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THE LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF DENOMINATIONAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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In the present study we examined the graduate students of higher educational institutions with Hungarian as the language of teaching in Hungary, Rumania and the Ukraine. We were interested in seeing whether divergences could be traced, years after graduation, among students coming from certain secondary school sectors. Our results revealed that the more advantageous situation of former denominational high school students could be detected especially in the attitude to one's work, the work concept of serving the common good, and the consumption of intellectual high culture in the traditional sense. These achievements of former denominational school students could not be explained with their social status, since these young people, in many respects, are more disadvantaged than the average. However, their value system and relationship network, and most of all their religiosity have a characteristic aspect. In regression models, we matched the strength of the seemingly significant explanations in the two-variable analysis. On the basis of the matching, we found that minding the influence of other explanations, regarding the readiness of entering service, the work concept of seeking social utility, as well as time spent on reading, sector-effect (effect of school maintainer) carries a very remarkable weight. After the passing of denominational school-years the personal or small-community worship can also inspire the formation or observance of this type of work concept, the attendance of students' extracurricular tasks and the classical intellectual leisure time habits.

Keywords: social capital, religiosity, region, denominational school, entering the world of employment

Langfristige Einflüsse der konfessionellen Mittelschule: In vorliegender Studie untersuchten wir Absolventen von Hochschulen in Ungarn und in grenznahen ungarischsprachigen Gebieten in Rumänien und der Ukraine unter dem Gesichtspunkt, ob Jahre nach dem Abitur Unterschiede

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zwischen den Studenten aus verschiedenen Mittelschulsektoren festzustellen seien. Die Ergebnisse zeigten, dass sich der Vorsprung der ehemaligen Schüler der konfessionellen Schulen vor allem in der Einstellung zur Berufstätigkeit, einer dem Gemeinwohl verpflichteten Arbeitseinstellung und der Teilnahme am kulturellen Leben der im herkömmlichen Sinne Intellektuellen zeigt. Die Leistungen der einstigen Schüler der konfessionellen Schulen in diesen Bereichen lassen sich nicht durch den gesellschaftlichen Status der Studenten erklären, da diese Jugendlichen in vielerlei Hinsicht schlechter gestellt sind als der Durchschnitt; ihr Werte- und Beziehungssystem sowie ihre Religiosität besitzen jedoch eine charakteristische Ausprägung. Die Stichhaltigkeit der in der bivariablen Analyse signifikant erscheinenden Erklärungen untersuchten wir anhand regressiver Modelle. Auf dieser Grundlage stellten wir fest, dass dem Einfluss des Schulsektors bezüglich der Bereitschaft zur Berufstätigkeit, einer dem gesellschaftlichen Nutzen verpflichteten Arbeitseinstellung und der auf das Lesen verwendeten Zeit auch unter Berücksichtigung des Einflusses anderer möglicher Erklärungen ausgesprochen große Bedeutung beizumessen ist. Im Anschluss an die in der konfessionellen Schule verbrachte Zeit sorgen auch die individuelle und die in kleinen Gemeinschaften gelebte Glaubenspraxis für die Entwicklung bzw. Wahrung der obigen Arbeitsauffassung, der Beteiligung der Studenten an extracurriculären Aufgaben und der klassischen Freizeitgestaltung der Intellektuellen.

Schlüsselbegriffe: gesellschaftliches Kapital, Religiosität, Region, konfessionelle Schule, Berufstätigkeit

1. Introduction

In the present study we examined graduate students of higher educational institutions with Hungarian as the language of teaching, in Hungary, Rumania and the Ukraine. We were interested in seeing whether divergences could be traced, years after graduation, among students coming from certain secondary school sectors. Our results revealed that the more advantageous situation of former denominational high school students could be detected especially in the attitude to one's work, the work concept of serving the common good, and the consumption of intellectual high culture in the traditional sense. These achievements of former denominational school students could not be explained with their social status, since these young people, in many respects, are more disadvantaged than the average. However, their value system and relationship network, and most of all their religiosity have a characteristic aspect. In regression models, we matched the strength of the seemingly significant explanations in the two-variable analysis. On the basis of the matching, we found that minding the influence of other explanations, regarding the readiness of entering service, the work concept of seeking social utility, as well as time spent on reading, sector-effect carries a very remarkable weight. After the passing of denominational school-years the personal or small-community worship can also inspire the formation or observance of this type of work concept, the attendance of students' extracurricular tasks and the classical intellectual leisure time habits.

2. Former research

A sector specific divergence of students' effectiveness was first recognised in the 1960s in the international literature of educational sociology (GREELEY & ROSSI 1966). Later, analysing school reports of American high school students coming from families with similar backgrounds but attending schools of different maintainers, divergences of results were found, and it was stated that the so-called private institutions helped students achieve more (COLEMAN et al. 1982). Others explained sector specific divergences of school results and admissions to higher education explicitly with the efficiency of denominational schools (COLEMAN & HOFFER 1987; GAMORAN 1992; EVANS & SCHWAB 1995; KUZNIEWSKI 1997). A group of analyses inspect the frequency of school failures such as dropping out of secondary schools or changing schools with regard to maintainers. According to findings, the rate of students dropping out or changing schools is lower in denominational schools (RUSSEL & SCOTT 2000). Findings of European researchers also showed sector specific differences of school achievement (CUYCK & DRONKERS 1990; LAARHOVEN et al. 1990; DRONKERS 1995; DRONKERS et al. 1999). In a recent international comparison analysing PISA data, DRONKERS and RÓBERT (2006) concluded that a special effect mechanism of denominational schools exists, which manifests its role in social mobility.

