predominance. Among the attitudes, the answer types inherited from the awakening movements are strong in the regions of Transylvania and Carpatho-Ukraine, especially influenced by these movements, while the answer related to the fellowship is exceptionally high in Upper Hungary. It is also peculiar that while we find the peak values of the negative answers here, it is also clear that if and when the low ratio of Upper Hungary respondents read the Bible, they do it upon a motivation related to some attitude or need. Thus, at first we believe to discover the operation of the Tomka-hypothesis even in the regional breakdown (Carpatho-Ukraine and Upper Hungary), but further refining the analysis the emphases of the

differences shift, and give way to conclusion regarding the peculiar image of each place, or identity region.

Finally, from the aspect of heritage, the results of group (E) are of an outstanding importance. Namely, we can see that regarding the reading/not reading, that is, the preserving or letting go of this identity element – disregarding the faith dimension of this question – the real dividing line is not between the (T) and (K) group, as expected, but between the (T) and (E) group. This is the group, where answers 10 (for both (f) and (e)) and 11 (for (e)) produce an outstandingly high value in the largest ratio. The interpretation of these results requires further researches. However, based on the above, we can establish at least that the correlation between the minority status and the intensity of religiosity is not an obvious one; also, the intensity of the religiosity – the enriching of the “good Calvinist” concept –, is not so easy to connect to the learning of the preconditions traditionally considered to be the heritage of Calvinism. It is exactly this study examining this very important Calvinist heritage, the reading of the Bible, which points out – even if rather roughly – that heritage is a conceptual space, which is shaped by the agents themselves, and which means a framework and assist for them during their problem solving. The fact that Bible reading has such various places and meaning in the discourses of the collective agents associated with the different Calvinist identity regions, raises the straightforward question of what we mean by “Calvinist.” Do the life-worlds of these agents reorganize into one whole? Is it possible that in the communicative processes of this reorganization a heritage-concept is formed, which serves as a precondition for the participating agents (that is, ourselves), in the recognition and solving of the relevant problems? And if it is not, is it possible to phrase such identity programs, which can motivate the whole Hungarian Calvinist community?

Abbreviations:

T = majority

K = minority

E = the group of those in similar ratio to other denominations (f), or ethnicities (e)

e = ethnic situations (T, K or E)

f = denominational situations (T, K or E)

hu = Hungary

ht = the regions outside of the Hungarian borders after 1921

ro = Romania

sk = Slovakia



ua = Ukraine

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