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**The External History of a Non-Traditional School:
The Case of the Reformed Lyceum of Velyki Berehy (1992–2025)**

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Abstract. *This study aims to present the external history of the Reformed Lyceum of Velyki Berehy, a non-traditional school founded three decades ago, which serves as a compelling example of the strength of civil society emerging from under Soviet restrictions. The article traces the development of the Lyceum from its inception in 1992 through the end of the 2024/25 academic year. The research explores the circumstances and processes of the institution's foundation, identifies key contributors, and examines their roles in the establishment of the school. Furthermore, the study follows the protracted process of the institution's legal recognition, the stages of infrastructural development, and its academic specialization.* **Methodology.** *The research methodology combines general scientific approaches with specific historical methods. Given the limited prior study of this topic and the formulated objectives, primary sources were sought. These included not only contemporary documents but also personal recollections of those involved*

and reports published in the press of the time. **Results and Conclusions.** The historical investigation reveals the considerable challenges involved in launching a new type of school – specifically a denominational institution – in a rural area during the early years of Ukrainian state-building, a period marked by economic hardship following the collapse of the Soviet Union. The study traces the lengthy process through which the local educational authorities eventually accepted the initiative and granted the necessary operating license. It also details the administrative framework developed to provide boarding for students, as well as the changes in the number and use of properties associated with the Lyceum. Additionally, the research outlines how and why the institution evolved into a seven-grade lyceum. The bold initiative that gave rise to a now-successful educational institution illustrates the intersection of faith and knowledge, tradition and innovation. Such an undertaking was only possible in a post-Soviet environment, reflecting the vitality of civil initiatives in the years of independent Ukraine.

Keywords: denominational school, institutional history, non-traditional school, Reformed Church, Velyki Berehy.

**Зовнішня історія однієї школи нетрадиційного типу:
Приклад Великоберезького реформатського ліцею (1992–2025 рр.)**

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Анотація. Мета статті – розкрити зовнішню історію школи нетрадиційного типу (Ліцею з гуманітарним і природничим профілем села Великі Береги), заснованої три десятиліття тому, що є чудовою

демонстрацією сили громадянського суспільства, яке визволилося з радянських кайданів. У публікації простежено історію ліцею від виникнення ініціативи про створення закладу в 1992 році до завершення 2024–2025 навчального року. Дослідження спрямоване як на розкриття передумов заснування освітнього закладу, реалізації задуму, так і на виявлення залучених до цього осіб, з'ясування їх ролі у процесі. Крім цього, було поставлено завдання простежити непростий період набуття освітнім закладом статусу юридичної особи, розкрити етапи інфраструктурного розвитку та формування профілів навчання. **Методологія дослідження** ґрунтується на поєднанні загальнонаукових та спеціально-історичних методів. Зважаючи на невивченість теми та сформульовані завдання, здійснено пошук первинних джерел, що означає використання не тільки тогочасних документів, а й спогадів учасників подій та публікацій у пресі тих років. **Результати і висновки.** У ході дослідження було з'ясовано, наскільки непросто було після розпаду Радянського Союзу в період розбудови української державності, що супроводжувався важкою економічною ситуацією, запустити новий тип навчального закладу, який не мав історичних традицій у регіоні – конфесійну школу. Послідовно простежено довгий процес, поки місцева система управління освіти прийняла ініціативу і надала дозвіл на діяльність освітнього закладу нового типу. Розкрито і те, як розбудовувалася система управління школою, враховуючи проживання учнів у гуртожитку, як змінювалася кількість об'єктів нерухомості, що належали ліцею, та їх використання. Зрештою, з'ясовано і ті фактори, коли й чому заклад став семикласним ліцеєм. Ця смілива діяльність, яка з нічого створила тепер уже успішний заклад загальної середньої освіти, добре ілюструє поєднання віри та науки, традицій та інновацій. Усе це могло виникнути тільки в середовищі, вільному від радянських пут, яке в роки незалежної України засвідчило життєздатність відновлених громадянських ініціатив.

Ключові слова: Великі Береги, історія закладу, конфесійна школа, нетрадиційний тип школи, Реформатська церква.