Different longitudinal surveys helped to research the matter more thoroughly, for example the results of panel-surveys between 1979 and 1994 demonstrated that Catholic schools could encourage Afro-American and Latin-American students outstandingly (POLITE 1992; GROGGER & NEAL 2000). Besides registering sector specific divergences, the studies abound in finding creative and variable explanations. A lot of researchers suppose that it is the greater discipline and stricter requirements that result in higher achievement in these schools (GREELEY 1982; JENSEN 1986; DRONKERS 1995). Others claim that some kind of characteristics of children or their families can cause divergences, so they started to pay attention to the character of communities in or around the schools. Beside the structures and contents of students' and parents' relationships in and outside the family (COLEMAN 1988; CARBONARO 1998), new contextual variables were included into the analysis, for example the nature of parents' relationships, the school density of church-adherents (MORGAN & SORENSEN 1999), the regional density of church adherents, the differences in tuition fees in different schools, the availability of grants regarding time factor (NEAL 1997) and the contents of dominant norms in schools (CARBONARO 1999).

Comparisons among different school sectors generally concentrate on differences among students attending institutions of different school maintainers, however, it occurs that researching the long-term effects of schools, former denominational students of higher education are put under survey (COLEMAN & HOFFER 1987; WILSON 1996).

The other direction of the explanations of sector specific differences puts emphasis explicitly on the influence of students' religiousness on school career. The influence of religiousness on the attitude to school can be approached from several directions. Effects of the different dimensions of religiousness can be promoting or

retarding if we take adaptation to school activities, schedule and hierarchy into consideration. The ideological dimension of religion puts the individual's life into a larger context. It makes the individual responsible for his or her deeds, conscious of his or her way of living. It also provides a future-orientated attitude, which is compatible with the value system of schools. A possible disadvantage of a transcendental view might be if the individual excessively turns his or her attention away from his or her present life, and as a result, he or she does not consider school efficiency important.

Among promoting effects we can find the communal forms of religious practice, the ritual dimension, and especially church attendance, because these rituals help students to adapt to school schedule and regulations. These religious rituals are similar to school rituals, as the structure of roles is easy to follow. It is obvious when people arrive and leave, stand up and sit down, speak and remain silent and how they do these. The time constraint in school is without question. One of the reasons for school failures is right in the inexperience in adjusting time to events. Ritual practice becomes useful in not only considering time orienting towards the future instead of the present, but it also helps to keep order – for example when the participants can start to speak and how the events follow one another in time. Thus religious practice helps pupils learn linearity and circularity in school life. Among the disadvantages we can mention that excessive discipline can retard spontaneous action and creativity, which is necessary for some school tasks, and becomes more and more important as children proceed in their school career. However, in modern, small-community worship there is place for individual, creative self-expression.

Most denominations prescribe a compulsory study of scriptures. Skills acquired through this promote effectiveness in school, because one of the indicators of school efficiency is the level of competency.¹ By the cognitive dimensions of religiosity, religious studies provide practice in studying; pupils gain knowledge almost without being aware of it. The rituals of everyday prayers and introspection contribute to critical self-evaluation and self-reflection, and encourage pupils to improve behaviour. Their drawback can be low self-esteem, and inhibitions in school due to excessive strictness.

The consequential dimension of religiousness results in partnerships with other people, which make pupils respect teachers more, and not disturb other pupils in studying. All in all they refrain from unruly, violent actions or vandalism. The negative consequence of this co-ordinated attitude in school can be that the pupil does not accept competitive situations that would aim at increasing efficiency. He or she acts as a partner in competitive circumstances too, which results in weaker achievement. Due to internal norms, the pupil needs less control and disciplining, so he or she does not cheat even if the teacher does not pay attention. As a consequence, he or she invests more time and energy into studying, and has steadier and more thorough know-

¹ In 1696 a canonical law was passed in Sweden which stated that people who were unable to read and understand texts from the Bible in accordance with central norms could not inherit or get married (SETÉNYI 1991, 72). This law could have effect not only on terminating illiteracy, but also on good results in PISA tests regarding reading and understanding texts.

ledge. The drawback can be that he or she cannot manage time and cannot rank his or her tasks according to priority.

Religion in a plural society can help in developing the ability to choose from the alternatives and to lead a more conscious life. This ability is useful in finding the way in the multi-level system of education. Religiousness defines the whole family's way of life through religious parents: it determines free time activities, habits of cultural and financial consumption, which may promote optimistic asceticism² that is necessary for school mobility. When we research the effects of religious behaviour, we rightly use the conditional mood for some types of behaviour, because we cannot be certain, we can only speak about likelihood. However, these types of behaviour are a bit more likely in the case of religious pupils than non-religious ones. In FREEMAN's opinion (1986), the primary effects of religiosity cannot be registered for sure, only dominant associations refer to their existence, while the secondary or indirect effects, for example those being felt through the control of the religious community, can be detected more easily.

