

*Judit Bognárné Kocsis*¹:

Characteristics of education and harmonic social relations according to Calvinist values

Abstract.

This paper focuses on Sándor Karácsony's educational philosophy and Calvinist values. Karácsony (1891-1952) was one of the most original educators in Hungary between the two World Wars. The basis of the essay is Sándor Karácsony's works and the author's earlier researches. Research method is analysis of sources based on primary sources. According to the studied literature the principal values of his system are reformed faith and Calvinism. Karácsony's opinion is that the pedagogic relation presents a positive, fruitful and common activity, the educator and his pupils are equal. The final aim of the education is to lead the pupils to God. Karácsony expects that the educator should deal with the children as a father, not as a clerk. He emphasizes continuous self-reflection in order to reach self image and self ideal, based on the message of the Bible.

Keywords: education, relationships, socialization, Reformed values, social soul, educator

1. Introduction

Reformed pedagogy has to be modern and at the same time traditional. It means that we have to apply the results of the work of our Reformed ancestors in our days. The teaching and educational traditions of the Reformed Church were strengthened in a social and spiritual context that was based on a Christian value system. It is the challenge of Reformed pedagogy to convey the Protestant thought and value system in an ever-changing world around us. The duty of Protestant educators is to do their work in the spirit of the Bible in their daily educational activities.

My previous research findings have drawn my attention to the fact that both the religious and theological foundations as well as social psychology are indispensable for examining Sandor Karácsony's pedagogy and pedagogical psychology. Karácsony claims

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that only Reformed people and communities— the members of which are ready to serve and make sacrifices – are able to maintain —Reformed schools. This essay attempts to collect and systematize the renowned professor's pedagogical views, Reformed educational principles, which reflect his upbringing.

2. Sándor Karácsony's social psychological system

Sándor Karácsony pursued linguistic and pedagogic studies in Budapest, then in Geneva and Munich, Vienna and Graz. During the Second World War he sustained an injury. Following the war he taught in one of the schools of Budapest then he worked in scouting and Reformed youth-movement. He became doctor of Philosophy, Pedagogy and Hungarian linguistics at the university of Debrecen in 1929. From 1932 he was the private tutor of the university of Debrecen where he became a professor in 1942. He held several public positions after 1945. From 1948 his activity was criticized and attacked from a political viewpoint.

As the founder of the Institute of Social Psychology (1942) Karácsony developed a unique system of social psychology, which describes the relationship of a person with other people and with God. In other words, it sheds light on the horizontal and vertical relationships of a person.

In his view, the social psychological foundation of pedagogy consists of four major parts:

1. Linguistic, literary education and the intellectual functioning of the social soul, detailed in the following volumes: *Magyar nyelvtan társaslélektani alapon* (1938), *A könyvek lelke* (1941)
2. The upper limit of the social soul and education of people for the transcendent, contained in the following volumes: *A magyar világnézet* (1941), *A magyarok Istene* (1943).
3. Social education and the volitional functioning of the social soul, as found in the following volumes: *A magyarok kincse* (1944), *Magyar ifjúság* (1946), *Ocsúdó magyarság* (1942).
4. The lower limit of the social soul and legal education, described in the following volumes: *A magyar demokrácia* (1945), *A magyar béke* (1947).

Sándor Karácsony's social psychological system that describes his approach is based on the social soul, by which concept he means a spiritual behaviour or attitude towards other persons and the world around us.

The life, work, and books of the deeply religious, Calvinist Sándor Karácsony – a Doctor of Philosophy, Pedagogy, and Hungarian Linguistics (1929, Debrecen) – are quite naturally defined and permeated by an analysis of person's social interactions, an emphasis on the role of interpersonal communication, respect for God, and his belief in education

and educability. Religion and Reformed faith are the starting points, the alpha and the omega of everything. He acquired this foundation primarily in his family; his maternal grandfather was a Reformed minister, and his mother passed on to him the spiritual heritage she had received at home.² Secondly, it was during his studies at Reformed schools (he attended the Reformed Public Elementary School of Földes between 1897 and 1902, then the Reformed College of Debrecen between 1902 and 1910) that he internalized the religious beliefs and behaviour.

