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Going Their Own Way. Protestants' Specific Models of Joining the Cultural Elite in 19th-century Hungary[1]

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Abstract: The figures and data unanimously demonstrate that Reformed protestants were significantly overrepresented in the Hungarian cultural elite by the last third of the 19th century. Protestants, who had been under a threat of persecution throughout the 18th century and were negatively discriminated against until the mid-19th century, had developed different strategies for producing a new generation of the intellectual elite. We can distinguish three markedly different models here. Although the number of Protestants in Hungary was relatively low, they won outstanding social and cultural advancement thanks to several successful strategies and channels aiding promotion, which ran parallel but were also independent of one another. Perhaps it was the segmentation of the denominations and the power of the opportunities offered by competing alternatives that partly account for the successful process of producing a Protestant elite. However, the question remains how, and why, in all three cases isolation and going their own way could produce such significant results, and whether there are any common traits that made autonomous development so organic in all of the three cultural areas? Such a common characteristic may be a phenomenon of the *Pfarrhaus*, that is, the development of clerical and professorial dynasties in all three cases. The three communities all strove for endogamy, thereby accumulating, passing on and preserving private cultural and social capital through several generations. Another shared element may be participation in peregrinations, and, finally, demanding that professors to be active in publishing (as scholars, textbook writers, publicists and newspaper editors). It was these criteria and the persistent deliberateness with which they met them that allowed them to go their own way, eventually arriving at the highly significant meeting points of cultural discourse.

Keywords: History of education in Hungary; production of the elites; Protestant colleges.

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1. Introduction

In the period between 1867 and 1944, 931 university professors were appointed in Hungary. Nearly 60% of them (59.8%) were Roman Catholic, 19.5% were Reformed and14.8% were Lutherans. There were only 23 Israelite scholars and 31 professors affiliated with another religion (Unitarian, Uniate or non-denominational), who managed to be appointed and thus reached the peak of their academic career (Kovács, 2016, p. 17). According to the last census data collected before 1920[2], in 1910 49.3% of the Hungarian population was Roman Catholic, 14.3% were Reformed and 7.1% Lutheran (Balogh & Gergely, 1996, p. 162). Apparently, the three dominant denominations were overrepresented among professors – Roman Catholic professors were represented at 1.21 times their rate of representation in the country, while the same rate was 1.34 for Reformed professors and 2.08 for Lutherans. It is important to note here that the academic career of Israelites cannot be studied with this method, nor is it worth comparing it with other data, since for the larger part of the period, the chance of being appointed to professors was unavailable for Israelite scholars[3].

Having a quick look at another series of numbers we see a similar scenario. Between 1880 and 1920 the rate of literate people in Hungary were the following among the different religious affiliations: 39.5% of Roman Catholics, 51.2%, of the Reformed, 56.6% of Lutherans, 9.1% of Uniates, 13.1% of Greek Orthodox believers, 36.2% of Unitarians and 57.1% of Israelites could read and write. This means that the national average of literacy reached 36.4%[4], and this rate was exceeded considerably by Israelites, Lutherans and the Reformed (Balogh & Gergely, 1996, p. 164).

The data listed above serves to illustrate a phenomenon that Hungarian scholarship on Social History refers to as the cultural overrepresentation of Protestants (Sárai, 2013, p. 45; Kovács, 2016, pp. 12-23). The notion indicated that the members of this religious minority had a much higher rate of school attendance, spent a longer time in education and had a more successful career than the national average or even Roman Catholics as the dominant denomination in Hungary. The phenomenon of overrepresentation was further intensified by the fact that for Protestants (that is, for Lutherans and the Reformed) it was much more difficult to join the cultural elite than for Roman Catholics – as I shall explain it later on.