There are several multi-dimensional models for presenting the effect of religious practice on school efficiency in the literature, but the effect mechanisms by which they assert themselves are not elaborated on. Personal or communal religious practice has a positive effect on some orientations of pupils with unfavourable backgrounds towards achievement and schedule (FREEMAN 1986). Religious practice has an effect on school work, plans for further studies and later social status (DARNELL & SHERKAT 1997; LEHRER 1999; REGNERUS 2000). What is more, regular participation in church ceremonies during adolescence can make up for the lack of parental cultural capital to a great extent (LOURY 2004).

The literature tries to interpret the functional mechanism of the effect religious practice has on educational careers in several ways. The question arises whether the association is direct or indirect, that is religiosity leads to a kind of attitude which promotes school efficiency. The question is whether this attitude is a central, organic element of religiosity like conscientiousness for example, or just a side effect of religious education like respect of authority (IANNACCONE 1998). Some believe that religiosity and school success come from the same origin, which can be attributed to obedience that is natural in a religious community. The most interesting alternatives in describing effect mechanism are the following in our opinion: Firstly, it can appear as group pressure through the personal net of relationships of the same age (SEWELL et al. 1969; DARNELL & SHERKAT 1997) as a condition of cooperation with religious friends. Secondly, value preferences and norms as well as determinative decisions directly influence the individual's everyday life by the cognitive dimension of religion (LEHRER 2006). Thirdly, it can impact educational decisions through the attitude towards family, work or other factors and as a consequence of decisions regarding this attitude (LEHRER 2006). An example of this is when a woman gives up further studies, because she acts in accordance with religious mentality, that is, she is expected to get

² The expression of optimistic asceticism is from Bourdieu, but he does not relate it to religiosity (BOURDIEU 1978, 260)

married and have children early. Besides, it can give a kind of security for underprivileged pupils with a disadvantageous background, and can moderate acculturation shock caused by school and stress caused by school failures (CLARK & LELKES 2005).

3. Data

The present study is based on data gathered from the border regions of three East-Central European countries. It examines whether a denominational secondary school has an effect that is relevant regardless of borders.³

The situation of this region's society is determined by the political arrangement decided by the great powers following the First World War. The former unity was divided into separate parts, which became far removed from the main stream of development. Consequently, the regions along the borders are peripheral today too; moreover this is at the same time the frontier zone of the EU. Previously the area had formed an education-ecological unity as well, which is shown on maps depicting the particles of the Reformed College of Debrecen in the 19th century (NAGY 1933). Undergraduates before their finals from six Hungarian speaking universities and colleges were surveyed (3 Hungarian, 2 Rumanian and 1 Ukrainian).⁴ Using the information provided by the respective higher educational institutions, we performed a multi-step stratified, group sampling (according to countries, institutions, faculties). Nearly one thousand students filled in the questionnaires by themselves with the help of interviewers. The data thus gathered were analysed with single and multivariable statistical methods.

4. Theoretical considerations

In this study we compare undergraduates before their finals who came from either denominational or non-denominational schools to investigate the long term influence of different schools. The study is based on data gathered in the border regions of three East-Central European countries.

We would like to compare students with regard to which school sector is more effective. We defined what we consider effectiveness in higher education in the following points:

1. Although in this area the inner screens of higher education do not select strongly, we can speak about dropping out to a certain extent. In practice it means that

³ The Regional University project was supported by the National Research and Development Program, its number is 200660/2002. This article was written with support from a János Bolyai Research Scholarship granted by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and an OTKA project (no. T 4880).

⁴ In Hungary: the University of Debrecen, the College of Nyíregyháza and the Kölcsey Ferenc Reformed Teacher Training College; in Rumania: the Partium Christian University and the Teacher Training College in Satu Mare (Szatmárnémeti); in the Ukraine: the II. Rákóczi Ferenc Hungarian College of Subcarpathia.

those students can be considered successful who are not only admitted to higher education but manage to reach the final year and are very likely to get a degree as well.

2. In this disadvantageous area under survey only the young people who have a vision are able to choose a career and find a job, and only with a determined preparation. Otherwise the student has to alter the educational track again and again, or he or she becomes unemployed, which has to be financed by him or her or his or her family. A student can be said to be successful if he or she is ready to enter employment and his or her attitude towards work is positive. Besides, by the end of his or her university or college years the image of work has to be mature, still, it is ambiguous whether it is compatible with the expectations of employers concerning employees and with the concept of social welfare.

3. The inner logic of the educational system makes it possible for pupils who achieve well to get to a higher level. This stimulus works in higher education as well among students aiming for a PhD. However, for those who are at a lower level (ISCED 5B), getting a university degree (ISCED 5A) is a step forward. All in all, a successful student in higher education is one who strives for a higher level in the educational system or alters his or her former bad decisions effectively.

4. The traditional function of higher education is to form intellectuals. Thus acquiring the culture of intellectuals is an essential success during these years. We consider intellectual culture as high culture in the first place. Sticking to the traditional concept of high culture, we define intellectuals as reading and well-read people.

