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Melinda Bogdán

Review of the 2011/12 yearbook of the Greek Catholic Gypsy Student College

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The yearbook of the Greek Catholic Student College provides an account of the results of the first year since its foundation, the historical background, and the functioning of the institution. The first chapter of the yearbook has the title "It has begun." At this point, it becomes evident that the college has been "Created" through Catholic ideologies, and the importance of human beings is a central issue for this educational establishment. As László Makkai, the director of the College has highlighted in the introduction of the yearbook, divine contribution and humanitarian love played a major role here. As for the historical background, there were several conferences prior to the foundation of the student college. After the exchange of experiences, the church leaders decided that the social improvement of the Gypsy community is a missionary assignment, and it requires a long-term solution. After long discussions, it was decided that talent nurturing and disadvantage compensation should go hand in hand. Following discussions, the representatives of four historical churches signed the agreement: the leaders of the Greek Catholic, Hungarian Calvinist, Hungarian Lutheran, and Catholic Church signed the memorandum of understanding, which was submitted to the Hungarian government. All four of these churches represented the same vision that the student college is to be established on the basis of spirituality, general education, culture, and language learning. As the yearbook highlights, all the colleges are also open to similarly minded non-Gypsies, and this attitude turns out to have beneficial consequences, as seen after the admission of new members. Just as the other above-mentioned student colleges, the Greek Catholic Gypsy Student College offers complex services to students. Besides the numerous important programs, I would like to highlight those that constitute the basis of this college system:

- Cultural module: Education of identity, culture, and ethnography.
- Spiritual module: The aim is to deepen spirituality and to acquire basic theological knowledge.
- General educational module: In addition to many practical programs (e.g., community organization, tender writing, management of administration), there are and self-awareness programs as well.

In the framework of these modules, there is an ethical mentality instruction coordinated by a psychologist once a week, based on biblical foundations. In addition, once a month there are interactive sessions that deal with social issues. Moreover, every half a year students have the opportunity to try voluntary work in order to strengthen their