

Thesis of doctoral (Phd) dissertation
**Examination of renewable traditions in the Reformed
education of Hungary after the Regime-change**

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I The aim of the dissertation, defining of the topic

The examination of the traditions of the Hungarian Reformed church education has not been processed in this respect before, the renewed denominational education after the change of regime (1989–90) and the gradually rebuilding traditions made it timely to conduct such research. As a staff member of the Reformed Pedagogical Institute (2014-2016), the topic came to the forefront, and I had the opportunity to conduct a questionnaire and interview research in this regard with an open national scope. This started the research.

Churches have been involved in education from the beginning, and it can be considered one of their traditions. The transmission of faith is the key to the survival and growth of churches, which is why they became involved in education, ensuring the supply of pastors as well as the next generation raised in faith. Religious traditions thus became part of education. In 1948, the church schools were nationalized in accordance with Act XXXIII of 1948. under law; a socialist school system was built. A few institutions could remain nationwide for the aftergrowth of pastors. With this, centuries-old traditions were broken for more than 40 years. Generations were left out of the education of faith. In 1993, the restitution of church property began, and the establishment of denominational educational institutions

became possible again. By 2016, it could already be said that the institutional system had been reorganized, the traditions had revived, so it became possible to examine them as well. The aim of my dissertation is to present a complex presentation (looking beyond the borders) of a study of traditions taken from a complex cultural and social context.

I.1 The goal of my research is to examine the reorganization through the educational institutions of the Reformed Church, the renewed, inherited traditions, and, in the case of newly established institutions, the exploration of the emerging 21st century customs. The examination of the Reformed College of Debrecen is a priority, as it is the only grammar school having been operating continuously, without interruption, which could survive due to the supply of pastors.

I.2 Research questions:

- Are the traditions of institutions that have been operating with continuity since their establishment more dominant, and thus have become a guideline for the newly established ones?
- Can the traditions of Reformed education be inherited and adapted to the life of institutions that operated along a completely different spirituality for more than 40 years?

- What does the term ‘Reformed’ in the name of the school give, is only the sustainer different, or can the added value be tangible? To what extent do the basic values of religion and religious traditions influence education?
- How long does it take for a school to become “Reformed”? How long does it take for conventions to develop? Are they mostly new or do they take them (revived / survivor elements) over from traditional institutions?
- Is there a difference between the legacies of educational institutions of different denominations?

I.3 Hypotheses

Based on the questions raised during the setting of the research aim, I made the following hypotheses:

- Institutions that have been able to function continuously maintain conventional traditions, guiding newcomers and the recently established.
- The customs of the Reformed education were reorganized. Most of them are built on old traditions, researched and revived. It takes a minimum of 10-15 years for the practice to develop and integrate. New habitual elements are also being created by the needs of the 21st century.

- The basic values of religion permeate education, the expectations of the Hungarian Reformed Church, the sustainer, and the time of taking over the school play a role in this (the situation is different with institutions taken over in recent years than with schools and kindergartens with Reformed roots).
- The added value of church schools is demonstrably greater, with the teachers' attitudes, behaviour, supportive approach, and morals all contributing to better performance overall.
- In Reformed institutes, greater care is taken to preserve and to pass on traditions.
- The traditions of Reformed education can be rebuilt and can consequently strengthen the institution. The ever-renewing Reformed education is made permanent by its intellectual heritage.
- Most of the elements of traditions can be found in institutions, in some cases to a declining extent compared to previous centuries. In the spirit of renewal, we can also find modern, new customs typical of the 21st century that are becoming or have already become tradition(s).

II Outline of the methods used

The exploration took place in several arenas and different methods were used. The main element of ethnological

research, the *fieldwork*, lasted for three years. I regularly conducted *semi-structured interviews*, *narrative interviews*. Informants in the research were, on the one hand, respondents to the open-ended questions of the questionnaire, and, on the other hand, structured and semi-structured interviews with educators, sustainers, and former students involved in reconstructed contexts. During the research I collected a considerable amount of memories (student magazines, yearbooks, Reformed publications, ethnographic writings, textbooks, photos of traditions).

