

KOZMA Zsolt:<sup>1</sup>

## *Identity, Denomination, and Nationality<sup>2</sup>*

### *Abstract.*

*Identity* pins down accurately who individuals are in relation to God, society, and themselves. God's statement about Himself (His self-identity) in the Bible "I am who I am" can guide us to find our own "I am who I am", definitely taking into account the *analogia relationis* rather than the *analogia entis*. The constant *dominant* of our human identity as God's identity as well is that we stay humans despite all circumstances, but its *features* ("our qualities") are variable. We are only interested in two of the many identity features: our denomination and our Hungarian ethnicity, which are "only" features, but as such they have been decisive. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we, as Reformed Protestants and Hungarians, got under the burden of the political and ecclesiastical consequences of the two world wars. Our faith required that the church and the Hungarians did not lose their identity features from the perspective of the communities and individuals. During the interwar period (1920–1944) and during the totalitarian regime (1945–1989), we, Transylvanian Reformed Protestants, had one single duty to fulfil: clarify our relationship vis-à-vis the political authority in such a way as to remain disciples and a disciple church without which we are not the ones who we must be. In his prayer, Jesus does not ask the Father to take all of his followers out of this world (meaning society) but rather to defend them from evil (John 17:15). How can we fulfil it? Our yes/no answer is the issue of *gratitude* towards God and *penitence* before Him.

**Keywords:** *the content of identity, energy of the protective spirit, dominant church, non-democratic church, valve system.*

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### *The Clarification of the Concept of Identity*

Before talking about our denominational and national, i.e. ecclesiastical and ethnic, identity and their emergence in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we deem important to clarify the concept on the individual level. This reflection will lie at the basis of the topic proper in the title.

The word *identity* implies but does not fully express the content of the term, by contrast to the Hungarian *önazonosság* ‘self-identity’, which pins down its very essence: namely, that I am identical to myself. We shall express this significance by a biblical analogy. What is your name? – asks Moses from the God appearing in the burning bushes. The answer is well-known: I am who I am (2Ex. 3:1–15). This is God’s name by which he defines Himself as Lord. I am who I am – this is his self-identity. In the Bible’s description, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them (Gen. 1:27). Thus, he conferred self-identity to the creatures, Adam and Eve. In terms of *analogia relationis* (so, not based on *analogia entis*), the individuals can state about themselves: I am who I am. God’s “I am who I am” means that he is *Lord*, and the individuals’ “I am who I am” means they are *humans*. (For those for whom the biblical description does not mean anything, it can be phrased in a different manner: Humans are born male or female.) We are going to illustrate man’s created (born) condition and what follows thereof with an illustration:

Let us imagine a cone turned upside down. At the bottom, there is my human nature, my identity. In time, other features, “layers” settle over it that we are going to incidentally list here: believer, Reformed Christian, Hungarian, Transylvanian, minister, teacher, party member, and so on. My human condition is self-identity, and what is “above” is merely an identity feature. These features are shaped mainly under the influence of three factors being determined by the genes, education, historical, and geographical location.<sup>3</sup> The human being himself will never change, but the order of the features will, and at a certain time or in a crucial situation the human as a moral being is determined by how near it has got to his/her human nature.

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<sup>3</sup> KOZMA, Zsolt (2007b): Keresztyén és nemzeti önanonosságunk. In: *Másképpen van megírva*. Cluj-Napoca, Erdélyi Református Egyházkerület. 181–190. 182.

Everything that has been said about the individual's identity is actually an introduction to our topic, which tries to tackle the issue in relation to the community: How did our Reformed Church and the Hungarians in Transylvania live during the 20<sup>th</sup> century? In relation to the church (denomination) and nation (ethnic group), the question arises mostly due to two external circumstances. In both cases, the first task is self-determination, followed by identity awareness. (Most certainly, the two can also overlap in time.) The first is when a community faces a *new historical situation*. This is what happened in World War I and World War II as well as after the changes of 1989. The second is when its existence, survival *gets endangered*. The analogy in Ex. 3:14 still means that the communities do not need to define their own identity in relation to others (I do not belong to that) but must rather live their own essence (I am who I am). God is Lord independent of everyone else; the community must have an identity independent of the others. It is a further task for the community reaching self-consciousness to open up towards society or even to the enemies just like God shed his sovereign lordship for the interest of His people.

Both communities lived as *minorities* in a similar existential situation. They had to find their identity in this context, and thus they had to find the tools, facilities, and inner movement to facilitate it.