5. The social background of students from denominational or non-denominational schools

It is widely believed that the majority of denominational schools are elite establishments mostly attended by pupils with favourable social backgrounds, but according to our latest research the social background of denominational secondary school pupils is not advantageous. Denominational students have higher qualified parents and fewer parents with definitely little schooling, but there is a big gap between the capital and the provinces. Parents at both the top and the bottom of the occupational structure are missing, and a larger number of parents are entrepreneurs. Almost 70% of students come from villages or small towns, and the number of children per family is well above the average (PUSZTAI 2006).

We supposed that it was students with better backgrounds who were able to get a degree, no matter which school they came from; however, undergraduates coming from denominational schools preserved their socially unfavourable position up until graduation. The most important indicator is that the parents of denominational pupils in the sample are unemployed beyond the average (40%). This means that the rate of unemployment is much higher among parents of denominational rather than non-denominational pupils.

If we consider financial situations, it is also evident that former denominational schoolchildren fall below the average, and to make things worse the number of dependents in their families is higher (1.47 compared to 1.2)

It is difficult to compare parents' educational levels because qualifications have different names and levels in the three educational systems. We eliminated this problem with the help of the ISCED system. On the other hand, we must emphasise that it is impossible to compare the achievement of generations growing up as minorities, entirely deprived of the possibility of higher education in their mother tongue with the achievement of Hungarian citizens, who have access to a developed system of institutions.

According to findings there are fewer highly qualified people among former denominational pupils' parents both in the case of mothers and fathers. The rate of parents completing the intermediate or elementary level of education is slightly above the average. Thus all things considered, the educational level of denominational pupils' parents is lower than the average.

Students coming from denominational schools tend to live in student dormitories during their university years: the rate is over 40%. They are likely to live so far from the place of higher education that they cannot commute. The right to live in a student dormitory depends on the students' social situation and their good results at school. Consequently, they are likely to fulfil either or both of these two requirements. Far more former denominational pupils come from villages than non-denominational schoolchildren in all the three regions: the rate of inhabitants of villages or small towns is nearly 70%.

6. Religiousness of students from denominational or non-denominational schools

Inspecting religious practice through several generations, students' families can be classified into five bigger family types in the sample.

One-seventh of the students live in homogeneously religious families, where the young people, their parents and grandparents all practice their religion actively both individually and communally. Their circle of friends comprises mostly religious people and they are also members of micro-communities.

One-sixth of the students' parents can be described by heterogeneous religiousness. In these families the young and their mothers can be characterised by active individual and communal religious practice but their relationships are not dominated by people of the same sort. Grandparents' individual religious practice is markedly strong, and the rate of individual religious practice between sexes is outstandingly balanced in this generation.

Less than one-tenth of the students live in families where parents, brothers and sisters do not really practice religion, however, the student practises religion in a micro-community, and the grandmother on the mother's side is actively religious.

One-third of the students come from families where the last two generations' institutional religiousness is becoming rare, and family members do not know about each other's individual religious practice.

One-fourth of the students live in expressly non-religious families, where all three generations surveyed are non-religious.

Table 1
Types of religiousness with respect to former school maintainers, expressed as a percentage

	<i>Non- denominational</i>	<i>Denominational</i>	<i>All</i>
<i>Active homogeneously religious family</i>	11.1	33.1	13.8
<i>Heterogeneously religious family</i>	14.9	24.6	16.1
<i>Only the student is actively religious</i>	8.0	11.9	8.5
<i>Ritually religious family</i>	38.3	21.2	36.2
<i>Non-religious family</i>	27.8	9.3	25.5
<i>N =</i>	828	118	946

The level of significance is 0.000. Figures in bold typeface represent values much higher than expected on the basis of random distribution.

In accordance with expectations denominational schools are peculiarly composed in this respect too, because the young people belonging to the most religious types make up the majority: most of them come from active religious families, the second largest number of students come from heterogeneously religious families. Most students coming from non-denominational schools live in ritually religious or non-religious families.

7. Rate of undergraduates before their finals coming from denominational schools

The composition of students entering higher education with regard to their former school maintainer is proportional in theory to the distribution of secondary school pupils with regard to school maintainers. The rate of denominational secondary school-children within the scope of higher institutions under survey is 5–6%, while the rate of former denominational school-leavers is 11% among higher educational institutions under survey within Hungary. The rate in the Ukrainian institutions is 12.8%, in the Rumanian institutions it is 34.5%. To sum up, the rate is different, but it shows definite overrepresentation. Two of the institutions of higher education under survey are church-run, however, denominational school pupils are underrepresented in the Hungarian one, and they are overrepresented only in one of the Rumanian institutions.

It is important to note that the task of establishing and running Hungarian educational institutions in minority was undertaken by the church in this region, as the state neglected to do it.

8. Entering the world of employment

The ways for students to enter and cope with employment show different attitudes. We think that one extreme is when the student with his or her university degree does not want to change his or her status within the labour market; he or she continues his or her previous activities. The other extreme is when he or she tries to postpone taking up a job or he or she hesitates to do so. These versions of career have been increasing recently among students in Hungary as well (GÁBOR 2002). Young people's school career and the order of different stations in life have become very individual. The attitude to work has also acquired a number of postmodern aspects, such as refraining from organisational constraints, refusing steady but not sufficiently creative jobs or changing jobs frequently in hope of promotion. Education-sociological researches analysing pupils' and students' efficiency are traditionally interested in why some students have become emotionally, physically and intellectually ready to enter the world of employment by the end of their university years, considering knowledge, endurance, zeal, expectations of tasks and challenge, etc., while others not really.