3. Pedagogic theory and educational practice

Sándor Karácsony views pedagogy as the entirety of theory and practice and lays emphasis rather on its efficiency. He connects pedagogic theory to educational practice. Sandor Karacsony's view is in line with the classic approach where pedagogy has to be based on the relation between the educator and the educated persons.

The aim is that the pupils should reach maturity and they become adults when they accept the other person's autonomy. Continuing this train of thoughts, it may be stated that one of the main functions of the educational activity in Sándor Karácsony's thought system - is the pupils' education/culture. It is necessary to interpret the cognition of culture and its objective elements at the individual's level in order to infiltrate the students' mentality, and let it have an effect. Culture, like folk culture comes to life only by this way of actions and speech. The process means to experience the contents of culture, which becomes embedded in the personality of the individual. Karácsony interpreted pedagogic relation as an interaction. In the education progress the educator and the pupils are equal, which means that the role of the students increases relationship with each other, so that the students' role value is increasing.³ The content of the process can be anything, since the main factor is not the content but the quality of the relation that forms in the process. The educators' personality, philosophy and views have great significance in this interaction. In addition to the affection for the children, it is important to believe in their development and the efficiency of the influences over them. The idealized picture of a child and reality simultaneously exist in the daily pedagogic practice. The educator has to hold his or her ground in this situation resolutely and optimistically. Moreover, the educator's task is to arouse the pupils' interest in order to stimulate their imagination. It may be recognized that these tasks need preparedness. Karácsony envisions an educator who is informed, wise and open to all problems. This

² BOGNÁRNÉ KOCSIS J.: *A családi nevelés és a szülői hivatás sajátosságai, feladatai*, 2016. 348-351.p.

³ BOGNÁRNÉ KOCSIS J.: *Karácsony Sándor pedagógiai modellje és recepciója a református felsőoktatásban*. 2010. 23-56.p. and SZATHMÁRY L.: *Megemlékezés Karácsony Sándorról*. 1982.

means that teachers should stand above their pupils in intellectual and ethical sense as an ideal, with higher intellectual knowledge, values and behavior patterns. The only expectation of the pupils is to be receptive and shapeable.

As a deeply pious man, Sándor Karácsony argued that the educator's affection should be pervaded by Christ's love. While the educator and the pupils are equal, the former has authority before the younger generation because of his wisdom and ethical attitude. According to Sándor Karácsony, the pedagogic relation reflects a positive, fruitful and collaborative activity where it is necessary for the pupils to engage actively in their own cultural process.

The principles of Reformed theology form the basis of Sándor Karácsony's pedagogic system. Without theological knowledge, one can hardly understand his views, or these can easily be misread. The contact of God and people is based on God's mercy and requires humbleness and modesty. The following features, reflect the theoretical model of Karácsony in the sense of his philosophy of religion. First of all, love, received from God, has to pervade the educator's pedagogical activity and should be transmitted by him or her. The final aim of the love is to lead the pupils to the God. The educator gives evidence of his or her faith on all occasions through his/her actions and speech. Karácsony, on the basis of Calvinist principles, expected modesty and humbleness from the educators, at the same time he expected firmness and exemplary life, "... faith and humbleness which characterize Reformed educators. -Humbleness is not equal to submissiveness, of course".⁴

According to Sándor Karácsony's terms, the most important communities of upbringing are: the family, the school, the dormitory, youth groups, social organizations, the society, church communities and nations in the neighbourhood.

In Sándor Karácsony's perception, education primarily means Hungarian education. He defined the tasks in this regard. He put the agendas in three important/essential categories. Education has to be modern, Hungarian and efficient.

Education will be "modern" if the educator and the pupils find and use the common language. They will be Hungarian, if they communicate in Hungarian, relate to fellows in a Hungarian manner.

The features of this relation are:

(1) Autonomy, which means the acknowledgement that both participants in the upbringing are independent personalities;

(2) Sincerity, which means one's authenticity in one, that is, when one presents him- or herself in his/her human nature;

(3) Unambiguity, which is valid both for thinking and speech, since real communication may come into existence only in this manner;

⁴ KARÁCSONY S.: *A magyarok Istene*. 2004. 171.p.