The world wars shook the ground under Europe two times during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and almost every country had to experience the subsequent traumas. We do not think that we exaggerate if we say that we, Transylvanian Hungarians and Reformed Christians, experienced the said traumas more acutely. In both cases, we had to face the powers we did not count on: the Romanian administration and the communist grinding machinery. Confronting them, the Transylvanian Hungarians and the Reformed Church found itself in a situation that called for reinterpretation. After the initial weariness due to the two world wars, they had to activate the old but still new inner energies. Transylvanian writer Géza Tabéry's premonition came true. In his 1931 reflections, he wrote: "A denomination that is neither supported nor protected by the state can generate immensely stronger energies and vitality than the denominations protected by the political power."<sup>4</sup> He refers to a 19<sup>th</sup>-century English historian and philosopher who called it the energy of the protective spirit that performed wonders

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<sup>4</sup> TABÉRY, Géza (1931): *Protestáns szellem a magyar közéletben. Református Szemle XIV.*

throughout history.<sup>5</sup> When we talk about the minority's excess energy, we believers must know that even there where the non-believers' eyes see only human solidarity, political and ecclesiastical will, economic organization, or merely the work of the survival instinct, it was still God's work – He granted us the excess energy that ensured our survival. Our task, on the other hand, is to ask for it from the Lord of all powers and authority as we can “produce” it in ourselves.

In the following part, we shall replace the denominational and national attributes in the title with the two concepts that we are actually to talk about: the Reformed Church and the Hungarian national ethnic group.

### *The Identity-Related Issues of the Reformed Church in Transylvania*

This chapter will at first provide reasons for not talking about denomination but rather church. In the light of the above ideas, the individual has one single identity, that of human being; on the other hand, in relation to the denominational community, we must say that a denomination has one single *identity*: the *church*. The name (denomination): Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Reformed, Evangelical, Unitarian, or Baptist are only *identity-related features*. Each denomination can state about itself and must do so that we are a church. When the individual designates him-/herself as a human being, s/he is aware that several billions can say the same about themselves. When a denomination is aware of itself as a church, it acknowledges the other denominations as also being churches.

The title received from the organizers is not binding, but the topic of the conference urges us to refer to the “church and society” viewpoint, too, and we shall certainly touch upon them although the author is not a sociologist. And to avoid excessive quoting, we shall rely in the introduction on the well-known verse. Jesus prays for his disciples as follows: “My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one” (Jn. 17:15).

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<sup>5</sup> We refer to Henry Thomas Buckle's *History of Civilization in England*, published in 1857.

The chapter shall be divided based on the three historical situations of the past century, which is justified now also because they were the occasions of identity awakening for us. The new situations are: The interwar period (1920–1944), the years of dictatorship (1945–1989), and the present time starting from the changes of 1990.

1. *Between the two World Wars (1920–1944)*. We shall examine our Reformed Church's quest for identity during these times from two perspectives.

a. *The church's public and organizational life* faced questions that had not been raised before. We would only mention two of them. First, the 1928 Denominations Act designated the Orthodox Church as a *dominant church* (Ro. *biserica dominantă*), the Reformed Church being merely a denomination. One of the consequences was that the state did not recognize our ecclesiastical alliances that were about to start on their domestic mission. They did not exist *de jure*. What probably hit us even more was that the Hungarian state schools were dissolved. This had to be fought against; and Bishop Károly Nagy – who already had a fierce nature – tried to prove vehemently at the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Bucharest that we were entitled to the schools. Second, the most important legal step in the history of our church was probably the 1881 Constituent Synod held in Debrecen, which had made us aware of our affinity and determined the Reformed Church Districts. At the time, something new was needed since the Church District of Tiszántúl was split, and part of it was attached to Romania, bearing the name of *Királyhágómellék*. The process of its recognition as an independent church district lasted for years and was achieved only in 1926.<sup>6</sup> (It is interesting that the current Reformed Church District of Királyhágómellék bears many features of the “Tiszántúl” region up to this very day.)

b. This was the time when our Reformed Church acquired two essential *theological identity features*: one was a trend and the other a movement. This was the time when the *new Reformed theology started to take root* in Transylvania in a much shorter time (uncritically in some people's opinion) and much more decisively than in Hungary. This trend, also called Barthian theology, did not only break off from the anthropocentric vision but also rephrased the entire theology. One can know God “completely differently” (as Sándor Tavasz put it) only after the Revelation the teachings of which precede even to

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<sup>6</sup> The first bishop, István Sulyok, was sworn in on 23 June 1926.

