

Thematic Article

Department history research and collections in the service of understanding the Debrecen school of educational sciences

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Abstract

Exploring the history of the Department of Educational Studies in Debrecen, as well as the history of university teacher training and the practice school, began in 2002 under the leadership of László Brezsnýánszky with the collaboration of the “Debrecen School” research group. In our study, we summarize the main results and present the collections under the supervision of the department, as well as the professional forums on departmental history organized by it. According to our findings, the Debrecen School of Educational Sciences – its various organizational units – possessed three functions: 1. It provided for the education of the scientific next generation in its own field of expertise; 2. It conducted training in its own discipline and announced lectures on pedagogical subjects for the interested circle of the student body; 3. It performed the instructional tasks of theoretical pedagogical courses for teacher candidates, and additionally carried out organizational and supervisory work in this field. The state university of Debrecen carried on the traditions of its predecessor, the Reformed College. In departments critical to the shaping of worldviews, such as pedagogy, Reformed faith and ecclesial commitment remained vibrant until 1950. In the years following the foundation (1912), lectures on educational science were held by the professor of the Department of Philosophy (Béla Tankó); later, the now independent Department of Pedagogy sought to strengthen its prestige with a more diverse and colorful range of lecture offerings. In his lectures, Professor Gyula Mitrovics strived to present the fields of science according to the traditional division of pedagogy (theory of education, history of education, didactics), while in his seminars, he covered the significance of the intelligence tests he conducted and of experimental pedagogy. Sándor Karácsony already spoke to his students about the practical questions of school educational work. The era of Béla Jausz and László Kelemen was about stabilization, the strengthening of the position within the Faculty of Arts, and the alignment with the direction and research designated by socialist educational science. During Kelemen’s leadership, the preparation for the independence of units growing out of the individual departmental groups took place.

Keywords: University of Debrecen; Department of Educational Studies; department history research

Choice of Topic

Choosing a research topic is not easy in every field. The well-known slogan of journalists and humorists, “The topic lies in the street” (Siegfried Brachfeld), does not always help in historical research. However, even here there are anniversaries of historical importance, unresolved or reinterpretation-worthy events and processes that motivate scholars to conduct research. Data, manuscripts, and bodies of work emerge that are worth uncovering and honoring.

Our present study is based on similar motivations in several respects. We pay tribute to the memory of the distinguished former professors of the Institute of Educational Studies and Cultural Management, while also

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honoring the current director, who, like his predecessors, tirelessly represents the interests of educational science within the Faculty of Humanities. Following the example of earlier teachers, he continues to build a growing circle of students and directs research that rapidly responds to changes in educational practice.

The position of educational science was already quite contradictory in the 19th century at Hungarian university faculties of humanities, and the first half of the 20th century was no more favorable. No other discipline had to prove its theoretical foundations as often and as thoroughly, and no other field's representatives faced as many unjust attacks and devaluations as professors of educational science. Meanwhile, in public education – especially in elementary and lower secondary schools (*polgári iskola*) – the opposite trend was visible: practitioners expected much from educational research and recognized its value.

As we know from psychology, a constant sense of threat and the fear of losing prestige can be stimulating up to a certain point: the desire to prove oneself is precisely what inspires the representatives of sciences with perceived questionable prestige to work even more diligently. Since these oeuvres were often not appreciated according to their true significance even in their own time – whether due to the tension between Budapest and the countryside (as there was already a tendency to underestimate, undervalue, or marginalize the results of rural researchers through silence), or due to personal conflicts and clashes of interest – there was plenty to (re)discover and uncover from the life's work of the former professors of educational science in Debrecen and the circle of disciples who formed their intellectual entourage at the turn of the millennium.

The debt of the successors toward their predecessors also accumulated because, during the forty years of state socialism, it was not advisable to research or analyze the work of the representatives of pre-1950 bourgeois and Christian pedagogy; collective memory erasure operated within the educational science of that era as well. During the change of regime, Sándor Karácsony was the first to be reinstated among the ranks of predecessors worthy of merit. Although his former students were no longer young, they were still energetic and enthusiastic enough to establish societies and associations cultivating the Karácsony cult. Under the care of the leaders and founders of the The Csökme Circle (*Csökmei Kör*), the republication of his works also began.