My paper discusses the different models of how Protestants, and mainly the Reformed, joined the cultural elite in Hungary. I shall demonstrate that although the number of Protestants in Hungary was relatively low, their outstanding social and

[2] 1920 is a date of key importance because that was when Hungary (formerly a member state of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, enjoying wide authority) became an independent state, according to the treaties marking the end of World War I. The new Hungary had approximately one third of the area and population of the former Hungary; hence the demographic structure of the country changed accordingly after 1920.

[3] They were only regarded as equivalent to dominant denominations between 1894 and 1918. Otherwise, in 1910 Israelites made up 2.5% of the population of Hungary.

[4] Compulsory education was introduced in Hungary in 1868. It took a long time for its effect to be felt: by the years before World War I 93% of the adult population in Hungary could read.

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cultural achievement was gained due to several success strategies and channels aiding promotion, which ran parallel but were also independent from one another. Perhaps it was the segmentation of the denominations and the power of the opportunities offered by competing alternatives that partly account for successful processes of producing a Protestant elite. The present paper is based on a years-long research on the social historical relations between education and the church in a specific Hungarian and Central European context. The theoretical background of my investigations are provided by the German Bildungsbürgertum and Pfarrhaus research on professionalisation and qualification (Müller, Ringer & Simon, 1987; Conze & Kocka, 1985-1992; Janz, 1994; Schorn, Schütte & Sparn, 1997; Müller & Zymek, 1997). These scientific results have met with considerable resonance in Hungarian theoretical literature in the past decades, producing significant results especially with regards to the social history of education (Kövér, 2006; Sasfi, 2013; Németh, 2016). Nonetheless, research on the history of ecclesiastical education has only recently been drawn on, and little attention has been given to models of different denominations (Keszei, 2018), which may primarily be explained by the fact that the discipline of ecclesiastical history was dropped off the radar after 1948.

Significant research has been done about the outstanding results Israelites achieved in the field of education (Karády, 2000). The present paper, however, does not deal with this topic, because their low number – compared to the entire population of the country – and the pressure of discrimination that eventually became persecution in the second half of the 1930s (as well as the resulting conversions to another religion) made the cultural success of Israelites a specific problem the discussion of which may digress to much from my original aim of writing.

2. Turning the cultural disadvantage to an advantage

When discussing Protestant scholars' chances of promotion at Hungarian universities, it is important to point out that up until 1872 there was only one university in Pest: the successor institution of the university in Nagyszombat (today Trnava in Slovakia), established by the Jesuits. After the suppression of the Jesuit order, the university was moved to Buda in 1777 and then, a few years later, to Pest. Although Pest was already a multicultural (multi-ethnic and multi-religious) city in the 18th century, the university managed to maintain its Catholic nature: between 1848 and 1944, three fourth (75.6%) of the professors appointed at the university – the most significant one in Hungary at the time – were Roman Catholic[5]. A similar phenomenon may be witnessed in case of the technical university (*Műegyetem*), likewise operating in Pest. Here, precisely 70% of the professors appointed in the period were Roman Catholic. These data are important because it was these two universities that had the highest number of teaching staff in the country: together they showcased 55.2% of all promotions[6].

[5] Between 1848 and 1944 the ratio of Protestant professor at the universities in Pest was 7.5%, while the proportion of Lutherans reached 10.5%.

[6] In addition, there were three other universities: one in Kolozsvár (today: Cluj in Romania), operating from 1872 on, as well as one in Debrecen and another in Pozsony (Today: Bratislava,

Another vital factor may be the fact that until the Patent of Toleration issued by Joseph II (1780-1790) in 1781, Protestants had very few rights. A distinct law listed the settlements where their churches, parishes and schools could be operated. Although they could have their own secondary schools and academic institutions of higher education, in the 18th century no Protestant was allowed to study at the only university of the country. Higher education of full value was only available for them abroad: though from time to time the Habsburg government limited or forbade their academic peregrination, keeping contact with universities abroad became increasingly important for them (Csepregi, 2009). They could only ensure the education of a newer generation of their cultural elite (college professor, theologians and bishops) at international universities. Meanwhile, they created and maintained an up-to-date network of professional connections with Western-European scholars, thus they could import the latest scientific results, the newest philosophical-political and other views almost instantly (Németh, 2006; Szögi, 2017, pp. 223-226). In the long run, this practice gave a considerable advantage to Protestants as opposed to Catholic scholars, who were more loyal to the Habsburg governments and isolated themselves in their own universities, living in existential tranquillity.