Theology. Evangelism was considered primary among ministerial duties, which today means preaching. This theology was heralded by Sándor Tavaszy, and his book *Református Keresztyén Dogmatika* (1932)<sup>7</sup> has defined our theology for decades up to this day. The accusation that during this period the Reformed Church hid inside the church, breaking away from society, is not due to the new theology but rather to the misinterpretation of this trend.

Another phenomenon parallel in time and ideology that we can call an identity feature was the *domestic mission movement*, which – although not rooted in and not bloomed out of the new reformer theology – was as regenerative for the church as the trend both in terms of its basic conception and its support. Under Sándor Makkai's service as professor of theology and later as bishop, emphasis was laid on the constructive theology focusing on the spiritual church as well as the spiritual nation. Theology teachers started their organizational and inspirational work with or independent from this impetus. And here one must think especially about Lajos Imre.<sup>8</sup> The alliances, associations, and societies were established one after the other: the Women's Alliance, the Men's Alliance, the youth organizations (IKE, FIKE), the Friendly Society for Foreign Mission, the Friendly Society of the Faculty of Theology as well as many other district- or presbytery-level and congregational associations. The theology teachers coordinating this work oversaw that the associations did not lose their theological and especially biblical grounds. For this purpose, they often delivered speeches during the ceremonies and urged the organization of weekly or monthly faith-strengthening biblical classes.

We often mention our church's social sensitivity;<sup>9</sup> nevertheless, the silent *charities* of the local women's organizations were even more lively and comprehensive, expanding even to the servants' mission. Beyond the noble philanthropic urge, they were organized on biblical grounds, based on theological considerations. The previously established charity institutions, such as the Charity House in Kolozsvár/Cluj and Brassó/Braşov

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<sup>7</sup> TAVASZY, Sándor (1932): *Református Keresztyén Dogmatika*. Cluj/Kolozsvár, Minerva. 192.

<sup>8</sup> ADORJÁNI, Zoltán (1996): Imre Lajos (1888–1974). In: Kozma, Zsolt (ed.): *Akik jó bizonyágot nyertek – A Kolozsvári Református Teológia tanárai 1895–1948*. Cluj-Napoca, Kolozsvári Protestáns Teológiai Intézet. 235–276.

<sup>9</sup> It should be mentioned that the Social Committee of the Reformed Church District of Transylvania was established in 1929.

(1908), the Deaconess School of the Reformed Church District of Transylvania (1921), the Orphanage of the Reformed Kun College of Szászváros/Orăștie, the Czirjék-Szörcei Orphanage of Zagon, were reborn. Newly established institutions: the Reformed Senior Facility in Kolozsvár (1931), the Reformed Senior Facility in Brassó (1933), the Orphanage and Foster Home in Kolozsvár, and, last but not least, the Reformed Hospital.

Owing to the theology teachers' *work in public life*, they became dynamic drivers of society and of the Hungarians in Transylvania. From the Reformed perspective, we deem important that all the teachers held church-strengthening speeches not only during the so-called Protestant evenings of the aforementioned societies but also in different congregations. We must note and consider that Sándor Tavaszy,<sup>10</sup> Lajos Imre, and Géza Nagy also lectured at the university aiming at becoming acquainted with the students. A proof of their scientific work and multilateral skills was that they also became contributors to secular periodicals (*Pásztortűz, Erdélyi Helikon, Hitel*).

2. *During the years of dictatorship (1945–1989)*. Several shelves were filled with books on what the 45 years of communism meant for our Reformed Church. In what follows, we are going to present just a brief personal viewpoint. We consider this age as a time in which the church got into the tunnel of power, and they wanted us to believe that at the end of the tunnel there was the light of communism, but we should (have) know(n) that there was God's realm awaiting, in whose light we can get purified. We were not aware of this. We folded our brains as we would our arms like school kids even when we noticed the end of the tunnel.