(4) Freedom, which presupposes the acceptance and tolerance of the activity of the other human being. This is possible only in a relation in which the parties are equal partners;

(5) Mission, as the educator believes in the fact that he or she is Jesus Christ's delegate, according to the Reformed faith (who, in order to do his/her task as efficiently as possible, is ready to testify to his/her own faith).

Sándor Karácsony derives the essence of religion from the word "religion". While practising religion, a person professes his or her faith, testifies to it, but at least two people are needed for this: the one professing and the one listening. The basic setting in religion is that the priest preaches the Word to the laity. Therefore, based on his interpretation, religion is not a private matter but a social psychological (interpersonal spiritual) manifestation. It is not a dogma, nor a cult or a rite, but an unexplainable phenomenon of the soul.

Therefore, Karácsony considers religion as a spiritual behaviour to be the basis of relating to other people. The type of religion is irrelevant in this understanding, although he states that for him the perfect foundation is given in Calvinism.

One of the doctrines of the Reformed faith is universal priesthood, so it relies on the faith of each believer. According to him, Reformed faith is actually an inner attitude, the main characteristics of which are simplicity, humility, and (in many cases) stubbornness.

Sándor Karácsony's view is in agreement with E. W. Bullinger's idea, according to which religion and Christianity are two different things.⁵ Religion is connected to the physical reality of a person, such as a church building, church membership, church laws, creed, while Christianity showed a new way to mankind, which involves a life and behaviour based on Christ's teachings. The Son of God did not create a religion but gave an example of life and gave his life for humanity. Bullinger emphasizes that there is a difference between the saved and the glorified: while in the first group selfishness, the emphasis on the role of "I", can be found more often, the other group is characterized by the full acceptance of God's gifts, complete self surrender and renunciation.

In his work titled *Nyugati világnézetünk felemás igában* Sándor Karácsony writes that people live their lives with a double standard and worldview, oscillating between the two.⁶ He compares the pagan worldview with the Christian one, and declares that the unequally yoked form of life makes one restless, unproductive, tragic and hopeless, since one cannot meet two different expectations and worldviews at the same time.

According to Karácsony, worldview means a conception of how a person sees the world around him- or herself and how he or she lives his or her life. In his view, only the Bible can provide a programme for the life of the individual; there are no general rules or methods exactly because of these individual differences, since otherwise the ideas of freedom and holiness would be lost. The church is made up of the community of believers, where living faith is at work.⁷

⁵ E. W. BULLINGER, D. D.: *Két természet Isten gyermekében*, 1997.

⁶ KARÁCSONY S.: *Nyugati világnézetünk felemás igában*. 1991.

⁷ BOGNÁRNÉ KOCSIS J.: *A vallás és a hit szerepe a személyiségfejlődésfolyamatában*. 2016. 16-36.p.

According to Karácsony's view, the pillars of the Reformed Church are:

- a) emphasis on grace,
- b) consideration of the individual's course of life and personal growth,
- c) building of democracy in the church organisation.

There is only one good solution for the Hungarian people: if they carry out their work with faith, looking for God. If they do not act like this, they will not be able to fulfil their function. Karácsony understands Protestantism as a spiritual behaviour which is characterized by two things: a sort of rigidity, unchanged quality, due to its history on the one hand, and a constant change because of its church members on the other. According to another approach, the Protestant person is holy, in other words, he or she is motivated by God's Spirit and aims at carrying out God's purpose. A free person/individual can be truly free because of his or her holy state. The Protestant church can be effective and fruitful in as much as the members of the congregation are also effective and fruitful.

4. Religious socialization

Religious socialization is the entirety of the knowledge of religious norms, behavioural patterns, values, and symbols, the understanding of their application as well as their internalization, and their application.

The acquisition and possession of the following basic abilities are necessary for the effectiveness of the religious socialization processes:

- a) Trust in others: one should be able to trust another person apart from oneself, this is the condition for trust in God as well.
- b) Ability to develop relationships, communication with others: this group of abilities helps us develop a relationship with God as well, and creates the foundation for prayer.
- c) Ability to accept and comply with norms: religious behaviour also has basic rules that have to be followed.