The situation of Protestants in Hungary became quite peculiar after Joseph II's Patent of Toleration[7]. Although legally they became almost equal citizens of the country (with some symbolic elements of legal discrimination remaining intact and therefore at times leading to serious tension, encroachment and contravention at a local level), they were nevertheless still the epitome of outsiders from a certain aspect. Apparently, the Patent of Toleration did not only ensure equality for the Protestants but also gave them almost unlimited autonomy. This meant that they could control their ecclesiastical life and educational affairs independently. Their decisions – as long as they did not breach a higher law – were simply taken notice of by the monarch. In return, Protestants renounced any state subsidy; thus, their independency was accompanied by the pressure of full self-reliance and self-financing (Romsics, 2016, pp. 75-76).

Slovakia), both established in 1914. Since Pozsony and Kolozsvár were annexed to other countries in 1920, the university located in the former was moved to Pécs and the other one to Szeged. These universities, however, were considerably smaller than the two great universities in the capital city (Szögi, 2017, pp. 229-230).

[7] The Kingdom of Hungary formed part of the Habsburg Monarchy but its legal status differed from that of the hereditary provinces of Austria and Bohemia. In the first half of the 19th century the Diet of Hungary had a relatively broad range of rights and Protestants enjoyed a high degree of autonomy. These circumstances made the Hungarian Reform Era (1825-1848) very intense: the period was characterised by the development of the Hungarian nation (in terms of language use, the press and the theatre) and embourgeoisement, and it was the first heyday of the academic world. The Hungarian revolution of 1848 was followed by a war for independence, supressed by Vienna in 1849. For the following decade, Vienna was determined to crush the autonomy of the Kingdom of Hungary and to fully integrate it into the Habsburg Monarchy. Yet, the period of neo-absolutism could not achieve the desired results as it failed at the complete administrative and political integration of Hungary. The period of consolidation began after 1860, with the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 at its peak. As a result, the Austro-Hungarian Empire was born in 1867, with Hungary formally established as a state-creating- and controlling factor.

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This model of «Protestants' golden freedom» was practically unknown in 19th-century Europe, since nowhere else did this minority group could have such a wide scope for action, and even in countries where Protestants were the majority (the German provinces, the Netherlands and the Scandinavian countries), they had a closer alliance with the state and may have created the conditions of their operation in a forced symbiotic relationship. Hungarian Protestants' almost complete independence from the state had several benefits – as I shall discuss it below – but also resulted in some decisive disadvantages, two of which must be emphasised by all means.

On one hand, Protestants prioritised maintaining their autonomy over participation in some programs aimed at modernising the policies of education – hence they were left out of these processes (Kowalská, 1996), the first and most crucial example being their failure to take part in educational reform. There was a large-scale educational reform planned to take place in two phases, in 1777 and in 1806, to be happening at the same time in all parts of the Monarchy, but the resistance of Protestants necessitated serious compromises (Garai & Németh, 2018, pp. 221-224). Hungarian Protestants' autonomy in the first half of the 19th century facilitated an educational-cultural reform in the country that differed considerably from (the rather similar) Prussian, Austrian, Bavarian and Bohemian model. Hungary, thus, went its own way.