II.1 Secondary research methods, processing of sources, analysis of the literature, archival research (eg.: Hajdú-Bihar County Archives, Trans-Tisza Reformed District and College Archives, Danubian Church District Ráday Archives) were used to summarize the history of education, to place the past and centuries-old intellectual heritage of institutions in context and to typologically classify classifications. The characteristics of the materials of archival and library findings can be placed in a context by defining the data of time, place and social (local) environment.

Regarding the statistical data on the institutions, I used the available data of the Central Statistical Office, the Bureau of Education, the Reformed Pedagogical Institute, the Education Office of the

Hungarian Reformed Church, and the results of other researchers in the field in addition to the figures of early documents.

II.2 Most of my empirical, primary research was provided by the two questionnaires, which included partly quantitative and partly qualitative data. Not only did the questionnaire contain measurable questions and answers that could be expressed in statistical numbers, but half of the questions were drafted according to the interview methods. Nearly 220 informants presented the traditions of their denominational institution. The answers of small churches are a curiosity compared to previous research in denominational education, as I have not found exploratory data on these issues elsewhere. Sampling for the questionnaire survey of the Reformed institutions was planned to be 100% of the total institutional circle, and 60% of all institutions responded. In terms of geography and supply area, the sampling was representative, as the group of respondents (the sample) covered the aggregate characteristics of the institutions (population), and its parameters were the same as its characteristics. The control research turned to other denominational institutions with a targeted inquiry, thus ensuring the representativeness of the sampling in terms of area, denomination, size, and task performance. The sampling was smaller in percentage (28%).

The expected number was 100 respondents, and this was achieved (117 respondents).

III Thesis-like listing of the results of the dissertation

Most of the questions formulated in my dissertation were answered in connection with the traditions of the Reformed educational institutions, most of the hypotheses were confirmed. The results of the questionnaire research support the assumption that a reorganizing Reformed institution will need at least 10 years to inherit or establish its conventions. The institutions taken over have a period of transformation in the first 10 years, with less Reformed spirituality and tradition. The elements of tradition collected at the beginning of the research have been proven to be present in denominational education, and new, connotative information has also been identified. The nearly 5-century long existence of the Reformed College in Debrecen proves that there is a renewable intellectual heritage even in the constantly changing circumstances. The revived particular school system also proves that institutions that have been uninterrupted for centuries can become a guideline. The Reformed educational institutions established after the change of regime also tried to adopt the traditions and customs related to them.

1. The statistics compiled by the Bureau of Education and the Reformed Pedagogical Institute and their further summary of said data proved that there is a 'Reformed surplus' which is realized in

the effectiveness of education and also in the preservation of traditions.

2. Pedagogical programs also articulate the need to raise awareness and nurture national values and traditions, and to transfer education to the Hungarian consciousness in an age-appropriate manner.
3. Questionnaire research for other denominations identified a slight discrepancy in the traditions found in education. The specifics found are (e.g.: quiet days, psalm singing, Reformed competitions) mostly related to religion.
4. Church conventions appear in a much higher proportion in the Reformed institutions than in other denominational institutions examined.
5. The vast majority of Reformed institutions have faith-related customs that help children learn about religion, psalms, the Bible, and become part of the community. The survival of the tradition is stronger in the long-standing, Reformed institutions, all the examined elements of tradition can be found. In the case of adopted institutions, Reformed traits appear first in appearances (uniforms, ties, change of boards), and only later at the level of basic values related to religion.

The changing needs of the 21st century have left their mark on education, and digitalisation has also emerged in many areas of tradition. Student magazines, bulletins, yearbooks have been replaced by websites, blogs and

digital publications. However, this does not mean the extinction of traditions. Moreover, it makes them more vivid; the transmission of knowledge, the transformability of information, its assimilation for the individual, and the transmission of the common heritage in a way help to hold members of the community together. Overall, it can be said that the Reformed education is being renewed more and more in Hungary at all levels of education. The centuries-old traditions associated with it have largely survived, have been passed on and a small part of them have been lost, but the 21st century has also brought with it new elements of tradition.

IV Conference presentations on the topic of the dissertation

2016.