Problem Statement. The central issue addressed in this study lies in the fact that the object of our research – the history of the Reformed Lyceum of Velyki Berehy – has not yet been explored from a scholarly perspective. This is despite the fact that a non-traditional type of educational institution was established just over 30 years ago, one that was entirely unprecedented in the region, even prior to the Soviet era. There has never been a secondary school maintained by the Reformed (Calvinist) Church in Transcarpathia; even before 1944, the Reformed Church only operated elementary-level schools. The founding of this new type of school is closely linked to the local Reformed community and the Reformed Church District of Transcarpathia, which began operating in 1993 following Ukraine's independence. In this year (2025), the institution celebrated the graduation of its 30th class [1].

Analysis of Recent Research and Publications. With regard to the object of this study – namely institutional history and non-traditional forms of schooling – there are no genuinely relevant scholarly precedents within Ukrainian historiography. However, in the broader field of educational studies, important domestic contributions have emerged in recent years that address the phenomenon of non-traditional or alternative forms of education. Among these is the monograph by O. Zabolotna, which is dedicated to the theory and practice of alternative education for school-aged children and youth in EU countries. This work includes a comparative analysis of the state and prospects of alternative education development in the European Union, with detailed discussions of Waldorf, Montessori, and so-called “free schools” [2].

While alternative schools do exist in Ukraine, they typically aim to adopt Western European educational philosophies. Zabolotna's monograph provides

insights into this process. Additionally, V. Palkush has conducted research on alternative education institutions in the United States, showcasing a wide range of implementations of non-traditional school types [3]. A collective monograph edited by O. I. Lokshyna examines the transformations in education across the EU, USA, and China. The authors define “trend” both as a scientific category in pedagogical comparative studies and as a phenomenon shaping modern educational development. The work also highlights the strategic orientations of international organizations in the context of globalization and Europeanization, and it identifies key trends in the evolution of school education in countries such as Germany, Poland, the UK, the USA, and China – all framed within the broader reform of general secondary education in Ukraine [4].

From a historiographical standpoint, only three shorter publications have addressed this topic to date. The earliest is a case study by Ildikó Orosz, titled “*A Kárpátaljai Református Gimnáziumok*” (Reformed Gymnasiums in Transcarpathia) [5], which remains available only in manuscript form. The next relevant work appeared in 2003 in the form of a longer article by Eleonóra Molnár, “*Egyházi tehetséggondozás Kárpátalján. A kárpátaljai református líceumok története*” (Church-based Talent Development in Transcarpathia. The History of Reformed Lyceums in Transcarpathia) [6]. This was the first attempt to chronologically organize the key events surrounding the foundation of the four Reformed lyceums in the region. Finally, in 2019, Ágnes Túri published a more extensive empirical research article titled “*A Nagyberegi Református Líceum oktató-nevelői tevékenysége*” (The Educational and Pedagogical Work of the Reformed Lyceum of Velyki Berehy), offering an in-depth analysis of the institution’s educational structures, chronological development, and pedagogical processes [7]. An abridged version of this latter practical work was published in 2024 by Ágnes Túri, which specifically presents the teaching of catechesis based on theoretical and questionnaire surveys [8].

Identification of Previously Unaddressed Aspects of the General Problem.

The key scholarly works mentioned in the first part of our overview primarily examine educational models and pedagogical methods. Notably, they do not address denominational schools – neither as a form of alternative education nor through a chronological historical lens. These studies approach the subject from general didactic and pedagogical perspectives and position their research object within a global context. Similarly, the shorter case studies and articles mentioned in the second section focus predominantly on educational and pedagogical methods. In contrast, our article examines the process through which a particular type of school – founded at the initiative of a specific religious denomination (in this case, the Reformed/Calvinist community) – became established. This school model integrates denominational values and educational goals with the basic expectations of state education. We therefore argue that this article fills a significant gap in Ukrainian historiography and that its scholarly contribution lies precisely in this innovation.

Sources of the Article. The sources available for this research are relatively limited in scope and type. The primary source base comprises the minutes of the Synod Council of the Transcarpathian Reformed Church (TRC), as well as documents and records held in the Archives and Museum of the TRC. From the latter, congregational minutes were used; however, these are only available up to the late 1970s. At the TRC Episcopal Office, synodical minutes are preserved only from 1995 onwards, and even these are incomplete. No records of synod meetings held before 1995 have been found in any institutional repository. According to interviewees in Ágnes Túri's oral history research on the founding of the lyceum, this absence is due to the fact that, in many cases, the decisions of the church's leadership were never recorded in writing. Agreements were often made orally, or relevant documents remained in private hands [9, p. 165]. As a result, even records from the founding year of the Reformed Lyceum of Velyki Berehy (1993) are missing. However, later records do include references to the institution.