In our sample almost half of the young people regard a degree as a turning point, and they are determined to take up a job. So their attitude to entering the world of work is traditional. An outstanding proportion of former denominational pupils – both in Hungary and abroad – belong to this group.

Table 2
Students' plans after graduating from university
according to the secondary school's maintainer, expressed as a percentage

	<i>Non- denominational</i>	<i>Denominational</i>	<i>All</i>
<i>Students rather continuing studies</i>	23.0	19.5	22.5
<i>Students starting to work as soon as possible</i>	55.1	66.9	56.6
<i>Uncertain</i>	21.9	13.6	20.8
<i>N =</i>	827	118	945

The level of significance is 0.038. Figures in bold typeface represent values much higher than expected on the basis of random distribution.

Expectations regarding the planned job show a varied picture about students. As the 18 variables in question are in connection with each other in various ways, we examined whether different types could be classified on the basis of diverse expectations concerning jobs. Data were reduced by factor analysis and 5 new characteristic variables emerged. The table below shows the factor matrix of the original variables, and it also contains the terminology of the new variables.

Table 3
Factor scores of variables concerning job expectations

	<i>Altruism</i>	<i>Focus on experience</i>	<i>Exemption of stress</i>	<i>Careerism</i>	<i>Independence</i>
<i>A job should be responsible</i>	0.76	0.10	-0.13	0.06	-0.08
<i>A job should give opportunity to help others</i>	0.70	0.12	0.27	-0.15	0.11
<i>A job should benefit society</i>	0.69	0.23	0.26	-0.06	-0.06
<i>A job should provide opportunities to meet people</i>	0.51	0.38	0.18	0.03	0.11
<i>A job should be focused on efficiency</i>	0.48	-0.07	-0.25	0.33	0.17
<i>Team work</i>	0.44	0.25	0.26	0.19	0.02
<i>A job should be interesting</i>	0.06	0.79	0.02	0.00	0.18
<i>Good atmosphere at work</i>	0.11	0.75	0.30	0.01	0.05
<i>A job should provide a sense of achievement</i>	0.23	0.71	0.07	0.16	-0.08
<i>A job should be varied and not monotonous</i>	0.30	0.52	-0.01	0.19	0.18
<i>Colleagues should be kind</i>	0.27	0.31	0.61	0.00	0.01
<i>Beside working there should be time for the family too</i>	0.03	0.08	0.56	0.00	0.07
<i>A steady job</i>	0.01	-0.06	0.56	0.52	-0.09
<i>A high salary</i>	-0.10	0.08	0.11	0.72	0.17
<i>Good promotional prospects</i>	0.16	0.20	-0.07	0.76	0.07
<i>A job should not be strenuous</i>	0.06	-0.08	0.33	0.07	0.75
<i>Flexible working hours</i>	-0.07	0.25	-0.09	0.16	0.69
<i>Employees should be able to make decisions on their own</i>	0.43	0.20	-0.27	0.06	0.48

We spotted five types of attitudes towards work with the help of factor analysis. One of our new variables is called altruism because of the most effective basic variables. This variable unites the contents of responsible, socially useful work, which makes it possible to help others, to meet people and to work as a team. It is interesting that the claim for efficiency is also best expressed in this variable.

The second variable is called focus on experience because it features the elements of entertainment and getting pleasant experiences. Work appears as an interesting, varied, lively activity which provides a sense of achievement, almost like a free time activity or hobby. The claim for a good atmosphere plays down the organisational statuses of work.

The third variable, called exemption from stress, aims at minimising the risks of work. It summarises the basic variables that focus on eliminating situations endangering individuals the most at work. These situations can be for example conflicts at work, it can mean the exploitation of the employee at the cost of the family or unsteady jobs. Consequently, the basic variables can be expressed in the following words: colleagues should be nice, the employee should have time for the family too, and the job should be steady.

The fourth variable combines the basic variables of advancement in career, prospects for promotion and high salary. Contrary to the previous variable, this one concentrates on how the employee can gain the maximum benefit from work.

The fifth variable is centred on the efforts to have as much independence as possible of organisational constraints coexisting with the world of work. It implies that the job should not be strenuous, working hours should be flexible, and the employee should be able to make decisions on his or her own.

The following step is to find out how popular the above mentioned images of work are among school leavers of different school maintainers. As the average of the new variables is zero in all the cases in the entire sample, one of the ways to compare the groups is to compare the group averages.

Table 4
The associations between the image of an ideal job and the former school maintainers, factor scores' group averages

	<i>Altruism</i>	<i>Experience centricity</i>	<i>Exemption from stress</i>	<i>Careerism</i>	<i>Independ- ence</i>	<i>N =</i>
<i>Non-denominational</i>	-0.046	-0.007	-0.022	0.031	0.022	775
<i>Denominational</i>	0.362	0.023	0.162	-0.209	-0.129	104
<i>All</i>	0.003	-0.003	-0.001	0.003	0.004	879
<i>Significance</i>	0.000	Ns.	Ns.	0.021	Ns.	