Religious socialization is present in every personality development, although it does not always become conscious, but stays in the subconscious. However, many of its elements can, and should be brought to consciousness; this is one of the most important objectives of religious pedagogy: to encourage interests for the transcendent in the process of personality development.

Individual conditions of religious socialization:

- a) need for belonging (need for community, love);
- b) need for identity and individuality (the individual is unique and irreplaceable);
- c) need for a meaningful life (a purposeful, meaningful life);
- d) need for creativity (with the use of the transcendent), the need for creating.

Religious socialization in fact denotes the process during which our relationship with God, with the transcendent develops. The external appearance of religious socialization is religious behaviour.

The functions of religious socialization are:

- learning and acquisition of the religious culture;
- introduction to the church, supporting the process of becoming a church member;
- interiorization of church norms and values;
- learning and interpreting the symbols of religion;
- joining religious communities.

In his book, Karácsony describes the developmental stages of his own religious socialization process, the stages of the development of his faith. He first got acquainted with the Bible in his family, since in the evenings they all gathered in his grandfather's room to read the Scriptures – this was a family tradition, a habit until his grandfather's death. After that, he saw the Bible in the hands of the pastor during worship services. He even imitated the liturgy and the preaching at home afterwards (standing on a stool, with thick books in his hands). As a student of the Reformed College of Debrecen, he was reading the Holy Scriptures out of duty. In his teenage years he read the Bible in secret, then he started to have doubts due to the science subjects he studied, and finally he turned away from the "fairy tales". After a year of denial, he realized that he needed religion; this was reinforced in him by the personality and lifestyle of his religious education teacher. As a young adult, he took an active part in the work of the Reformed Church. After about twenty years of ministry and Bible reading he reached the level where he was finally able to accept and love others, and to renounce his egotistical self. His religious development had reached a peak, the values were interiorized, his practice of religion was natural and came from the inside.⁸

He organized a small group, a circle of disciples around himself, with whom he was in close contact. He attached great importance to the opportunities that appear, become alive and to the practices in a relationship formed with another person or other people. The core of Sándor Karácsony's circle of disciples was made up of the participants of the Bible study group he organized, who then were given guidance for their whole way of life and work during the exposition of the Word. "Those whom God blessed to be able to attend Sándor Karácsony's Bible study once, have been drawing strength from the Bible since then for their lives."⁹

The "Master" put together a Bible Reading Plan for them which they followed in their continuous Scripture reading, a method based on Kálvin's doctrines. His disciples

⁸ KARÁCSONY S.: *Utazás a Biblia mélységei felé*. 1996.

⁹ KARÁCSONY S.: *Hatalom alá vetett ember*. 1995. 5.p.

also took an active part in the publication of this Bible Reading Plan. This practice was later adopted by the Synod of the Reformed church. Sándor Karácsony taught his disciples to think which was more valuable than to simply impart knowledge.¹⁰

5. Reformed values

In the course of personality development or education, the religiousness hidden in a person/an individual (the Christian value system) has to be formed and activated, so religious education, the practical application of religious pedagogy, should be the task of not only the religious education teacher but also every teacher, every educator who is in contact with children or even adults. In the following, we will take into account the characteristics of Sándor Karácsony's philosophy that are in line with the value system of the Reformed faith.

1. For the deeply religious Sándor Karácsony each child is important, every single person is special, just as for his supreme master, Jesus.

2. With regard to education he uses biblical terminology such as "student", while employing the word "growth" when referring to education and development itself.

3. His view on the unity of languages also reflects the message of the Bible. According to his interpretation, there used to be only one language once. Since the confusion of languages at Babel, there have been separate languages, but the roots are the same, we are one in Christ, so we have to understand each other, even if we speak different languages.

4. In his pedagogy, love, smart love, stands above all else, that is the basis of the relationship between the educator and the student.

5. Sándor Karácsony respected God, therefore he respected the other person as well. He proclaimed the acceptance of the autonomy of the other person.

6. In his philosophy he places great emphasis on honouring people, the recognition of the other party as an equal partner, since we are all equal before Christ. From this social relations follow that aim at understanding.

7. Karácsony proclaimed the priesthood of all believers responsibly; he expected all the educators and adults to transmit the Reformed faith, which of course is not easy to do in everyday pedagogy. The educators, being elevated as priests, would have to testify to their faith, and the child, hearing and feeling this, would start to believe or be strengthened in his or her faith.