We also used local press as a tertiary source, such as the weekly newspaper *Kárpátalja* published by the Cultural Alliance of Hungarians in Sub-Carpathia (CAHSC) during this period; the *Kárpátaljai Szemle*, another CAHSC monthly; as well as the Hungarian Reformed Church's weekly newspaper *Reformátusok Lapja*, published every Sunday. These periodicals regularly reported on events and developments related to the lyceum. Additionally, we consulted *Beregi Hírlap*, the official newspaper of the Berehove district administration, which published photo-reports and articles about the school, as well as the public affairs magazine *Kárpáti Igaz Szó*.

Formulation of the article's objectives (setting the task). In our study, we sought to explore the external history of the Reformed Lyceum in Nagybereg in chronological order, covering the period between 1992 and 2025. For this reason, among other things, we sought answers to the following questions during our research:

1. What were the antecedents of the founding process of this non-traditional type of school?
2. Who were the individuals and organizations that initiated, contributed to, and directly participated in the founding of the lyceum?
3. How and when did the educational institution become a legal entity?
4. What infrastructure did it start operating in, and how did its spatial location change?
5. What educational principles were formulated at the time of its founding, and in which segment of education is the non-traditional nature of the denominational school reflected?
6. What is the current infrastructure and student enrollment of the lyceum?

The aim of my methodological approach is to present the history of the Reformed Lyceum in Nagybereg from its foundation until the end of the 2024/25 academic year in a comprehensive and wide-ranging manner, from a historical

perspective and in chronological order. For this reason, we have carried out work based on a combination of general scientific and specific historical methods. Due to the lack of research on the subject and the tasks set, we set ourselves the goal of exploring primary sources, which included not only documents from the time of the lyceum's foundation (license document, school regulations, etc.), but also the recollections of former participants and the current school principal, as well as news reports and case studies published in the press at the time.

Presentation of the Core Material. In the second half of the 1980s, as the former Soviet Union experienced a culmination of social, economic, and cultural crises along with a deepening legitimacy crisis of state power, a process of revitalization also began within the traditional churches of the countryside. Church attendance increased significantly, and the ecclesiastical leadership sought to use its growing social influence to restore elements of its former institutional network. One such area was the expressed desire – also evident in –for the denominational (specifically, Reformed) education of the younger generation [10, p. 2]. This goal first became attainable in 1991, when, with the support of Hungary's Ministry of Culture and Public Education (HMCPE), an initiative was launched to create a Transcarpathian class within the Ady Endre Secondary School in Csenger, Hungary. Eventually, 30 students were admitted to this so-called "Transcarpathian Reformed Class" in Csenger (town is Hungary).

The Initial Steps Toward Founding the Institution. Significant progress toward establishing a Reformed school on native soil became possible only in the second year of Ukraine's independence. On September 10, 1992, six stakeholders – the CAHSC, the HMCPE, the TRC, the Transcarpathian Hungarian Pedagogical Association (THPA), the Transtibiscan Reformed Church District, and the Ady Endre Secondary School in Csenger – signed an agreement allowing for the creation of a Reformed school/class in Transcarpathia starting from the 1993/94 academic year [11, p.10]. Following this agreement, negotiations began with Ukrainian state

authorities, alongside the preparation of the necessary official documentation. However, due to time constraints and appeals to legal ambiguities, a solution was reached only through Resolution No. 20, issued on July 18 by the Berehove District Council of People's Deputies of the Transcarpathian Oblast. Based on the decision and request of the TRC Synod dated June 7, 1993, the resolution authorized the launch of a 21-student Hungarian-language Reformed class within (and under the framework of) the existing Secondary School of Velyki Berehy. The resolution stipulated that if the initiators could ensure adequate material, technical, and intellectual conditions, the class might eventually develop into an independent institution [12, p. 18].

Key Actors and the Launch of Educational Activities. Key roles in handling the administrative and organizational affairs were played by István Tüski (representing EDUCA Transfer International (ETI), then a pastor in the Netherlands) [13, p. 168], Lajos Gulácsy (then General Notary of the TRC), László Horkay (then Dean of the Ung District of the TRC), Pál Oroszi (pastor), Dániel Szabó (then Chief Elder of the Reformed Church District of the Transibiscan), and Tivadar Bacskó (then educational inspector at the Berehove District Department of Education). The organization and coordination of teaching activities were overseen by Anna Szabó, a pedagogue of Transylvanian origin. After entrance examinations held in the summer of 1993, the school partially adopted curricula prepared by Ildikó Orosz (then head of the Velika Dobrony Secondary School) and several of its teachers. These curricula combined elements of the 10th–11th grades of Ukrainian secondary education with the content of Hungarian four-year secondary schools (gymnasium) [14, p. 22]. Initially, the program extended the length of schooling compared to the Ukrainian system, resulting in a 12-year education cycle (9+3), meaning students graduated at the age of 18. At the time of obtaining the launch permit, what was achieved in effect was the authorization to open a specialized class, rather than a fully independent institution.