On the other hand, this particularly visible break from the educational and cultural policies of the Habsburg Monarchy made Hungarian Protestants' hard-won autonomy quite volatile. The government in Vienna made counter moves as soon as an internal affair or tension provided an opportunity for it. In some cases of minor importance such intervention was already carried out in the Reform Era of 1825-1848 (in the case of Protestant-Catholic mixed marriages, for instance, the rulings predominantly favoured the Catholic spouse) but the best opportunity for an intervention by Vienna came along with the fall of the Hungarian Revolution of 1848-1849. The neo-absolutism of the 1850s was characterised by three mutually reinforcing tendencies: imperial centralisation, which tried to do away with Hungary's traditional autonomy within the Habsburg Monarchy; concomitant intentions to Germanise; and the complete abolishment of Protestants' autonomy.

Educational policy was the main stage of action taken against Protestants. The *Organisationsentwurf*, introduced by Leo Thun in the entire monarchy, was also obligatory in Hungary, without any chances of modification or compromise. Several points of this regulation stood in direct contradiction to the educational structure developed by the Protestants. For this reason, while the *Entwurf* meant an opportunity for a Western-European modernisation, the Protestants began a passionate fight for autonomy. They fought most intensively in 1859-1860, and although they were by no means united, their actions created an unfavourable climate of foreign affairs that eventually made Vienna give up its policy –Hungarian Protestants succeeded (Gottas, 1965; Németh, 2018).

Nevertheless, the religious and cultural policies of neo-absolutism had a revolutionary impact on the history of Hungarian education: it showed for those concerned with the limits and considerable volatileness of «Protestants' golden freedom», the risks of developing separately. The *Entwurf* indeed offered a modern

alternative for regulating education, an initiation worth joining, if only with minor constraints (Ash, 2017, pp. 92-93). Accordingly, in the 1860s Protestants started an organised and declared approximation of their institutions to the central management of education dominated by Catholics. Their networks of schools that had been isolated from another in many respects began to integrate and form a unified system of education. This change was responsible for the success of comprehensive laws regulating education in Hungary in the following years (Bődy, 2017)[8].

3. Lutheran models?

Lutherans managed to achieve double overrepresentation at the peak of the academic-scholarly elite, despite the fact that they had no university in Hungary or even an academic training of full value. Furthermore, two third of Lutherans in Hungary were Slovakians living in the east and south-east of the country, characterised by a lower level of education than the national average and having a rather underdeveloped network of schools. Illustrative of this situation is the fact that the first major Lutheran school of the area, an institute of teacher training, started its operation in Nyíregyháza in 1858[9].

The most significant school of the Lutheran Church was operating in the then capital of Hungary, the colourful academic town of Pozsony (today Bratislava in Slovakia) (Kowalská, 1996; Tóth, 2009, pp. 133-154). Still, even this institution was described by statistician Elek Fényes in 1843 as one «that may be perceived as sort of an academy» (Fényes, 1843, p. III. 79). In fact, it was only an initiative of a college, which offered two or three years of philosophical and theological studies, and one year of law school. Such a short period of time was maximum 50-60% of the academic studies available for the Reformed. What is more, these schools could only widen their scope of academic programmes at the turn of the 18th and 19th century and offer an extra year or two added to traditional secondary education.[10] This situation was further complicated by a certain regional takeover that took place in the education of Lutherans in the course of the 19th century. The role of the Lyceum of Késmárk (today Kežmarok in Slovakia), the most significant Lutheran school since the Reform Era, was gradually taken over and outshined by the Secondary Grammar School of Eperjes (today Prešov in Slovakia), which rose and developed at a relatively high speed (Kónya, 2017). As a result, in the first half of the 19th century Késmárk could no longer and Eperjes could not yet have an outstanding performance at a national level. While Pozsony, Sopron and Eperjes gradually and visibly became the main

[8] The Public Education Act was made in 1868, followed by the Secondary Education Act in 1883 and the Nursery School Act in then in 1891.

[9] Lutheran faith was practiced by Hungarians, Germans and Slovakians, each group making up one third of the total Lutheran population in Hungary. Their denominational and ethnic isolation is well illustrated by the fact that for the larger part of the 19th century they lived in rather closed enclaves next to one another (Csepregi, 2017).