It is striking at first sight that altruism and career-oriented attitude are strongly related to former school maintainers. According to detailed findings, denominational pupils can be outstandingly characterised by altruism, so it is they who strongly hold on to a coherent image of work where the central elements are responsibility, helping others, social usefulness, dealing with people and team work. The negative group average of non-denominational pupils calls attention to the fact that it is altruism that is the least important in choosing a job for former pupils of other school maintainers. The other significant value of between group variations was measured in the case of career-oriented attitude. This is what attracts former denominational pupils the least. Focus on experience or exemption from stress are more important for denominational students than for others; independence, however, is not important for them.

To sum up, former denominational pupils prepare for work with more determination than the average, and they would like to work in socially useful, responsible jobs, where they can help people and work in a team. They consider efficiency important, but they refuse a career-oriented attitude.

9. Life-long learning after graduation

40% of the young people in the sample plan on continuing their studies part or full-time after the graduation in question. So the inclination for life-long learning is present in this circle. We wondered what proportion of students coming from different school sectors of different maintainers consider their ongoing studies as the last stage of their education. We supposed that as former denominational pupils are overrepresented in the group that wishes to take up a job as soon as possible, they are more likely to go on studying in a smaller proportion.

However, findings in this field show the advantage of denominational schools, though regional divergences are large in this respect. While in Hungary 56% of students coming from denominational schools would like to continue studying, this rate is lower among students living in minority, because they have only recently been given the chance to obtain their first degree.

Looking at the rate of inclination for further studies, we do not know yet whether these students have acquired the attitude of life-long learners described by GREEN (1980) as outposts who bring educational expansion in motion again and again, or if they just try to correct their former bad or not entirely effective choice of continuing studying. As it is impossible to omit certain intermediate levels, we can say that level $n+1$ means university for college students, but PhD for university students. So those who follow this line can be described as ambitious outposts of expansion. Students who try to correct bad decisions are likely to try another major at the same educational level. All in all, 5% of the sample, 8.3% of former non-denominational students would like to go on to the PhD level, 16% of the students graduating from colleges would like to go to university and 4% would like to get to the PhD level. These rates are a little higher among former denominational students: 20% plan to go to university,

10% would like to do a PhD. We can conclude that a higher number of former denominational pupils would like to move one step forward from their present educational level.

Table 5
Students' attitude to further studies from schools of different maintainers,
expressed as a percentage

	<i>Non- denominational</i>	<i>Denominational</i>	<i>All</i>
<i>Students not planning on continuing studying</i>	16.6	20.5	17.1
<i>Uncertain whether they want to go on studying or not</i>	41.8	28.6	40.1
<i>Students planning on continuing studying</i>	41.6	50.9	42.7
<i>N =</i>	770	112	882

The level of significance is 0.028. Figures in bold typeface represent values much higher than expected on the basis of random distribution.

10. Extracurricular workload

Looking for other dimensions of efficiency we also researched extracurricular activities performed during university or college years, for example publications, essays written within the framework of what is called the 'student scientists' circle', assignments as demonstrators, scholarships acquired like scholarships of the republic, and memberships in classified boards. These activities can be good indicators of successful higher studies. With respect to publications and essays, former denominational students achieve a bit worse than the average, but concerning assignments as demonstrators, scholarships of the republic or other scholarships and memberships in classified boards, they achieve better than the average. Although there is no significant connection between school maintainers and efficiency according to the index⁵ created on the basis of the findings in this field, former denominational students achieve slightly above the average.

⁵ If the student has at least one of the extracurricular activities (publications, essays, assignments to posts of demonstrators, scholarships – e.g. scholarship of the republic, memberships in classified boards), he is more efficient than the average. If the actual achievement is regarded as 1, and the ones only planned are not taken into consideration, an index from 1 to 7 is created. Even if there is only one achievement, it is considered efficient, because 60% of the students under survey did not have any extra achievements.

Table 6

Taking part in extracurricular activities in higher education among students coming from secondary schools of different maintainers, expressed as a percentage

	<i>Non-denominational</i>	<i>Denominational</i>	<i>All</i>
<i>Below average</i>	61.6	55.1	60.8
<i>Above average</i>	38.4	44.9	39.2
<i>N =</i>	828	118	946

The difference is not significant.

11. Attitude to high culture

The consumption of high culture very often appears in surveys as a variable explaining school efficiency. In this study, however, we perceive it as an intellectual attitude which is formed during the educational career. We wondered whether there was a difference in quantity or in style among students coming from schools of different maintainers in this respect. Studying the consumption of high culture we generally survey how often people go to theatre, concerts, museums, libraries or book shops, how often they read books or newspapers. However, in this survey we omitted the activities that need outdoor infrastructure, because of the regionally unequal opportunities and the great geographical differences of cultural events. We considered book reading an appropriate dimension that is not influenced by regional or local opportunities.

5% of the students do not read at all, almost 20% only do so very rarely, 46% occasionally. It is surprising that hardly 30% say that they read on a regular basis, despite the fact that this can be regarded as a criterion of being an intellectual.