We can most certainly reproach ourselves many things concerning our relationship to the power, especially that we were loyal to the communist system and that we did not show at least the kind of resistance the Roman Catholic Church did, and it also happened that we outbid the official restrictions. The church officials got so perverted that they eventually gave the emperor what actually belonged to God. Our church hopped on the train of socialism to get to communism fast, but there were also others who ran in front of the train. A friend of ours said it about someone else, but we would now apply it sadly and sarcastically to us. We can accuse ourselves that we

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<sup>10</sup> JUHÁSZ, Tamás (1996): Tavaszy Sándor (1888–1951). In: Kozma, Zsolt (ed.): *Akik jó bizonyosságot nyertek – A Kolozsvári Református Teológia tanárai 1895–1948*. Cluj-Napoca, Kolozsvári Protestáns Teológiai Intézet. 277–318.

made some concessions to the state power for having our church recognized, and there were also others who preached a human-like, conjunctural gospel (Gal. 1:11). The non-truth that the Reformed Church had a democratic structure was emphasized incessantly to simply pleasing the “people’s democratic” power.

The internal and external charges are true; they are the *features* of our identity, but we could not possibly have lost the *church’s self-identity* as it is the body of Christ. Everyone may express their opinion whether it was fair that the Reformed Church was the only church that published its list of informers. But the graphics on the cover of one of the volumes is definitely fake: that the towers of the Reformed churches featured the hammer and sickle.<sup>11</sup> The covers of the other volumes kept the rooster with a machine gun pointed at it.

The Bible classes were very restricted among all the ecclesiastical services (from Saturday noon to Sunday noon); the charity institutions were completely dissolved... what was left was preaching inside the church, the sermon. The members of the second generation of the new reformer theology in Transylvania, who had heard Karl Barth before the communist times (Dániel Borbáth, Tibor Kozma, Pál Geréb, István Tőkés), would publish their homiletics studies on the pages of the only remaining journal, *Református Szemle*, which had a single topic, namely textuality, and one unuttered characteristic, namely depoliticization, which unfortunately inevitably rendered it an unsocial character.

Concerning our church’s local ecumenic relations, we need to consider as a useful initiative the annual sessions held by the two institutions of Orthodox theologies and our Institution of Protestant Theology between 1965 and 1989, where they did not only deliver high-quality speeches, but we were also able to socialize on the hallways and during lunch and get personally acquainted with our fellow professors of other religions. The conference unfortunately got politicized when the bishops or the representatives of the Ministry of Religious Affairs joined in.

**3. The period after the changes of 1990.** We are going to tackle it very briefly as we are still living in this period, and we do not have any kind of overview of it. We can see ourselves only from “below”. This also means that we shall not list data and

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<sup>11</sup> MOLNÁR, János (2014): *Szigorúan ellenőrzött evangélium*. Vol. I–IV. Cluj-Napoca, Kriterion.



facts, but we shall rather specify situations and define principles. The task was to find our existing, hidden identity that we could also define as: the church–church and seek for the features of our identity.

Totalitarianism forced us to live a self-sufficient ecclesiastical and theological life; and following the changes we were surprised at living in the world surrounding us. *The church was able to open up before society, and society opened up to the church.* We should (have) design(ed) a *valve system* that opens outwards and closes inwards.

a. Opening to society (The valve opens to the outside world.). Following the changes, we were all happy that the road had become clear to society, that the people, the entities paid attention and listened to us at all. The ministers had their voices heard on the stages of non-ecclesiastical meetings, took part in marches, and published in literary or arts journals upon request or without. We need to answer at least two questions here. First, we had to and still have to answer the question as to what we have taken out into society. It is obvious that the church had to address the people who were politically, economically, and culturally more or less concerned. It could not talk over the people’s heads and could not pretend that these questions were not there. The church and, more precisely, the ministers had one task – namely, to carry it out with the help of the *gospel* and not something else. And the occasion was the sermon. We are all aware of the “twofold single” task: preach the gospel and address the society. Although it is a homiletical issue, we had to and still must perceive and tackle it as a mission from God. Was the church able to withstand temptation offered to the ministers, namely that to assume public office?

b. Society opened towards the church, and the church faced two unexpected phenomena:

First. The ministers could see new faces in the church, the crypto-congregation members, the so-called peripheral settlers.<sup>12</sup> They did come because they were longing for truthfulness after the false voice or the discordance they experienced until then. We tried to give them a voice, and we think that it is not the evangelizer church’s fault that their enthusiasm waned after a while, and then it burnt out.

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<sup>12</sup> KOZMA, Zsolt (2007a): Isten országának peremén. In: *Másképpen van megírva*. Cluj-Napoca. Erdélyi Református Egyházkerület. 67–72.