[10] The phenomenon included the town schools of Lőcse (today Levoča in Slovakia), Rozsnyó (today Rožnava in Slovakia), Selmecbánya (today Banská Stavnica in Slovakia) and Sopron. These secondary schools had additional classes of philosophy, theology and law in the period between 1780 and 1810.

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centres of education for Lutherans, despite all efforts made, Pozsony and Eperjes could only have their own 4-year theological academy in 1882 and 1884 respectively, and Sopron achieved the same in 1904 (Szelényi, 1917, pp. 152-163).

How could Lutherans, in spite of lacking institutes of higher education and being ethnically divided, successfully reproduce and continually raise the standard of their own intellectuals, their own cultural elite? Several concomitant factors led to this phenomenon, one of them being the density of their school network. Although even their most significant schools could not get past the third level of the pyramid of their educational system, there were actually six or seven schools of the same rank at the third level, and another three of four secondary grammar schools below. Lutherans also operated so-called lower grammar schools (which only got as far as to introduce the Latin language) permanently in a dozen towns. This way, they had a fairly distinguished educational capacity, as many of their lower grammar schools were operating in settlements with a Lutheran population – or overall population – of less than 2000[11]. The second important factor of this success, from the aspect of the history of education, may be attributed to the fact that from the early 19th century on, Lutherans declaredly strove to unify and integrate their school network contentwise. In 1806 Lajos Schedius prepared the curricular regulations of Lutheran schools. Although due to financial reasons these regulations were not compulsory, individual parishes and patrons of the schools considered them to be guiding principles and the regulation became the basis of several curricular reforms in the following decades to come (Szelényi, 1917, pp. 117-139)[12].

Lutheran schools were not only connected on the basis of common curricular regulations but also by the knowledge and use of the German language. Besides the German-speaking inhabitants of Northern Hungary, Lutheran Hungarians and Slovakians also had a good command of the language, acquired in their local schools and neighbourhood. This knowledge made it easier for them to study in Germany – there were hardly any Lutheran pastors and secondary school teachers who did not study abroad. The connections made in the course of these peregrinations played a vital part in intellectual growth. At the outset Wittenberg, than Halle and Göttingen, later Berlin was the main destination. Thus, Lutherans could stay close to one of the primary European intellectual trends all the while.

For Lutherans, familial and dynastic relations were likewise important aspects of growth. Theoretical literature on social and ecclesiastical history has explored in detail the phenomenon of the *Pfarrhaus*, various versions of which also developed in Hungary, owing to Lutherans. The establishment of familial relationships was facilitated by common or at least similar experience in secondary school, destinations of peregrination and the experiences they had at universities abroad, as well as by the values and elements of middle-class life that generally characterised Lutherans. Latest research findings in Hungary point out that Lutherans' networking was partly

[11] For instance, in Sajógömör (today Gemer in Slovakia) the number of inhabitants in 1828 was 1001 and the settlement had its own Lutheran grammar school. Even fewer people lived in Zayugróc (today Uhrovec in Slovakia), and there was only a lower secondary grammar school operated by the Lutherans here.

[12] Making quite a stir, Lajos Schedius (1768-1847) became professor of philology and aesthetics in 1792, at the age of 24.

due to so-called small peregrinations, the intensification of interregional mobility. As a part of this process, in the 17th century routines of keeping contact with Moravia, Bohemia, Silesia and Transylvania, were developed. The new dimension of regional co-operation increased demand for polyglotism and displayed a growing need for above the average tolerance and cooperation (Csepregi, 2015, pp. 99-106).

4. Reformed models

Reformed students could reach the second level of the pyramid of the educational system at the Reformed College of Debrecen and Sárospatak Reformed College, which means that they could complete their academic studies in the humanities in four years and then continue with a four-year training in theology. Offering an alternative for the theological training, in the first half of the 19th century, a four-year law school was gradually developed first in Sárospatak, then in Debrecen. Even with these developments, the educational system was incomplete, since the university and doctoral degree necessary for having a new generation of scholars could only be obtained at universities abroad. All this meant that not only parsons and secondary-school teachers but also college professors were «left out of» these peregrinations (Dienes & Ugrai, pp. 119-122).