8. With regard to Christianity he had an ecumenical view. He emphasized unity, peaceful coexistence in respect of religion, within the nation and between the nations as well.

¹⁰ BOGNÁRNÉ KOC SIS J.: *Karácsony Sándor pedagógiai modellje és recepciója a reformátusfelsőoktatásban*, 2010. and MIKLÓSSY E.: *Karácsony Sándor, az embertárs.* 1998.

9. He openly and honestly faced social and educational problems and sought to overcome them. In all circumstances he looked for the solution in the message of the Bible. This explains why his views still have an effect on people today.

10. According to Sándor Karácsony's view, it follows from the principle of individual salvation that the student can learn through personal experience, and his or her personality can develop by being taught freedom of thought and ethical independence.

11. He always looked at the whole person, recognized the interaction between the processes in body and soul, and sought their joint development.

12. His work and activities are characterized by service towards the other person, and his narrower and wider environment.

13. He established a circle of disciples around himself, with whom he spent a lot of time together, and was in a close and confidential relationship. His goal was not to lecture them but rather to think together with them. During their meetings he spoke mostly when his disciples asked him about something.

Based on his writings, in Sándor Karácsony's pedagogy, Reformed values can be detected in the following basic statements concerning education and educability:

1. *Individuals are autonomous, therefore uneducable, only social beings are educable.*

In Sándor Karácsony's understanding, the individual, the pupil is an autonomous being, therefore he or she is uneducable in his/her own individuality, only the social soul is educable, that is, only in the course of his/her relationship with another person can educational change take place. We can try to educate the individual by accustoming him/her to social values, making him practise, or giving him an example, it will always be in vain, we will not succeed, because the individual is autonomous.

2. *Education is growth.*

The educator gives something of him- or herself, passes it on, and the person being educated receives it, gains something from the other. The result of the interaction of the two people is growth. Education is finished when the relationship between the educator and the person being educated is levelled off, in other words, a collegial relationship develops. In this case, the person being educated does not need the instruction of the educator anymore. Moreover, a new educational situation may arise: the person being educated may educate the educator.¹¹

3. *Education is a linguistic relationship and linguistic education at the same time.*

He interprets linguistic education as a spiritual phenomenon, the medium of which is language, which carries cultural values. The success of linguistic education is strongly influenced by the willingness and extent the teacher and the student show in relating to each

¹¹ KARÁCSONY S.: *Magyar nyelvtan társaslélektani alapon*. 2010.

other. Linguistic education takes place in every class, regardless of the subject, since the pedagogue and the pupil talk to each other, and the goal is to understand the student's communication.

4. Education needs to be a community of work and life.

Educational influences can take place during the working of the social psychological function of the individual soul through relating to others, during the joint execution of a task. He understands the relationship between the educator and the one being educated as shared work and life, which motivates and gives strength and perspective.¹²

5. It is not possible to educate people only by imparting educational and spiritual content.

Content does not educate people in itself, but it can have a formal power to do so. In practice it means that the teacher says what is right, what example needs to be followed, and the pupils listen. This method of education, i.e., imparting educational contents, either has a result or not, mostly not. At schools this kind of education is the norm.

6. Everything depends on love in education.

Teachers in general must love people, which also means they must love values. The parent or the pedagogue has to accept the child as he or she is. Real results can be achieved only with goodwill and sacrificial attitude. One must love the child, the school, not expecting anything in return.

7. Education is not a method, but personality and attitude.

Although Sándor Karácsony challenged the effectiveness of the educational methods considered modern at that time; however he recognized the effort and work put into the experiment. He esteemed the personality of the pedagogue, his attitude to education, and his self-reflection much more highly than the representatives of all the new methods.

8. Education should be presbyterian.

Karácsony emphasizes parity in the teacher-student relationship, in which the educator is only a commissioned person; he or she is not above the student.

After describing the characteristics of Sándor Karácsony's pedagogy, the educational locations and contexts will be presented below in connection with his offices and roles. The following list demonstrates the richness and diversity of his work:

¹² KARÁCSONY S.: *Ocsúddó magyarság*. 2002 and KONTRA GY: Karácsony Sándor, a nagy hírű professzor. 2009

1. Family, which for him was the primary location for learning basic values, Reformed identity, and how to relate to each other.