Second. Society, and especially the political and cultural entities, offered the ministers a dais or simply asked the priests to appear at social events, mass meetings, and wreath laying ceremonies wearing their cassocks, as a motionless group of statues or a smiling background giving the celebrators the impression that they were in the magic circle of sanctity. And if asked to take the floor, they were satisfied if the priests covered the party slogans with a bit of holy glaze. Before such requests, the church should (have) start(ed) using the inward-closing valve. The school of theology is reliable for its operation (in relation to preaching) and the current synod (concerning dogmatic purity).

This does not mean at all that the church should withdraw from the economic, political, and cultural stage. By no means. On the contrary, it should be sensitive to them, but its feedback should always be in the form of godly solutions and advice, answers that society itself could not possibly give. It is true that we had to address the members of the political parties, we had to strengthen our nation's minority awareness, it is true that the traditional singers and folk artists have always been close to our hearts, and as such we could not have possibly overlooked them as they were also members of our congregations at the same time. But our task is to preach the gospel's word. If we do not do it, we could get secularized from the inside, and the church alienated from his head, Jesus Christ, is nothing but tasteless salt, only meant to be crushed. Thus, the church's first duty in society is to keep its identity and *remain a church*.

### *Identity Issues of the Hungarian Ethnic Group in Transylvania*

From our perspective, we can talk about *nationality* as being part of an entire nation's body living in the state of a majority.<sup>13</sup> In public law literature, this equals the notion of minority. With that, we have stated that the word is valid only for this context, as otherwise our ethnic group is an equal member of the nation. Unconsciously, this had always been the case, but we had buried it until 1990, when József Antall "also said it out loud".

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<sup>13</sup> A community can be called a nationality even if it is a separate entity, i.e. there is no nation in any motherland.

1. *Between the two World Wars (1920–1944)*. The analysts consider this period starting in 1920 as the years of post-traumatic unconsciousness. However, we must add straight away that they lasted very little.

*Politics* gave the first quick answer to the new situation. Károly Kós established the *Transylvanian People's Party* (1921), which bore the name of *Hungarian People's Party* (1922). Baron Sámuel Jósika initiated the short-lived *Hungarian Alliance* (1922). Later, the most important and relatively the longest-standing *National Hungarian Party* arose from their merger (December 1922). After over a decade and a half, it was banned by the military dictatorship in 1938. As a reaction to that, a new political and literary group started its activity thanks to the multilateral Baron Miklós Bánffy, the so-called *Népközösség* (1939). It was an ethnic mass organization not only addressing the intellectuals but being at the same time their social echo. In economic life, the *Transylvanian Hungarian Economic Society* pooled together the farmers, while the *National Hungarian Tradesmen Association* grouped together the tradesmen.

*Literature* had a response of its own to our identity concern defined on our way to self-identity. We must think especially about novel writing, whose most important figures encompassed our entire ethnic reality. Sándor Makkai in *Holttenger* and Dezső Szabó in *Az elsodort falu* confronted our intellectuals with peasant life, while Józsi Jenő Tersánszky in his series of volumes titled *Kakukk Marci* described the struggles of the marginalized urban common men. Sándor Reményik could also be called the Transylvanian prince of the poets: he cried over the “as it is possible” of our minority’s fate not only to the outside but also to the inside as opposed to Makkai’s expression of impossibility.<sup>14</sup> Several periodicals with various profiles were born one after the other, of which the literary and arts journal *Pásztortűz* (1921–1944), the periodical of the Transylvanian writers’ community, *Helikon* (starting 1926), and the platform for political-historical studies, *Korunk* (after 1926), were the most remarkable ones.

“In 1933, an important and well-known Hungarian writer and philosopher came to visit Transylvania and published his remarks in a depressing piece of writing. He spoke about an agonizing Hungarian minority in Transylvania, also

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<sup>14</sup> MAKKAI, Sándor (1937): Nem lehet. In: *Láthatár* 1937/2; REMÉNYIK, Sándor (2005) [1935]: Ahogy lehet. In: *Reményik Sándor összes verse*. Vol. I. Budapest–Kolozsvár, Polis–Kálvin–Luther. 640.

giving a medical evidence of it: *morbus minoritatis*. For us, Sándor Tavaszy's and Sándor Reményik's answer was soothing, considering the assertions untrue.<sup>15</sup> The few lines herein can be read as a late but probably not a belated answer (too). Another positive answer was given by Dezső László in his collection of studies that has never been as valid as it is today."<sup>16</sup>