In theory, there was a third reformed college in the Transdanubian region, in Pápa, but this school – likewise founded in the 16th century – had a more complex role. It served as a border fortress and also as a school, uniting the Protestants of the region, who were heterogeneous in terms of their denominations. Nonetheless, up until the very end of the 18th century, the school in Pápa was not self-reliant, that is, it needed help to be able to operate. It adapted the curriculum, rule and textbooks of the school in Debrecen, and invited its teachers – in a rather inconsistent order – from Sárospatak and Debrecen. This meant that the Reformed College of Pápa was not powerful enough to educate its own teachers and parson for the Transdanubian region but was in constant need of external help. This situation got even worse in the second third of the 18th century when in the spirit of Catholic's pressure of Counter-Reformation the college was reduced to the level of lower secondary schools and banished to a nearby village. It was only after Joseph II's Patent of Education that classes in Pápa could be re-launched. Although in the following decades an independent academy gradually developed in Pápa, the Reformed families that consciously strove to join the elite only considered Debrecen, or perhaps Sárospatak as a fully-fledged school (Köblös & Kránitz, 2005, pp. 19-25).

The development of the other two colleges differed considerably. Although the distance between Debrecen and Sárospatak was only 80 km, the two colleges contributed to the evolvement of a two distinctively divergent cultural regions. Debrecen was more prestigious in every respect – it was the most populous town in Hungary at that time, and a fairly wealthy one, almost entirely homogenous in terms of the religious affiliation of its inhabitants. Debrecen focused mainly on agriculture and was inhabited by a solid and strong feudal middle-class that traditionally dominated the town and the region. Since almost the entire population was Reformed, Debrecen could become a significant centre of the religion internationally – although it is bit of an overstatement, the town is known in Hungary as «The Calvinist Rome». The

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leaders of the town, the episcopacy and the college were strongly interconnected and formed a relatively exclusive circle. Within this structure, the unanimously voiced principle stated that each church district would have one college under its full control. As an educational centre, this college could thus determine the curriculum and school facilities of all reformed schools in Eastern and Central Hungary and provided teachers for these communities, thereby directly determining the education of 40-50% of the Reformed in Hungary. Besides, with the influence exerted on Pápa, its strong impact also expanded to further congregations and regions.

Owing to the income from its estates and endowments, the financing of the Reformed College of Debrecen was not in jeopardy, even at the peak of the Counter-Reformation. Professors of the college got a high salary, and belonged to the elite and ruling class of the citizens of Debrecen. Most of them also had extensive farmlands and were considered to be distinctly well-off people. Accordingly, the selection of professors for the college was a rather complicated process based on some sensitive issues. At the same time, the college could create the circumstances appropriate for this strict selection process, in both existential and scientific terms. The Reformed College of Debrecen has always been in close contact with the main destinations of peregrination in Europe (Utrecht, Leyden, Zürich, Göttingen, Berlin etc.) and also served as a cultural bridge between Hungary and Transylvania (Hegyi, 2015). It can be stated without exaggeration that amidst the threats brought along with the 18th century the Reformed College of Debrecen was the main educational centre in Hungary, second only to the Jesuit University. Such a stable, balanced operation and leading position necessarily made the college a fundamentally closed system which tended to be cautious and keep it distance from various scientific and political novelties. In the spirit of steady progress, the Reformed College of Debrecen was generally the centre of traditional, conservative notions, which were, however, accompanied by expectations of high quality.