Table 7

Reading habits of students coming from schools of different maintainers, expressed as a percentage

	<i>Non-denominational</i>	<i>Denominational</i>	<i>All</i>
<i>Students rarely or never reading</i>	71.2	64.4	70.3
<i>Students often reading</i>	28.8	35.6	29.7
<i>N =</i>	826	118	944

The difference is not significant.

The analysis shows that there are more former denominational pupils belonging to the group of readers than the average, although as it was mentioned above, their parents are definitely underqualified. When we wanted to find out where the custom of reading came from, we first examined the parents' reading habits. We discovered that denominational students' love of reading could not originate from the parents, because compared to the other groups their parents are the least keen readers.

Beside parental attitude, a good supply of cultural products can also be effective. However, former denominational pupils' parents possess fewer books at home than the average, but their children have an average number of books of their own. Researching the consumption of high culture, we also looked at the students' daily schedule in minutes. We noticed outstanding differences only in some aspects: former denominational pupils significantly stand out in spending time on self-education and reading. They spend 57 minutes on self-education compared to the average 39 minutes, 92 minutes on reading while the average is 54 minutes and only 34 minutes on the Internet instead of the average 61 minutes. All the other differences are insignificant, but it is worth noting that denominational students spend 68 minutes in front of the television, which is 10 minutes shorter than the average.

12. Comparison of variables influencing effectiveness

Last, we tried to examine what variables can be made responsible for the development of the indicators in the sample and with how much explanatory power. We thought of the indicators that embody the criteria of effectiveness from our point of view: the intention to take up a job immediately, the attitude to consider work as an effort to benefit society, the ambition to go on studying after graduation and the time spent reading.

Three of the above enumerated variables are continuous variables. The variable called altruist attitude towards work comprises factor scores that were produced as a result of factor analysis. Extracurricular workload was embodied by a seven-value index; the time spent reading was given in minutes. The content of two dependent variables was formed into dichotomy from categorical variables: these were the determined intention to take up a job and the plan to go on studying after graduation. We used independent variables, mainly existing in categorical form, in dummy form. In this way they were brought to a homogeneously high measuring level.

Looking for explanations, we had to take gender into consideration as well, because with respect to gender efficiency might change significantly in both directions during the different stages of educational career. Gender is presented as a dummy variable (male = 1). Parents' qualifications play an essential role in the model for two reasons: on the one hand, it is important to check the hypothesis concerning the reproduction of cultural capital, on the other hand, it has emerged that enormous impulses work in children whose parents' level of education is intermediate and who represent the first generation of intellectuals in the family. It would be worth catching these impulses in action. Parents' educational level is represented by two dummy variables (parents with intermediate educational level = 1, parents with academic qualifications = 1).

As students not only possess parental cultural capital, and as several authors pointed out the far-reaching effects of students' own cultural activities (DIMAGGIO 1982; BLASKÓ 1998), we represent students' reading habits in the analysis (students often reading = 1). The influence of financial matters on school career emerges again and again: several surveys have proved that it does not surpass the influence of parents' educational level. However, financial supply acts as a condition of high achievement in higher education. Students need certain basic financial support so that they can really concentrate on their studies. As a consequence, it is inevitable to examine the influence of financial matters (students better-off than the average = 1).

The different types and institutional forms of religious practice act as sources of ambition on the level of the individual and as sources of social capital on the level of the community: the overall picture is influenced by channels mediating norms, standards and information. Thus in addition to individual religious practice (students praying = 1), communal religious practice (students going to church regularly = 1) and minor communal religious practice (membership in religious youth communities = 1) this made us also represent the composition of the students' friends (religious friends in majority = 1). It has been proved in the literature several times that the stations of former school career can be important independent or mediator variables, for example the secondary class's type where the school leaving exam was issued (grammar school = 1) and the effect of the school maintainer (denominational = 1). Several variables helped to represent regional inequalities: the temporary address during the school year (student dormitory = 1), two variables show the type of permanent habitation (large city = 1 and village = 1) and regional habitation (abroad = 1).

During the binary analysis we noticed that former denominational pupils showed definite intention to start working as they approached the end of their higher studies. Examining this phenomenon from several aspects, we concluded that it was the school maintaining sector indeed whose influence could be regarded positive and significant, even if the rate explained by this model remained low. School norms suggesting the ultimate goal of studying and the importance of conscientiousness could provide explanation for the development of a more traditional career-model.

Beside the intention to start working, we also got a characteristic picture of the types of job expectations from which we found altruistic attitude the most noteworthy. This attitude puts emphasis on responsibility for the community, dealing with and helping people, and efficiency, as opposed to an individualistic attitude which emphasises advancement in career and independence. The development of the attitude towards social benefit can also be explained by other variables. Being a former denominational pupil is still a significant explanation; however, those can be best characterised by this job expectation that practice religion in minor communities. To refine the picture, we can say that the girls and the students who read a lot and who have a lot of cultural goods, mainly books, tend to consider socially beneficial jobs ideal for themselves.