2. *Dictatorship (1945–1989)*. This was a bitter period both *politically* and *nationally*, during which the communist regime stifled the words in our mouths and closed the letters in our drawers. During the totalitarian regime, both the majority and the minority suffered, but the situation was more dangerous for us as we were fewer and thus closer to annihilation. History served all of us only one kind of politics, the one dictated by the East. It started by shredding the parties and ended up in dancing around the leader's idol. Those who did not join this dance were either executed (Aladár Szoboszlai – Roman Catholic priest, Kálmán Sass – Reformed priest) or sentenced to life in prison (István Dobai, László Varga). The Hungarian journals were published on the model of the majority journals or were simply translated. Many of them tried to break free from under the pressure of the Soviet rubber boots: they either completely surrendered and withdrew from public life or tried to escape to Western Europe or chose suicide (László Szabédi). The little we got from the political power was soon to be taken away. The same short-lived fate was the fate of the Maros/Mureş Hungarian Autonomous Region and especially the successor of Franz Joseph University, the Bolyai University in Kolozsvár (until 1959).

To be honest, we can thank the churches and the schools that our preserved identity has become awareness. The gospel was preached in Hungarian in the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches, and in the nationalized Hungarian schools teachers of Hungarian and history made sure that the upcoming generations would get acquainted with and continued the fathers' traditions.

The primary condition for the publication of *literature* was the social perspective and literary movement called socialist realism. Of the second-rate literary pieces

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<sup>15</sup> See László Németh's *Magyarok Romániában*. Sándor Reményik's and Sándor Tavaszy's answers were published in *Pásztorújság* (1933/7 & 9).

<sup>16</sup> LÁSZLÓ, Dezső (1997): *A kisebbségi lét ajándékai*. Posthumus edition. Cluj-Napoca, Minerva Művelődési Egyesület. [The translations of all non-English quotations are my own throughout the article.]

this trend has produced we must highlight two leftist prose writers, namely István Nagy and István Asztalos, who wrote their stories and novels about the life of the workers at the bottom of urban society. Beyond the commissioned or copied writings, there was also valuable Transylvanian Hungarian literature in terms of content and artistic approach, and here we also mean the young generation of writers and poets. We must particularly refer to two Reformed writers: poet Sándor Kányádi and writer and playwright András Sütő.<sup>17</sup> We mention them in the same breath since they were both the role models of peasant natural talent and with one of them being born in the region of Mezőség/Câmpia Transilvaniei and the other in the Szeklerland area, they could embrace the whole of Transylvania. The writers and poets could not speak freely about the anomalies of the system and could not speak up against dictatorship; the consolidation of the Hungarian identity could have been qualified as a “subversive deed”, and that is why they resorted to the rhetorical device of the metaphor. The latter two writers outstandingly mastered this, and we, the readers, were able to interpret the metaphors in our minds.

We shall not touch upon how we should live our national identity as an ethnic group *after 1990* because the events are still ongoing, being still too close to us.

All the ideas we have outlined above have no prospects of great success. We must get used to achieve small results with important spiritual and intellectual energy investments and that the seeds may fall on the roadside, on rocky ground or among thorns. And what were actually the perspectives that the twelve apostles set off with to their mission? We “only” mediate, we only urge, and if there is a small result, we must be glad and thankful to “[Him] that giveth the increase” (1Cor 3:6–7).

Referring back to the first part of the speech, we must address the question of community (church, ethnic group) and the individual’s identity: What determines our existence and our being: the church (our faithfulness) or the nation (our Hungarian ethnicity)? The community and the individuals must answer this question in order to solve the potential identity disorder. In the case of denominations, the answer depends on which one is closer to the “peak”, to religious identity, whilst in the case of the individuals it is about how close they are to their human identity. We must sort out the relationship between the means and the goal. The church and the faithful must become aware that

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<sup>17</sup> K. JAKAB, Antal (1998): *Magyar Irodalom Bánffy Miklóstól Szilágyi Domokosig*. Cluj-Napoca, Stúdió. 422, 436, 502, 594.

our Hungarian ethnicity is the means to becoming even more faithful church members.<sup>18</sup> Those who consider their Christianity as a mere means to becoming more genuine Hungarians are not perverted atheists, they are not against the church, but they have rather acquired noble national ideals. However, as such, we must admonish them to place their national ideals in the service of becoming better Christians, God's more faithful children.

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