Its rival, Sárospatak Reformed College of was in a completely different situation (Ugrai, 2017). Sárospatak was a small, village-like settlement, heterogeneous in terms of the religious affiliations of its inhabitants, where the Reformed made up about 30-35% of the population. Although the town was considered to be an important military and cultural centre in the north-eastern region of Hungary, which was sinking deeper and deeper into poverty, it was a rather insignificant settlement both economically and administratively. Hence the town had several rivals within the county and the church district. Another striking difference between the two colleges may be found in the internal structure of the diocese they operated in. While Debrecen was characterised by the dominance of the bishop's authority: in the Cistibiscan Church District of the Reformed Church, in North-East Hungary, the bishop's influence was only palpable much later, in the mid-19th century (before that the church district operated as a loose alliance of dioceses), and even in the first half of the 19th century there were serious conflicts concerning the bishop's sphere of authority, which made it much weaker. As opposed to Debrecen the bishopric did not have a school centre; rather, the college seemed to have become a kind of battlefield or buffer zone between the clerical and secular leaders of the church. The most significant distinction between the two colleges was that there was no stable base to finance the Reformed College of Sárospatak. Protestant autonomy came with a

price: Sárospatak did not get any state subsidies. Owing to its turbulent history, its estates and other sources of incomes were not sufficient for a steady operation. Furthermore, due to its contesting regional and environmental peculiarities, heterogeneity in terms of its denominations and growing poverty, it did not have a clearly defined maintainer or patron.

Regardless of these disadvantages, the number, power and energy of the Reformed in North-Eastern Hungary ensured the continual operation of the high-quality college in Sárospatak. What is more, the compulsion to fend for itself made the college more creative and innovative from time to time: as the existential bases were rather shaky, the leaders of the college had to respond to the students' expectations in a more flexible way. The college introduced progressive innovations, thereby acknowledging the needs and expectations of members of the lesser nobility, who had a share in the formation of the middle class. Accordingly, Sárospatak Reformed College was the first school in Hungary where instead of Latin, Hungarian came to be used as the language of instruction, and it was the first institution with an academic department where mechanics, statistics, apiculture and pedagogy were taught. Apart from the introduction of these disciplines, it was the practical education of law – as opposed to the speculative and ecclesiastical traditions of teaching – that made the college so significant at a national level. The specificities of the development of the institution were also visible when it came to traditional educational: while the college of Debrecen became well-known for theological orthodoxy, Sárospatak became the citadel of Calvinist liberal theology in Hungary. Therefore, it cannot be duly stated that there were no renowned scholars in the slightly weaker Sárospatak (Dienes & Ugrai, 2013, pp. 103-121, 150-181).

There was minimal passage and direct interference between the two divergent models, while the isolation of the colleges from one another was almost complete success. As my own research data indicates, the rate of active Cistibiscan pastors who studied in Debrecen in the first half of the 19th century was less than 1%. Likewise, no one could succeed in the Transtibiscan region who got their academic qualification as a pastor in Sárospatak. There was a similarly sharp distinction in the case of professors and secondary-school teachers: out of the 103 teachers working in the two colleges in the period between 1781 and 1860, only two were born in the catchment area of the rivalling college. These two teachers and two others studied at a young age at the other college or at both colleges. On the whole, only a minimal level of mobility may be demonstrated between the two dioceses and colleges. As opposed to Debrecen, Sárospatak Reformed College did not have an intensive relationship with the Reformed in Transylvania or Eastern Hungary, predominantly inhabited by the Reformed. At the time when the college of Pápa was having difficulties, Sárospatak had closer relationships with the west of the country, but these relationships decreased and became sporadic by the mid-19th century. Thus, the development strategy dominating at the college of Sárospatak was that of introversion and isolation, characteristic of a culture of poverty.