However, the reintegration of Mitrovics into the intellectual pantheon of respected predecessors was not as simple. Even in 1995, László Vaskó pointed out the responsibility of the successors with some resentment in one of his studies: “So far, no comprehensive work or more serious analysis of his pedagogical activity has unfortunately been published. Naturally, this is primarily the fault of the colleagues in Debrecen” (Vaskó, 1995, p. 17). The remark was justified, as at that time, other departments of pedagogy (Eötvös Loránd University, József Attila University) were already well underway with research aimed at the re-evaluation and detailed analysis of the lifework of former eminent professors of pedagogy (e.g., Németh, 1992; Gácser & Pukánszky, 1992).

Our Research Aims and Results

Intensive department-history research began in 2002 at the University of Debrecen's Institute of Educational Sciences, led by László Brezsnyánszky. In the second phase of the work, between 2006 and 2010, major volumes and studies summarizing results were published, becoming widely cited works in Hungarian educational history. The publication and dissemination of our results at various forums were supported by “The Debrecen School” Project (OTKA T043016).

Our research aimed to uncover the specific characteristics manifested in the activities of the pedagogical school of Debrecen. Using written and oral sources, we examined the functioning of the pedagogical workshop at the University of Debrecen between 1912 and 1970, including its roots in the Reformed College prior to the university's foundation. We studied organizational and content aspects of training for scholars, teachers, and specialized students, as well as the composition of student communities. The topic was rendered timely by the centenary of the University of Debrecen and the anniversary of the independent department founded in 1918, as well as the renewed interest in issues of teacher training.

In our investigations, we defined the Debrecen School of Pedagogy (whose organizational embodiment is the Department or Institute of Pedagogy or Education) as an institution performing three types of training functions and activities, stemming from the 20th-century characteristics of research universities. (We must not forget that until the second half of the 1940s, a “single-professor department” structure was most characteristic of faculties of arts; the assistant staff supporting the professor was partly in constant flux and partly performed assigned tasks without remuneration.) We analyzed the results and impacts of the pedagogical school within the framework of the following three classic areas of responsibility.

- It ensured the training of a new generation of scholars in its respective field and, in accordance with the prevailing university regulations, provided scientific qualification (awarding doctorates, overseeing habilitations, and in later periods, supporting candidates through aspirant tutorship) for those deemed suitable.
- It conducted training in its own specialized field and offered pedagogical courses (*collegia*) for the interested student body. The period under review saw the organizational and disciplinary differentiation of educational science. In 1970, the “original department” split into the Department of Pedagogy, the Department of Adult Education and Cultural Management, and the Department of Psychology.
- In accordance with the prevailing system of teacher training, it carried out the teaching duties for the theoretical pedagogical courses of teacher candidates. Within the division of teacher training tasks – which varied significantly across different periods – the university units of educational science were also responsible for broader teaching, organizational, and supervisory tasks that were more closely related to practical training.

During the research, we processed previously unexplored rectoral and faculty documents, as well as archival materials related to the university's training programs. We examined the accessible records of the Teacher Training Institute and the surviving documents of the practice secondary grammar school. In our study, we were also able to rely on the notes of remembering disciples and the accounts provided by eyewitnesses of past events.

Following the three functions mentioned above, we first sought to clarify who led the Department of Pedagogy during the period under review, under what circumstances, and with what level of effectiveness. We uncovered how the four professors (Gyula Mitrovics, Sándor Karácsony, Béla Jausz, and László Kelemen) came to head the department, in which fields of educational science their work unfolded, and what kind of circles of disciples formed around them. We were interested to discover whether any kind of professional or intellectual continuity could be identified in their principles and research.

We organized the studies on their work, disciples, and colleagues into professorial eras. From institutional records, we sought to reconstruct who earned a doctorate in pedagogy during this period. The higher education reform of 1949 thoroughly disrupted the world of universities, centralizing organizational management and prescribing curricula. In this situation, the professors' room for maneuver was significantly narrowed. For several years, the university lost its right to award doctoral degrees. After 1950, the Department of Pedagogy remained without a leader for a period; between Sándor Karácsony's forced retirement and Béla Jausz's appointment, there was a transitional period when visiting lecturers and teaching assistants covered the department's classes.

The eras of Jausz and Kelemen were characterized by stabilization, the strengthening of the department's position within the Faculty of Arts, and alignment with the directions and research defined by socialist educational science. During László Kelemen's leadership, the preparations for the independence of units emerging from the various departmental groups took place. Numerous studies and conference papers were produced regarding these professorial eras, and finally, a summary volume was published by Gondolat Publisher (Brezsnyánszky, 2007).