Commencement of Educational Activities. Teaching officially began in September 1993 in the building of the Velyki Berehy Secondary School, with an initial group of 21 students enrolled in a newly established special class named “10.C” [15, p. 2]. Among the founders, this class was informally referred to as the “Reformed Gymnasium of Velyki Berehy” [16, p. 5]. During the first year, a classroom within the local secondary school was made available for the Reformed lyceum class, and teaching was carried out by both the faculty of the Velyki Berehy Secondary School and pastors of the TRC [17].

Even before the start of the school year, negotiations began with the Velyki Berehy Village Council concerning the transfer of a suitable building for educational purposes. After prolonged discussions, the council agreed to transfer a historical building – originally constructed as a Reformed elementary school (folk school) and located in the village center – to the TRC for future use as the institution’s home. These negotiations were facilitated by ETI [18, p. 11]. At the beginning of the first academic year, students were accommodated by local host families, thanks to the hospitality of pastor János Szántó and the Reformed congregation of Velyki Berehy. On November 7, 1993, the students were partially able to move into the newly designated school building, initially granted the use of five rooms. These were repurposed to function as a staff room, boys’ and girls’ dormitories, a study room, and a dining hall. However, all educational activities and classes continued to take place in the village’s secondary school building until the end of the first academic year.

The initial financial foundation for the institution was provided by ETI, supported by UNI, a Dutch organization dedicated to Christian education in Hungary and across the Carpathian Basin [19]. The Christian Reformed World Missions (CRWM) from the United States also joined the initiative [20]. In addition, members of the Ridderkerk Reformed congregation in the Netherlands offered regular

material support in the form of canned food supplies, delivered three to four times annually.

The furnishing of classrooms and dormitories was coordinated by István Tüski [21, p. 24]. At the time, the lyceum also received support from the Hungarian state. Further assistance came from the Tabita International Christian Aid Organization. The institution's maintainers were the Transcarpathian Reformed Church and the Reformed Congregation of Velyki Berehy.

The Central Building of the Lyceum. The dormitory partially occupied in November 1993 was, in fact, the former building of the Reformed denominational elementary school (folk school). Located in the very heart of the settlement, this more than century-old structure remains an impressive feature of the local landscape and an important witness to the educational and architectural history of the region. Recent historical research has reaffirmed that the original school building was erected through the initiative and financial contribution of the village's *civic community* itself, rather than by the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the First Czechoslovak Republic, or the Reformed Church.

The municipal council of the period, chaired by Judge Károly Kopor, purchased in the spring of 1906 a plot of land opposite the market square, from Albert Bába, a resident of Velyki Berehy. This site was chosen for the construction of a new school [22]. In the autumn of 1907, the council announced a public tender for the construction of both a school and a kindergarten, with a budget of 60,729 crowns [23, p. 5]. The contract was awarded to Samu Méhes, a construction entrepreneur from Berehove (at that time: Beregszász), and his associate. The building work progressed efficiently, and by the end of July 1908 the contractors had completed the main structure. Carpentry and interior works began on 6 August [24, p. 57]. The new facility contained six classrooms and housed both the municipal kindergarten and residential quarters for one teacher and one kindergarten instructor [25, p. 320]. Later, a headmaster's residence was added to one of the wings [26, p.

379]. The completed building was formally handed over by the municipality to the Reformed Church on 15 November 1908, under perpetual usufruct rights – “for as long as it is used for educational purposes” – in the presence of representatives of both the civil and ecclesiastical authorities. Contemporary reports described it as “a distinguished building – unique within the church district – comprising six classrooms, a teacher’s apartment, a spacious corridor, and several smaller rooms, including a meeting room and a caretaker’s flat” [27, p. 3]. This arrangement created a somewhat unusual situation: although the school remained the property of the municipality and was largely financed by civic funds, it operated as a Reformed denominational institution. A handwritten note on the inside cover of an attendance register from the 1908/1909 school year states: “We moved into the new school on January 16, 1909. The winter Canonical Visitation took place on January 25, 1909” [28, p. 5].