1. The Teachings of the Reformation – the Reformation of Teaching conference, Reformed Pedagogy Institute; Title of Presentation: *The Rebirth of Reformed Education, renewing tradition post-regime change in Hungary*; 24-25th of February 2016. Debrecen DRKG.
2. Conference of Doctorate Candidates and Young Researchers on Faith and Science; Title of Presentation: *Study of the Traditions of Renewing Reformed Education*; 18th of November 2016. Debrecen DRHE

2017.

3. Sacred Places, Spaces and the Culture of Memory conference; Organizers: the Hungarian Theology Society; DE Department of Folklore MTA Folklore Research Group, MTA DAB Committee of Experts in Humanities, Arts and Theology; Title of Presentation: *The Study of Traditions in Ecclesiastical Education, with Special Focus on Reformed Education*; 17th of November 2017. Academic Committee of Debrecen (DAB) Debrecen headquarters

2019.

4. DOSZ Spring Wind International Multidisciplinary Conference; Title of Presentation: *The Renewing traditions of Reformed Education*; 3-5th of May 2019. Debrecen DE
5. Society of International Hungarian-studies; Continuity and Interruption in Hungarian culture; Title of Presentation: *The Renewal of Hungarian Reformed Higher Education*; 04-09th of September 2019; Vienna
6. DOSZ KTO Conference on Rural Regions in the 21st Century; Title of Presentation: *The Study of the Settlement Structure of Ebes*; 11th of June 2019; Gödöllő

2020

7. X International Theology Jubilee Conference for Young Researchers and Doctorate Candidates, DOSZ Department of Faith-studies; Title of Presentation: *The Traditions of Reformed Colleges*; 28th of February-1st of March 2020; Eger

V Further Conference Presentations of the Author

2017.

1. ReferNet Project Consortium Partner-meeting, Budapest NGM, NSZFH library (22nd of November 2017 *as a representative of DE BTK*)
2. “Conversation about Vocational Education” Workshop for the Hungarian Pedagogy Society Department of Adult-Training; 17th of October 2017; Budapest; Title of Presentation: *The Competition of in- and out-Branch Vocational Matura Exam Subjects of the year 2016/2017, and the in-Branch Vocational Matura Exam*
3. XIX National Conference of Public Education Experts; 07-09th of November 2017; Hajdúszoboszló; GINOP-6.2.4; Title of Presentation: *The Development of Quality and Content of 21st Century Adult Training*

2018.

4. Public Education, Vocational Training, Training of Educators – innovation XX National Conference for

Experts in Public Education; Title of Presentation: *Enhancing the Quality of 21st century Vocational Training, Validational Pilot* (Hajdúszoboszló 06-08th of November 2018)

2019.

5. Validational Conference and Workshop 13th and 17th of November 2019. Bureau of Education Budapest; Has the Time of Validation come to Hungary? Title of Presentation: *The Validational Pilot*

2020.

6. What does the Future Bring? Teaching-Learning Differently... XXII National Conference for Experts in Public Education online -- <https://suliszervizkonferencia.com> 3—5th of November 2020. Title of Presentation: *Presenting the Results of Validational Pilots. The Validational systems-plan.*



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PhD Publication List

Candidate: Mónika Mária Lőrincz
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List of publications related to the dissertation

Hungarian book chapters (2)

1. **Lőrincz, M. M.**: Református kollégiumok vallási hagyományai.
In: *Fiatalkutatók és doktoranduszok X. nemzetközi jubileumi teológuskonferenciájának kötetek*. Szerk.: Kiss Gábor, Doktoranduszok Országos Szövetsége, Budapest, 1-12, 2020.
2. **Lőrincz, M. M.**: A magyar református felsőoktatás megújuló hagyományai.
In: *Folytonosság és megszakítottság a magyar kultúrában / Csapó Mónika, Nemzetközi Magyarstudományi Társaság, Bécs, [Közlésre elfogadva]*, 1-23, 2019.