We compiled a list of pedagogical lectures held during each professorial era, which allowed us to identify the dominant educational science content and fields within the arts and teacher training programs of each period. Lectures in educational science were offered by the Faculty of Arts since its foundation; in the first four years, these were held by the professor of the Department of Philosophy (Béla Tankó), after which the now-independent Department of Pedagogy sought to strengthen its prestige through a more diverse and colorful range of lectures. This palette was further enriched by various private lecturers, such as Ödön Szelényi, Sándor Karácsony, Gábor Lükő, Árpád Kiss, and Tihamér Kiss.

It was also fascinating to examine how these pedagogical lectures reflected the school practices, childhood concepts, and educational policies of the given era. We found that in his lectures, Gyula Mitrovics strove to characterize and present fields of science according to the traditional divisions of pedagogy; he only addressed the significance and debates of intelligence testing and experimental pedagogy – which he himself conducted – within his seminars (Vincze, 2011; 2017). The real breakthrough was marked by Sándor Karácsony's habilitation; he was the first teacher at the university to speak to students about the practical issues of school-based educational work. His private lectures included topics that would have been unimaginable under Mitrovics, such as the following lecture series: “Technical and Economic Education in Schools” (1st semester, 1937/38), “The Problem of Sexual Education in Schools, with Special Regard to Fashionable Theories (Freud, etc.)” (2nd semester, 1937/38), “The Educational Work of the Gymnasium and the New Regulations” (1st

semester, 1939/40), and “Secondary School Education and the New Instructions” (2nd semester, 1939/40) (Vincze, 2019).

The review of pedagogical doctoral dissertations from the interwar period also provided important insights and lessons. The direct disciples and teaching assistants of Mitrovics focused on experimental pedagogical themes in their theses, but a significant number of works were also produced on the theory of education, the history of education, and methodology. Several candidates developed their dissertations from previous university essays.

During the socialist era, the launch of the Pedagogy major at the University of Debrecen in 1957 was considered a significant step forward, even though the program began with relatively low student numbers. Previously, such training was only available at the Faculty of Humanities of Eötvös University in Budapest (not counting the philosophy-pedagogy program of the Apponyi College as a precursor). The elevation of primary school teacher and kindergarten teacher training to the higher education level, the increasing student numbers at teacher training colleges, and, last but not least, the need to raise the standard of university-level teacher training all justified the launch of a Pedagogy major at one of the provincial universities as well.

In addition to the Department of Pedagogy, we also uncovered the history of other institutions involved in teacher training. During the existence of the Teacher Training Institute (1925–1950), professors of pedagogy played a significant role in both training and examination (Orosz, 2012). We succeeded in processing the pre-1945 matriculation records of teacher training, as well as the minutes of teacher examinations (basic, specialized, and pedagogical exams). The registers record detailed data on enrollment in the Teacher Training Institute; we found entries for a total of 1,717 candidates (Brezsnyánszky, 2012). Tables were prepared regarding the distribution of candidates by academic year, gender, and place of residence. From the master registers (törzskönyv), it was also possible to determine where the students applying for teacher training had completed their secondary school leaving examinations (Matura). Studies have been published on graduating groups in special situations (Brezsnyánszky, 2016; Brezsnyánszky, 2019).

The practice secondary grammar school (1936–1949), which served as the practical workshop for teacher training, had been somewhat forgotten over time. Former students – many of whom continued their studies at the university and later became esteemed experts, instructors, or researchers across various faculties – kept the memory of their beloved alma mater alive through regular reunions and writings. The history of this institution was strongly linked to our research (Vargáné Nagy, 2009). Indeed, Béla Jausz, the later professor of pedagogy, served as its director, and he invited teachers to the faculty who years later followed him to the department (András Borbély) or became prominent figures in educational science (Árpád Kiss). By processing the yearbooks and other documents of the gymnasium – which was established in a villa on Simonyi Road and continuously expanded – as well as the oral accounts of accessible former students, a thematic volume was produced regarding the work and networks of the practice school’s teachers, and the Department of Pedagogy’s involvement in the institution’s operations (Brezsnyánszky & Fenyő, 2009). In addition to the writings on the old practice school, we also commemorated those secondary schools where teacher candidates were later able to complete their teaching practice.

Reformed Church Connections of the First Two Periods of the Debrecen School

During our research, in addition to strictly institutional historical investigations, we also sought to uncover every element within the network of relationships of the first two major professorial personalities that could help explain the development of their work and careers. In the case of both Mitrovics and Karácsony, their connection to the Reformed Church was decisive, although their roots in Calvinism differed and they experienced their faith in different ways.