The developmental models of the two reformed colleges were apparently totally different, and I shall briefly examine the impact of this difference on the new generation of intellectual elite below. 42.8% of the Reformed in Hungary lived in the Transtibiscan Church District of the Reformed Church, while 11.2% inhabited the

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region of Sárospatak, the Cistibiscan Church District of the Reformed Church.[13] In the Transtibiscan region, 53 men became professors and most of them graduated from Debrecen. Nearly half of these 53 professors started working at the university in Debrecen, founded in 1914 and clearly Reformed in terms of its religious affiliation. In the Cistibiscan region, having studied predominantly in Sárospatak, 19 people were appointed as professors. This means that the Transtibiscan bishopric was 3.8 times more populous than the Cistibiscan region, but the rate of teachers educated there was only 2.8 times more, although in the last thirty years of the period it had a university of a palpably Reformed nature. Let us also remember the fact that there were three times as many Catholics as Reformed inhabitants in the catchment area of Sárospatak, and only 24 Catholic university professors originated from the area. The north-aastern region of Hungary educated 4.3% of the Roman Catholic and 10.4% of Reformed professors, despite the disparate numbers stated above. The model of Sárospatak may thus also be considered successful, regardless of its drawbacks and handicaps.

5. Conclusions

The figures and data unanimously demonstrate that the Reformed were significantly overrepresented in the Hungarian cultural elite by the last third of the 19th century. The Protestants who were under a threat of persecution throughout the 18th century and were negatively discriminated until the mid-19th century had different strategies to reproduce a new generation of intellectual elite. We may distinguish three markedly different models here.

The most successful group were the Lutherans, who stood at a higher level in the process of achieving a middle-class status, and for whom German was the mother tongue or an intermediary language that they felt comfortable using. Although lacking an institute of higher education, the Lutherans were doubly overrepresented, compared to Roman Catholics, among university professors. This success can be explained by the large number, harmonisation and integration of their secondary schools, as well as with the fact that there was passage and mobility among these institutions, which helped form a far-reaching internal network of connections. Furthermore, Lutherans' adaptability and inclination for innovation was intensified by academic peregrination to various German universities and by an intensive relationship with communities in the neighbouring Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia and Transylvania.

The two Reformed colleges went their own way, different both from that of Lutherans and as compared to one another. Debrecen as "the Calvinist Rome" became a strong and stable, though conservative centre of knowledge, exerting a great impact and outstanding in terms of its negotiating power. Due to the heterogeneity of denominations, being massively defended by the bishopric and having economic power, it could successfully maintain its full-fledged autonomy even at times of persecution and played an important role in making the University of

[13] Data from the years 1880 to 1886. Kovács (2016, pp. 94-95).

Debrecen, founded in the early 20th century as the third such institution in Hungary, a Reformed institution.

With its much more unstable background, Sárospatak was constantly fighting for survival and eventually managed to become a highly productive institution that could renew itself effectively and increase the number of the cultural elite in Hungary. It did so by being sensitive and responding flexibly to the cultural and economic needs of both its era and its social base, thereby recurrently emerging as a pioneer in terms of developing and introducing curricular and scientific innovations of great importance. Although from time to time its situation seemed completely hopeless, its intellectual influence and exemplary development created a reputation that was undoubtable until the mid-20th century.

The question remains how and why in all three cases isolation and going their own way could produce such significant results, and whether there are any common traits that made autonomous development so organic in all the three cultural areas? Such a common characteristic may be a phenomenon of the *Pfarrhaus*, that is, the development of clerical and professorial dynasties in all three cases. The three communities all strove for endogamy, thereby accumulating, passing on and keeping private cultural and social capital through several generations. Another shared element may be participation in peregrinations, and, finally, demanding the professors to be active with regards to publishing (as scholars, textbook writers, publicists and newspaper editors). Besides the common denominators, there was also a fierce ongoing competition among these models. Yet, the competing alternatives had positive effects, preventing the minority group of Hungarian Protestants to isolate themselves as a community, and thereby becoming too comfortable and falling behind Catholics. This meant that instead of going their own separate way and thus have less room for manoeuvre, these communities demonstrated a dynamic interrelationship, which offered a greater chance of reaching highly significant meeting points of a cultural discourse.

6. References

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