Hungarian conference proceedings (3)

3. **Lőrincz, M. M.**: A református oktatás megújuló hagyományai.
In: *Tavaszi Szél = Spring Wind 2019. : Tanulmánykötet : III. kötet*. Szerk.: Bihari Erika, Molnár Dániel, Szikszai-Némethi Ketrin, Doktoranduszok Országos Szövetsége, Budapest, 740-750, 2020. ISBN: 9786155596521
4. **Lőrincz, M. M.**: Validációs projektek eredményeinek bemutatása: A validációs rendszerterv.
In: *Mit hoz a jövő? Tanítás-tanulás másképp... : XXII. Országos Köznevelési Szakértői Konferencia : előadások, referátumok, fotók*. Szerk.: Kónyáné Tóth Mária, Molnár Csaba, Szűcs Szervíz Oktatási és Szakértői Iroda, Szűcs Szervíz Pedagógiai Intézet, Debrecen, 61-66, 2020. ISBN: 9786155967030
5. **Lőrincz, M. M.**: A XXI. századi szakképzés és felnőttképzés minőségének fejlesztése, validációs pilot - GINOP 6.2.4.
In: *Köznevelés, szakképzés, pedagógusképzés - innováció XX. Országos Köznevelési Szakértői Konferencia III. / Kónyáné Tóth Mária, Molnár Csaba, Szűcs Szervíz Oktatási és Szakértői Iroda Kft., Debrecen, III 18-23, 2018. ISBN: 9786155967009*





Hungarian abstracts (3)

6. **Lőrincz, M. M.**: Református kollégiumok vallási hagyományai = Religious traditions of Reformed colleges.

In: Ifjúsági kutatók és doktoranduszok X. nemzetközi jubileumi teológuskonferenciájának rezümékötete. Szerk.: Kiss Gábor, Doktoranduszok Országos Szövetsége, Budapest, 102-103, 2020. ISBN: 9786155586552

7. **Lőrincz, M. M.**: A református oktatás megújuló hagyományai

In: Tavaszi Szél Konferencia : Nemzetközi multidiszciplináris konferencia : Absztraktkötet.

Szerk.: Németh Katalin, Doktoranduszok Országos Szövetsége, Budapest, 719-720, 2019. ISBN: 9786155586422

8. **Lőrincz, M. M.**: Ebes településszerkezeti vizsgálata.

In: Rurális térségek a 21. században tudományos konferencia : absztraktkötet. Szerk.: Bálint

Csaba, Földi Péter, Kápolnai Zsombor, Kovács Csaba József, Nagyné Molnár Melinda,

DOSZ, Budapest, 8, 2019. ISBN: 9789632698410

List of other publications

Hungarian book chapters (1)

9. **Lőrincz, M. M.**: Ebes: honnan hová?

In: Rurális térségek a XXI. században. Szerk.: Bálint Csaba, Földi Péter, Kápolnai Zsombor,

Doktoranduszok Országos Szövetsége, Godólló, 149-156, 2019. ISBN: 9789632698533

The Candidate's publication data submitted to the IDEa Tudóstér have been validated by DEENK on the basis of the Journal Citation Report (Impact Factor) database.

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VI Further Publications of the Author

2017

1. Lőrincz, M., Gál Z., Plósz, A.: *Vocational Summary of the in- and out-Branch Vocational Matura Subjects of the Year 2016/2017*. National Vocational Training and Adult Educational Office online disseminatory publication
2. Lőrincz, M., Magyar M., Klein, A: *The Summary of Vocational Experiences of the Contest of Exemplary Students (szktv) Organized for Students Enrolled in Special Vocational Training in the Year 2016/17 and of the Complex Contest of Vocational Subjects (szktv) Organized for Students in Skill-Developing Schools*. Online Disseminatory Publication of National Office of Vocational Education and Adult Training

2020

3. Lőrincz M.,: *GINOP-6.2.4-VEKOP/16 The Detailed Description of Validation Component of the Project entitled The Development of the Quality and Content of the 21st century Vocational Education and Adult Training*.

From: The Discharge Summary of Validation in
Hungary in 2020 A Series of Expert Workshops;
Composed by: András Derényi, Publicist Budapest
Bureau of Education, 25.04.2020. 62-71