Karácsony’s religiosity can be characterized as a confessional Reformed conviction that grew out of popular Protestantism, while Mitrovics was raised in the atmosphere of cultural Protestantism; although he was not marked by the kind of ideological individualism typical of intellectuals shaped by liberal theology, he was far from the Bible-centeredness that strongly influenced the work of his successor. He later assumed more of a mediating role between church public opinion and state cultural policy. As a professor at the Debrecen Faculty of Humanities, he was the first to formulate that the establishment of the University of Debrecen did not pose a threat to Reformed public life through the integration of the academic divisions of the College. He addressed the future of his church in several of his articles, urging more intensive and practice-oriented clergy training and calling for more careful selection of candidates entering the profession (primarily in terms of psychological suitability).

The transmission of religious experience was more organically integrated into the life and works of Karácsony than into those of Mitrovics. Sándor Karácsony can rightly be regarded as one of the most successful Protestant evangelizers between the two world wars; he received numerous invitations to quiet days, psalm weeks, and church conferences. Professor István Török considered him an “irregular dogmatician” and described his work as follows: “In his deeply biblically grounded and highly individual pedagogical works, the doctrine of justification by faith is exemplarily realized” (Török, 1942, p. 36). His deep and living faith led him to organize a Bible-reading circle from among his closer circle of students. “Sándor Karácsony, together with his students, developed a method by which the entire Holy Scripture can be read through within two to three years: all books of the Bible, parts of the Old Testament, and verses of the New Testament are read daily in parallel” (Kovács, 2002, p. 121).

Beyond the Reformed commitment reflected in the pedagogical works of the two professors, the close relationship between the Debrecen pedagogical school and the Reformed Church manifested itself in a much more direct way even before the establishment of the independent Department of Pedagogy. The analysis of data on those who obtained doctoral degrees in pedagogy revealed that of the 114 individuals who, between 1917 and 1949, chose educational science as their main or one of their subsidiary subjects in their doctoral examination, 34 had theological qualifications or prior theological studies. This represented 29% of those earning doctoral degrees in pedagogy in Debrecen during this period. Neither in Budapest nor in Szeged was it typical that such a high proportion of doctoral candidates in pedagogy had theological backgrounds or were practicing clergy.

Among those who obtained doctoral degrees in pedagogy in Debrecen before 1950, one can find names of individuals who later became leading figures and distinguished authors within their church. These include Dezső Fonyad, Lajos Segesvári, Zoltán Péter, Mihály Bucsay, and Sándor Csighy. Kálmán Újszászy and Tihámér Kiss also obtained their doctorates here; both taught pedagogy, though Újszászy only for a short period, while Kiss devoted his entire career to pedagogy and psychology.

These results of our research convincingly supported what we had previously assumed: the state-maintained University of Debrecen not only continued the traditions of its predecessor institution (the Reformed College), but in those departments that played a direct role in shaping students’ worldview, commitment to the Reformed faith and church remained alive until the communist turn made its impact felt in higher education (Vincze, 2015).

Collections of the Department of Educational Studies

The first legacy that entered the department’s library in the early 1930s was the pedagogical book collection of Ödön Szelényi (see Ugrai & Vincze, 2005). This collection was integrated into the departmental library and was not preserved as a separate unit. The Szelényi legacy mainly contains Hungarian and German-language professional books, as well as small-circulation German doctoral dissertations and school year books.

Currently, the Institute of Educational Studies and Cultural Management – and as part of this, the Department of Educational Studies – houses two major source collections. It preserves and maintains them and supports their research, presenting the results at thematic conferences organized by the institute (Kiss Árpád Memorial Conference and the Kiss Árpád and Sándor Karácsony Collection Symposium).

One of the collections contains the professional legacy of Árpád Kiss (1907–1979), an indispensable figure in 20th-century educational science research. He was born in Csernátfa (Cernatu, today in Romania), in the southeastern part of the former Kingdom of Hungary. He began his secondary education in nearby Brassó (Braşov) and later studied in Balassagyarmat. Between 1926 and 1932, he studied French and German language and literature at the Pázmány Péter University in Budapest. After obtaining his diploma, he worked as a secondary school teacher, first in Balassagyarmat (1932–1939), then in Debrecen at the university practice secondary grammar school established in 1936 (1939–1944). In 1935, he obtained a doctoral degree in French philology in Budapest.