2. School, which provides the sharing of life for the collaboration of the teacher and the student.

3. Scouting, which provides an opportunity for the younger generation to get to know the older generation, relate to them, and take part in activities with them.

4. Newspaper editing, during which readers can join in the work of editing, and in this way the joint work of young and old, experienced and inexperienced can be realized.

5. As a writer, Sándor Karácsony realized that readers want him to write about topics or cases they share with the writer.

6. Lectures and courses, when he adjusted his lectures and speeches to the needs of his audience. His goal was to make his message understood.

7. Evangelization in the church, which actually was a testimony of faith given for the visited churches. Karácsony preached the good news, the gospel, in accordance with the doctrine of the universal priesthood of all believers.

8. As the representative of church and mission movements, he noticed the power and influence present in community.

9. In his experience as the leader of various organizations, people expected to be led; they demanded a goal, a task, a programme. A leader must be an experienced person with a rich network of relationships.

10. As an international committee member, he realized that we need to relate to other nationalities in an honest and Hungarian way; then we will be accepted as partners.

He saw in context the events around him, the problems of the Hungarian people, the questions of pedagogy and the importance of faith in the life of the individual. Based on his writings it can be stated that he offered a form of life, a life programme which was not only for pedagogues, and the main theses of which hold their ground in comparison with the European context as well.¹³

6. The educator

It proves Sándor Karácsony's sense of reality and thorough knowledge that he has no illusions about schools and pedagogues. It appears as a question in one of his books whether there are really suitable teachers in schools. He draws a sad conclusion, which he explains with low salaries and the lack of social honour. Then as a summary he says that in Hungarian schools it is not those who teach that should, and they do not

¹³ See the theses based on mutuality and relating to the other person in the book *Ember ésem-bertárs* by Károly BARTH or the book titled *Társas intelligencia. Az emberi kapcsolatok új tudománya* by Daniel GOLEMANN.

teach what and how they should.¹⁴ In other words, Karácsony places the emphasis on the personality, attitude and convictions of the pedagogue.

Sándor Karácsony interpreted educational community as a living and natural web of relations. Participants in this contact – which will last for a short or a long time – are equal, they have educational effect on each other and are associated with educational intention and responsibility.

Efficient self-supporting or group-learning, self-education or teaching to think independently can be found in Reformed education¹⁵. It is especially the duty of the educator:

- to help in self-education, self-improvement e.g. by rewarding, encouraging;
- to bring to surface/to the fore their abilities and to try them in practice, as in the process of the discovery- and experience-oriented learning.¹⁶

According to Karácsony, it is a distressing sign that teachers are professionals or at least, they would like to be, rather than wise persons, priests, masters or sophocrats. In Karácsony's understanding, a sophocrat is someone who lives his life as a true believer, in a humble way, not grovelling, but living an active and creative life. According to the general Christian understanding, wise is someone who, first of all, fears the Lord; sees the world, people, and the meaning of life in context and unity; is responsible, conscientious and lives in harmony with his/her surroundings and him- or herself. Reaching a state of wisdom is usually related to age and life experience. But it can by no means be claimed that everybody becomes wise by old age, nor is it true that wisdom can be reached by old age only.

Based on Karácsony's understanding, in the work of the pedagogue the educational role is unambiguously the most important one, in school and during after school activities as well: influencing the whole person, transferring values and developing personality. He stressed that the role of the educator changes through each developmental psychological stage.

Karácsony holds a mirror up to aspiring young teachers by collecting all the general and professional pieces of knowledge required for the teaching profession, the abilities needed for the task, and the attitude and psychological traits that are indispensable for the pedagogical profession. Based on his writings, the main features of Sándor Karácsony's picture of the pedagogical career and teacher's profession can be delineated as follows:

1. the primary task of teachers is not teaching but educating;
2. the responsibility of teachers is to give meaningful exercises, and to awaken and maintain attention;

¹⁴ KARÁCSONY S.: *Magyarország és nevelés*. 2003. and LENDVAI L. F.: *Egy magyar filozófus: Karácsony Sándor*, 1993.