After the establishment of Soviet rule in the autumn of 1944, the building formally remained under the ownership of the Velyki Berehy Village Council, but it was repurposed to house a state school. Initially operating as a seven-grade elementary school, it was reorganized into a ten-grade secondary school in September 1953 and continued to function in this capacity until 1979. When the local collective farm completed the construction of a new two-storey school building that year, teaching activities in the old premises ceased. Between 1979 and 1993, the building served as the Cultural and Ideological Center. The institution included a wedding hall, an ethnographic museum, a weaving exhibition, a substantial art gallery containing 124 works, a café, a billiard room, a library, and a multipurpose hall used for social events and discotheques.

When the Lyceum received the building in 1993, it was once again put to use for Reformed educational purposes – exactly as had been stipulated by the original builders nearly a century earlier. The only difference was that ownership of the property had now passed to the Church itself. In the spring of 1994, with financial

support from the Netherlands, the institution purchased the house of Gizella Nagy, located opposite the former elementary school. By the end of that summer, the building had been converted into a kitchen and dining hall, which subsequently served as the Lyceum's canteen.

The 1994/1995 academic year began in the Lyceum's own building, following the partial renovation of the former elementary school. The Velyki Berehy Village Council granted the Lyceum additional rooms within the structure; in return, the TRC District undertook to construct a new community cultural center for the village. This new facility was completed in 1996 and was built behind the so-called village club.

Becoming an independent legal entity and the school's unique characteristics. Although the Lyceum had moved out of the Velyki Berehy Secondary School, it did not yet possess independent legal status. Even at the time of the first graduating class in 1995, it was not officially recognized as an autonomous educational institution, as the district authorities in Berehove refused to grant the necessary status despite the available legal provisions. It was at this stage that Ildikó Orosz, president of the THPA, became involved in the legal process of institutional establishment [29, p. 16]. In the same year, the TRC invited mathematics teacher Lajos Szilágyi, a native of Muzhiyev, to assume the position of director and to prepare, in accordance with Ukrainian educational regulations, the documentation required for the school's formal independence. In September 1995, the Lyceum obtained its official operating license, and by September 1996 it achieved accreditation under the name Velyki Berehy Reformed Lyceum [30, p. 11]. Initially, the institution adopted a humanities-oriented academic profile, focusing on advanced instruction in the native language and literature, English and German languages, and history. From 1995 onward, however, the introduction of personal computers allowed the school to place special emphasis on computer science education as well. In 1996, the institution graduated its first class of 19 students. The

end-of-year concert was performed by the 46-member Grand Rapids Brass Band of Calvin University of Michigan (USA), strengthening the denominational connection [31, p. 4].

Beyond material difficulties, limited space, and a shortage of dedicated denominational teachers, the establishment of the institution was further complicated by the Ukrainian legal framework, which at the time did not recognize the category of denominational schools. To obtain accreditation and official authorization, the Lyceum was therefore registered in 1996 as a communal school, meaning it was supported by multiple maintaining bodies. Later changes in Ukrainian educational legislation made a re-licensing procedure necessary, and in 2012 the Transcarpathian Regional State Administration's Department of Education re-registered the institution as the Velyki Berehy Lyceum of Humanities and Natural Sciences [32], granting it the status of a private school [33].

Research conducted by Ágnes Túri revealed that the element of catechetical education represents the core instrument of denominational pedagogy within the Lyceum's educational program [34, p. 28]. It plays a crucial role in deepening the relationships between students and teachers, creating a family-like atmosphere, and fostering one of the Lyceum's primary goals: the education of individuals with a healthy sense of self and national identity. In addition to regular annual events, the school organizes a wide range of extracurricular activities, including group singing, youth Bible study sessions (held separately for boys and girls), prayer meetings, and special Bible classes for those students who openly profess their commitment to faith. Other regular activities include a film club, the preparation of wall newspapers, and the creation of a prayer calendar.

The same research has also demonstrated the positive impact of the students' outreach visits to Reformed congregations. During these visits, students introduce the life and work of the Lyceum to local communities and express gratitude for their food and other donations. Each year, under the coordination of church leadership,

food collection campaigns are organized across the region to support the Lyceum. These visits not only help strengthen the relationship between the institution and the congregations but also contribute to the personal and spiritual development of the students [35, p. 29].