In 1945, he was appointed executive director of the National Council of Public Education, the advisory body of the Ministry of Education, thus gaining a significant role in educational policy, which he held until 1948. His most important activity was the development of the concept and curriculum of the new eight-grade elementary school system. He also continued scientific research. In 1946, he obtained the title of private university lecturer in Debrecen. Until 1949, he worked at the National Institute of Educational Science as head of the didactics department and later taught at the Budapest Primary Teacher Training Institute.

Following the communist takeover, he too became a victim of political purges and was interned in 1951. After his release two years later, he was employed as a primary school teacher and then as a lecturer in a primary teacher training college. His scientific career resumed in 1956 at the Pedagogical Research Institute. He retired in 1976 as head of the Didactics Department of its successor institution, the National Institute of Pedagogy. He played an important role in integrating Hungarian educational science into the international scientific community; under his leadership, Hungary joined the IEA studies in 1969 as the first socialist country (Kiss Árpád).⁴

The valuable estate of Árpád Kiss, rich in manuscripts, was organized by his wife, Dr. Irén Darkó (1920–1995), a secondary school teacher. Following her death, the work was continued by their son, Endre Kiss (1947–), University Professor of Philosophy. With the assistance of Zoltán Báthory and Tamás Kozma, the archive was transferred to the Department of Pedagogy at Kossuth Lajos University in 1997, where an Árpád Kiss Memorial Room was established.

The main components of the Árpád Kiss Collection are as follows:

1. Library of pedagogical and psychological works (books and journals in Hungarian and foreign languages);
2. Manuscript legacy (including manuscripts and proofs of published works);
3. Árpád Kiss's own published works;
4. Official and professional correspondence (including a small number of personal letters);
5. Publications related to his professional activities, inscribed copies, photographs, and official biographical documents;
6. Letters and documents related to the professional work of Mrs. Árpád Kiss.

Since 1999, the Department of Educational Studies has organized the Árpád Kiss Memorial Conference in Debrecen every two years, chaired by András Buda and Endre Kiss. This two-day event, now in its 14th year, has grown into a gathering of national significance. While the presentations cover all fields of educational science, the life and work of Árpád Kiss remain a featured theme at every conference (Kiss, 2012).

The second collection of the Department of Educational Studies is the Sándor Karácsony Collection, which was established by one of Sándor Karácsony's former students, Dr. György Kontra (1925–2007), a physician and teacher. It was donated to the Institute of Educational Sciences at the University of Debrecen in 2011 by his son, Miklós Kontra, University Professor of Linguistics.

Sándor Karácsony (1891–1952) was a 20th-century multidisciplinary thinker whose work was equally outstanding in the fields of educational science, psychology, linguistics, and philosophy. Born in Földes, he completed his elementary studies there. Between 1902 and 1910, he studied at the Reformed College of Debrecen. From 1911 to 1918, he was a student of Hungarian and German Language and Literature at the University of Budapest.

He initially worked as a secondary grammar school teacher in Kassa (Košice, today Slovakia), then for eight years at the Zrínyi Miklós Grammar School in the capital. Karácsony played a leading role in several youth movements of the era. From 1927, he became involved in linguistic research (lexicography) at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. He earned his doctorate at the University of Debrecen in 1929, where he obtained his habilitation in 1934, subsequently delivering lectures on a regular basis.

In 1942, he was appointed Full Professor in Debrecen, and he served as the Head of the Department of Pedagogy until 1950. In 1945, he was appointed President of the National Council of Adult Education (Szabadművelődési Tanács). During this period, he once again held a key position in the Scout Movement. However, the communist takeover disrupted his career as well. He passed away shortly after being forced into retirement (Vincze, 2019; Vincze & Rébay, 2025).

The Sándor Karácsony Collection comprises, on one hand, the published works of Karácsony and, on the other, the professional literature written about him. Its main thematic units are as follows:

1. Works by Karácsony (first and subsequent editions) organized into categories such as fiction, religion, social psychology, pedagogy, and others;
2. Works about Karácsony;
3. Works by the students of Sándor Karácsony (e.g., the works of Imre Dankó, Ferenc Fabricius-Kovács, Sándor Gellért, Miklós Heltai, Sándor Jánosi, Gábor Lükő, Andor Oláh, Lajos Szathmáry, Mária Székácsné Vida, and László Vekerdi);
4. Publications issued by Exodus Publisher;

⁴ <https://www.arcanum.com/hu/online-kiadvanyok/Lexikonok-magyar-eletrajzi-lexikon-7428D/k-760F2/kiss-arpad-76416/>.