¹⁵ BOGNÁRNÉ KOCSIS J.: *Reformed education and teaching practice with equal chances*. 2016. 4-126.p.

¹⁶ BOGNÁRNÉ KOCSIS J.: *Zsolnai József pedagógusképe*. 2011. 31-37.p.

3. teachers are not superior, therefore they are in a coordinate relation with the children;
4. teachers can only relate in a pedagogical way with a pastoral attitude. It is important that they whole heartedly commit themselves to the task, but the success of the relation depends also on the measure of the pupils' capacity to receive and accept;
5. teachers should look at the children as persons of full value;
6. the task of teachers is to develop the personality of the children;
7. teachers should know the children and their developmental psychological characteristics well, they should be able to read the expressions on the children's faces;
8. teachers have to have authority, who lead those entrusted to them, and if needed, give instruction;
9. the teaching profession is service that does not promise riches, but rather expects one to lead a humble, honest, sacrificial and authentic life;
10. pedagogues must be aware that the teacher-student relationship is an ongoing task and is often a struggle until a real bond of work and life develops;
11. the position of teachers is responsible;
12. he requires teachers to have an exemplary behaviour, although he knows that teachers are fallible people as well;
13. teachers have to be cultured, motivated, spirited people;
14. they have to be socially sensitive;
15. they should have trust in and vision for the future;
16. they should treat and educate the children in their care not as officials but as fathers (mothers);
17. teachers should be knowledgeable and cultured;
18. flexible and ready for renewal;
19. communicative, open to the problems;
20. resourceful, confident, results-oriented, purposeful;
21. they should be able to cheer people up, and to keep up the good atmosphere in the classroom, in the community;
22. should be deeply religious, a philosophical type.

In summary, it can be said about Karácsony's pedagogical career mirror that, besides professional knowledge, the personality, attitude, faith, and ethical convictions of the pedagogue are stressed. Karácsony expected educators to deal with children as a father not as a clerk.

In his system of the Reformed pedagogical scientist there is a separate category for the Reformed pedagogue, of whom he has great expectations, and typifies them on the basis of their faith. He declares that in fact there are no good Reformed teachers. However, he excuses them partially, since in his opinion the training of Reformed pedagogues/educators does not emphasize enough the development of Reformed traits. In reality, they only trained state school educators who had to go to church services and religious education classes,

so he particularly stressed the need for constant self-education.¹⁷ A variety of relevant works, including those of Sándor Karácsony, highlight the importance of the pedagogues' self-knowledge and self-image in the living out of their vocation and the professionalization of the teaching career.

According to Calvin, church servants, including teachers, have to accept with humility the ministry of teaching as God's gift of grace.¹⁸ On the one hand, the entrusted church members have to recognize God's sending will for service (inner call), and on the other, the outer call, i.e., one must be ready to take an active part in the life of the congregation and accept church hierarchy for the sake of ensuring the order and activities of the church.

Karácsony mentions János Apáczai Cseré's so called "mobile schools as an example: whenever he was forced to leave a place, his students followed him; as a result, his school never actually stopped functioning. Reformed educators must be aware that they cannot make statements *ex cathedra*. Students are "only" entrusted to them, they help bring out the best in the students during their studies, and they do not stand above their students.¹⁹ In this sense, they have a collegial relationship.

Karácsony describes three types of Reformed educators:

- martyr teacher: someone who can stay humble in the minority struggle of Christians, which testifies to his faith;
- schoolmaster teacher: someone who constantly cultivates himself, and does everything for the maintenance of the Reformed school or college;
- school-building teacher: God's chosen one, who as a prophet acts in a quiet, modest way, and whose life is characterized by prayer and the reading of the Bible.²⁰ They can be recognized not by their work methods but by their way of life.

Reformed conviction must be reflected in the behaviour of the educators, i.e., that everyone is a sinner before God. This concept prevents the educator from thinking of him- or herself as more valuable or better than others. Concerning the hierarchy of educators, Karácsony puts teachers in a separate category, since they have the most difficult task. In the case of Reformed educators, he also emphasizes continuous self-reflection in order to reach a self image which is, based on the message of the Bible. Primarily, we do not have to meet external expectations but first and foremost Jesus Christ. Self-education has to become a purposeful, systematic self-cultivation in order for Reformed schools and educators to regain their old esteem and social honour.