Table 8
Standardised regression coefficients of the model explaining students' effectiveness and significance levels belonging to independent variables and R² values of the models

	<i>Altruistic attitude to work</i>	<i>Inclination to start working</i>	<i>Extracurricular workload</i>	<i>Plans to go on studying after graduation</i>	<i>Time spent on reading</i>			
<i>Gender</i>	-0.09	**	0.02	0.08	**	-0.04	0.01	
<i>Parents with inter- mediate educa- tional level</i>	-0.04		0.05	0.00		-0.04	-0.07	
<i>Parents with aca- demic qualifications</i>	-0.07		0.00	0.00		-0.02	-0.05	
<i>Reading habits</i>	0.08	**	0.02	0.08	**	0.08	**	-
<i>Possession of cul- tural goods</i>	0.09	**	-0.02	0.06		0.12	***	0.14 ***
<i>Possession of finan- cial goods above the average</i>	-0.04		-0.04	0.00		0.07	*	-0.10 **
<i>Personal religious practice</i>	0.07		0.03	0.11	**	0.08	*	-0.09 *
<i>Institutional reli- gious practice</i>	0.05		-0.07	0.06		0.02		0.06
<i>Religious practice in a basic com- munity</i>	0.12	***	0.01	-0.01		0.03		0.01
<i>Religious friends</i>	-0.01		0.02	-0.04		-0.04		-0.02
<i>School leaving exam in a grammar school</i>	0.01		0.04	0.00		0.05		0.02
<i>Place of the student dormitory during the school year</i>	-0.05		-0.04	0.03		0.07	**	0.04
<i>Permanent place of living in a large city</i>	-0.05		0.07	0.01		0.06		-0.01
<i>Permanent place of living in a village</i>	0.00		0.07	0.01		-0.03		0.08
<i>Denominational school</i>	0.07	*	0.07	**	-0.02	0.03		0.10 **
<i>Students abroad</i>	0.05		0.04	0.05		-0.06		0.09
<i>R²</i>	0.105		0.02	0.38		0.07		0.07

Significant values are marked by*: *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

According to a former analysis, the students from former denominational schools who take up more extracurricular workload than the average are in majority. Nevertheless, according to regression analysis, young people are stimulated by reading habits, personal religious practice and on the basis of gender instead of the effects of sectors.

With respect to further studies after graduation, detailed analysis showed that among students orienting to the PhD level, former denominational students are not in significant majority. In planning any kind of higher education, the following factors play important roles: possession of cultural goods, erudition, personal religious practice, financial situation, and a place in the student dormitory.

Regarding the time spent on reading, studying and self-education, we found that former denominational pupils are again in a more advantageous situation. This result was most obvious in the case of reading. Comparing independent variables here we left out the one referring to reading habits, and beside the definite influence of possessing cultural goods, e.g. books, we did not manage to refute the hypothesis regarding the explanatory effect of school sectors.

All in all, we can say that although the models do not provide explanations to the majority, it is evident from the findings that a former denominational school has a far-reaching influence in three out of the five dependent variables: regarding the inclination to take up a job, the work attitude to benefit society and the time spent reading. Besides, it is also evident that some kind of religious practice can be related to high efficiency: in the case of three dependent variables it means personal religious practice, and one variable is connected to small-community religious practice. The previously important effects enforced by the friends who are religious in majority and by mass worship have faded here. Perhaps the real surprise is that in a model like this, we cannot feel anything from the usually significant influence of parents' educational level and their financial support. It is rather the cultural consumption and the availability of cultural goods that take over the role of the traditionally effective independent variables. The influence of the social place is also weaker than expected, because neither living abroad nor the type of permanent habitation, moreover, not even the type of the secondary school had a role in the models. It is only the student dormitory that has a significant effect on further studies, obviously because it serves as an information channel.

13. Summary

In this article we inspected undergraduates before their finals in the region under survey to find out whether differences exist among students coming from different secondary school sectors. Our findings show that the advantages of former denominational secondary schoolchildren can be demonstrated mainly in the attitude towards work and in the consumption of intellectual high culture in its traditional sense. These advantages cannot be explained by their favourable backgrounds; quite on the contrary, these young people are in more unfavourable situations than the average in

several respects. This reinforces the statement based on former surveys that beside the manifest function of mediating religious culture, the social role of denominational secondary schools is to balance the unequal chances of young people with culturally or regionally unfavourable backgrounds in school.

We measured the power of explanations which seemed to be significant in the binary analysis, in regression models. On the basis of this, we can state that in higher education struggling with different problems nowadays, the readiness to start working, the work attitude to benefit society and the time spent on reading are extremely important indicators. With respect to these indicators, the influence of school sectors is essential compared to the influence of other explanations. It means that according to these indicators, former denominational pupils take part in higher education more efficiently because these students really wish to start working after graduation, they want to contribute to social welfare, and as students they spend more time on self-education and acquiring knowledge than the average. Findings show that personal religious practice and religious practice in a basic community, which appear after leaving denominational secondary schools or appear as a substitute for these church schools, can also encourage the above mentioned attitude towards work, the participation in extracurricular activities and the development or the observation of classical intellectual free time activities. Beside the explanatory powers enhanced by us, there are certainly other formerly described indicators which influence students' effectiveness, although more sporadically. These indicators are the possession of cultural and financial goods, a place in the student dormitory. However, it seems that parents' educational level loses its importance in this constellation.

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