Spatial and Structural Transformations of the School. With the completion of the new cultural center in 1996, ownership of the former Reformed elementary school building was fully transferred to the TRC District, in accordance with the agreement between the Velyki Berehy Village Council and the TRC. The growing number of students soon made it necessary to acquire additional buildings. One such property was located at 48 II. Rákóczi Ferenc Street, which was initially converted into a boys' and later a girls' dormitory. However, as it could no longer accommodate the expanding student population, the building was eventually sold. For similar reasons related to the rising number of students, the TRC purchased another property – a family house at 147 Gázla Street – which functioned for one year as a girls' and later as a boys' dormitory. Today this building serves as staff housing for teachers [36].

The largest infrastructure expansion was necessitated by the fact that, at the beginning of 2008, the Nagyberég Municipal Council reclaimed the building that had been rented by the Lyceum, which had been used as its kitchen and cafeteria [37, p. 28]. The lease agreement with the local government was valid until 2011, so a solution had to be found to the pressing issue of lack of space by then. Finally, in 2009, Reformed congregations, private individuals, former graduates of the institution, foreign Reformed churches and congregations [38, p. 4], and the Hungarian government rushed to the aid of the institution. Although the project initially only involved the construction of a dormitory for students, the plans were later expanded [39, p. 5]. The cornerstone for the new wing was laid on June 12, 2009 [40, p. 35]. The large-scale construction project was completed in 2014, resulting in a unified educational complex occupying a single, contiguous site. The

classrooms of the original denominational school were now used exclusively for teaching purposes, and the Lyceum's library was also housed there. The newly constructed wing accommodated a gymnasium, kitchen, dining hall, and dormitory. The entire complex was formally inaugurated on August 23, 2014 [41, p. 3].

The first major change in the institutional structure occurred as a result of the 2011 presidential decree of Ukraine, which abolished the twelve-year system of general education. Consequently, at the end of the 2011/2012 academic year, the Lyceum had two graduating classes – the 11th and 12th grades. In response, in 2013 the school's leadership decided to expand enrollment by admitting students who had completed the seventh grade, while still maintaining the two-year upper secondary program. Thus, beginning with the 2013/2014 academic year, students who had finished both the seventh and eighth grades were eligible to apply, and instruction was organized for the 8th through 11th grades. The rapid increase in student numbers soon revealed the institution's infrastructural shortcomings – specifically, the dispersed locations of its properties, dormitories, kitchen, and canteen, as well as the absence of a gymnasium. A decision was therefore made to consolidate the various facilities into a single campus centered around the main educational building [42]. This much-needed expansion was launched with financial support from Hungary through grant-based programs.

A further significant structural change occurred in response to another state-level reform: the new Ukrainian Law on Education adopted in 2017. For the Hungarian community of Transcarpathia, this law threatened the long-standing tradition of native-language education that had been in place for more than seventy years. As a result, beginning in 2020, the Lyceum also began enrolling students who had completed elementary education. Today, the Velyki Berehy Reformed Lyceum functions as a seven-year institution, educating students between the ages of ten and seventeen.

Conclusions and Future Perspectives. The historical investigation has vividly demonstrated how difficult and complex it was to establish a new type of school – a denominational institution without pre-existing legal or organizational traditions – under the challenging economic conditions that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union. A chronological overview of the Lyceum’s integration into the local educational system clearly illustrates the determination, perseverance, and moral strength required of its founders to obtain official authorization for its operation. It also became evident that, during the first decade of its existence, infrastructural expansion was achieved exclusively through the purchase and adaptation of existing properties. This practice gradually reached its limits in the 2000s, as the steadily increasing number of students and the dispersion of dormitory facilities made the institution’s operation increasingly fragmented. By the early 2010s, the founders resolved to create a unified school complex, which led to the establishment of the current campus. The historical reconstruction of the Lyceum’s development also reveals the rationale behind its transformation into a seven-grade institution. The courageous initiative that gave rise to a now successful educational establishment from virtually nothing exemplifies the close interconnection between faith and knowledge, as well as between tradition and innovation. All of this could only have emerged in a post-Soviet context – an environment free from ideological constraints – reflecting the vitality of renewed civic initiatives in the years of independent Ukraine.

This study has sought to present the historical dimensions of the topic. Nevertheless, considerable research potential remains in the pedagogical, psychological, and methodological examination of the Lyceum’s teaching and educational activities over the past three decades – an undertaking that awaits the attention of a dedicated specialist.

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