¹⁷ KARÁCSONY S.: *A magyar észjárás*. 1985. 185.p. and LÁNYI G.: *Magyarság, protestantizmus, társaslélektan*. 2000.

¹⁸ KÁLVIN J.: *Tanítás a keresztyénvallásra*. 1986. 234.p.

¹⁹ BOGNÁRNÉ KOCSIS J.: *The Teaching and Educational Traditions of The Reformed Church*. 2016. 67-76.p.

²⁰ BOGNÁRNÉ KOCSIS J.: *Karácsony Sándor ideális pedagógusképe, nézete a pedagógusképzésről, a pedagógus pályáról*, 2009. 167-175.p.

Sándor Karácsony admits that it is not easy to be a Reformed educator, although it is the most beautiful task. Often pedagogues think of themselves as perfect and smart, and they forget about their Reformed identity (or at least neglect it). Still, he is hopeful, and believes that at least in Reformed schools, the situation is better or can be improved.

According to Karácsony, the religionless pedagogue cannot be successful, because on the one hand he cannot draw strength from anywhere and on the other, the social psychological preconditions are missing, i.e., the ability to the will to serve the other person, a willingness to relate, and the individual development and formation with the help of self-education and self-examination. The teacher's resources are love and joyful humility, which naturally serve as the basis for the relationship with the students.

7. Summary

Sándor Karácsony's biblical conviction permeated all his writings and activities, although he never referred to any Bible verses, theologians, or movements. It is reflected in his Reformed approach to work that he educated through (also) his personality, and he looked at those in contact with him as whole people. By his exemplary life he demonstrated that in addition to accepting the other person one must know the individual's theoretical and practical ideas about leading his or her life. It also has to be taken into account that a person/an individual has to adapt to external conditions and relations (society, work place, family) on the one hand, and to the expectations of his or her own inner life and nature on the other.

Sándor Karácsony's activities demonstrated that 'to be' means to be in a good and healthy relationship with the other person, God, and ourselves. If a person is in full harmony with him- or herself, then it will have a positive impact on his/her relationships with his/her neighbours and on his/her relationship with God as well.

As an education science specialist, Karácsony applied his concept of social relations in the world of pedagogy; he showed how to connect with fellow human beings effectively and successfully, how to create smaller and larger communities, and how to educate people to do so. In his concept it is apparent that neither the children's nor the adults' inner world can be understood without their social relationships. As a deeply religious Reformed person, he does not leave out religious attitude from this relation, but it is the attitude itself that counts, and the traits that are required of a religious inner behaviour (e.g., compassion, selflessness, empathy, understanding).

According to Karácsony's statement, there is no Reformed or Catholic science, but there is a difference between the scientific approaches of scientists with different religious backgrounds, since their views, standpoints and guidelines reflect their scientific way of thinking. In this sense it can be stated that Sándor Karácsony's Reformed

conviction is emphatically present in his philosophy, and his life work is unique and complex. The word 'Reformed' means that even in changed circumstances one needs to return to God's Word.²¹ It can be said of Sándor Karácsony and his work that he was a real Reformed believer, since he always kept the teaching of Jesus Christ before him. His concept and activities show how the Protestant principles can be put into practice. In his life he sought to set an example for his students, and to bear witness to his Reformed faith.

Sándor Karácsony was an active community man, who made a great impact mainly on his circle of disciples, but also on the people he came into contact with. As a result, many associations, institutions and workshops consider it important in our days to pass on Sándor Karácsony's spiritual heritage, among whose founders we can find of course the former students, the members of his Bible study group, who – by putting together their modest means – have established Exodus Publishing House for the publication of Sándor Karácsony's works.

Calvinist faith, education and psychology, based on Sándor Karácsony's life example and concept, form an organic unity, a complete whole, which opens up an exceptionally attractive, harmonic perspective in the area of treating people and establishing contact with them.

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²¹ BUSCH, E.: *Református. Egy felekezeti arculata*. 2008. 13.p.

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