5. Other publications closely related to Karácsony's activities, including the newspapers and journals edited by him (e.g., *Az Erő*, *Magyar Ifjúság*, *Pro Christo*, *Új Szántás*, etc.) (Kontra, 2011).

A small part of György Kontra's Sándor Karácsony Collection was originally owned by another of Karácsony's students, Dénes Kövendi (1923–2011); these items were added to the Kontra Collection in accordance with the wishes of his children.

The collection, which was handed over together with a detailed catalogue, also includes numerous small prints, invitations, press clippings, photocopies, photographs, index cards (primarily those of György Kontra), and handwritten or typewritten notes and documents. Its primary value lies in the fact that it provides a centralized location for studying works, documents, and references related to Karácsony that are otherwise only available in a scattered manner elsewhere (Kontra, 2011).

In 2022, the Karácsony Collection was expanded with the estate of a third student, Zsófia Révész (1922–2021), thanks to her daughter, Ágnes Paraczký, who described her mother as follows: “Teacher Zsófia Révész belonged to Sándor Karácsony's circle from her youth. She attended his lectures and discussions and disseminated the great educator's writings. Until the end of her life, she read the Bible according to the Exodus Bible Reading Guide, which was established based on Sándor Karácsony's principles” (Paraczký, 2022).

The Révész Legacy consists of books by Sándor Karácsony (monographs and edited volumes), as well as writings about him. It also includes two manuscripts. One is a document titled “The Front at Csucsa” (A csucsai front) by Sándor Jánosi, of which only a few copied manuscript examples survive. In this work, the author interprets and evaluates Karácsony's novel of the same title and includes the reminiscences of the elder Miklós Heltai (Brezsnyánszky, 2023). The other is a memoir by Lajos Szathmáry titled “In memoriam S. B. (Sándor Bácsi⁵)”, written in 1960. Beyond their personal relationship, it provides interesting information regarding Karácsony's scouting activities. This piece could only be published in the 1980s (cf. Szathmáry, 1980 and 1982). Both manuscripts are made unique by a large number of pasted-in photographs.

Collection Symposia and Collection Booklets

The Sándor Karácsony and Árpád Kiss Collection Symposia serve as a forum for research related to the collections managed by the Department. The event was first organized in 2012. Following the forced hiatus caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the series resumed, with the 10th symposium taking place in 2025. At these mini-conferences, which typically feature 4–5 presentations, both University of Debrecen students involved in collection-based research and senior researchers from various higher education institutions focusing on the namesakes have delivered lectures. The focus has alternated between the life's work of Sándor Karácsony and Árpád Kiss, while also providing a platform for studies exploring the history of the Department of Educational Studies in Debrecen.

The presentations delivered at the symposia – compiled from multiple events – have been published in the series “Gyűjteményi füzetek” (Collection Booklets), edited by Magdolna Rébay and published by the Institute of Educational Studies and Cultural Management. To date, three volumes have been released in Hungarian; their titles, translated into English, are:

1. Our Predecessors: Sándor Karácsony, Árpád Kiss, Béla Jausz (Debrecen, 2014);
2. Sándor Karácsony, Gyula Mitrovics, and Their Students (Debrecen, 2018);
3. Pedagogy in the Era of (Pre-)Socialism (Debrecen, 2021).

Closing Remarks

The momentum of research into the history of the Department of Educational Studies has somewhat slowed in recent years, but those researchers who were previously the most active in the research group coordinated by László Brezsnyánszky have continued their work. New studies continue to be published on specific topics by László Brezsnyánszky (2020; 2021), Imre Fenyő (2018; 2019), and Tamás Vincze (2021; 2025).

The collections presented provide rich and valuable source material for further research, including manuscripts (such as Árpád Kiss's literary efforts) that may reveal previously unknown facets of individual scholars or educational researcher.

Through our departmental historical investigations, we aimed not only to explore the past but also to serve the present and the future by helping current staff and students of the Institute of Educational Studies and

⁵ Uncle Sándor.

Cultural Management gain a more nuanced and accurate understanding of their institution's past and the professional achievements of the past century.

With the writing of this study – in addition to offering a worthy tribute to our Honoree, Professor Gabriella Pusztai –, our goal was also to introduce our professional historical research to an English-speaking audience.

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