

EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN MAGYARKANIZSA DURING THE DUALIST ERA

SÁNDOR FEJŐS

ABSTRACT

After the establishment of the Austro–Hungarian Empire (1867), during the dualist period, was when Magyarakanizsa was closest to the oft mentioned Western Europe. A significant portion of its administrative, educational, religious and economic institutions were founded during this time. Apart from the rapid economic development the self-aware middle-class was also gaining strength. The desire for quality entertainment and community culture also grew which the Délvidék’s (Southern Region) townships sought to satisfy.

The turn of the century can be considered the golden age of civil organizations. Belonging to a civil organization as a sign of middle class poise and serious societal rank is characteristic of this period. The most active organizations’ pre-WWI (First Magyarakanizsa Table, Lords’ Casino, The Ó-Kanizsa Volunteer Firefighters’ Society and the Jewish Women’s Society, the Magyarakanizsa Youth Society for Community Culture, etc.) function, work, community forming power and effect on local cultural life are discussed by the author.

There were two important periodicals during the dualist era in Magyarakanizsa the Kanizsai Újság (Kanizsa Newspaper, 1908–1915) and the Kanizsai Ellenőr (Kanizsa Inspector) from 1911. The subjects covered by the aforementioned media faithfully represent the most important scenes of local social, economic and cultural life during the period.

With all its contradictions, the Dualist era can be considered one of the most prosperous periods in the history of Magyararkanizsa.¹ Following the Austro–Hungarian Compromise (1867) Magyararkanizsa’s economy experienced an upswing.² In 1870 the municipality purchased its pastures and public spaces from the state in a compensation treaty. Renting out the lands bought from the crown meant a significant source of income for Ó-Kanizsa due to the ever-increasing numbers of livestock. With the upswing in agriculture began not only the allocation of land for pastures, but within the framework of water regulation flood control works began as well. Flood control (draining of fields, building embankments) were carried out under the supervision of the Tisza Regulation Association of Bács.³ Article XVIII of the 1871 Act establishes the administrative and organizational framework for the municipality.⁴ In accordance with the municipality act, Ó-Kanizsa qualified as a large-municipality and could elect leaders: judges, notaries, public trustees, treasurers, doctors. The law, documenting significant advances in administration, provided interoperability between the different municipality types, due to the fact that the decision fell solely under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Internal Affairs. The status of a *town with an organized council* could only be modified to *legislative authority* by passing a law.⁵ After changing its name from Ó-Kanizsa to Magyararkanizsa in 1904, the municipality took this opportunity and achieved the status of “*city with organized council*”⁶ in 1908. Since the principal of municipal virilism applied, the majority of the members of the Representative Body were from among the well-to-do farmers who owned the rich fields of Bácska (Mátyás János Dukai, József Tóth Jr. etc.), wealthy businessmen of incorporated companies (Herman Grünfeld, József Milkó, etc.), and to a smaller extent tradesmen, merchants as well as the city’s intellectuals who held administrative power. Due to the process of urbanization a large number of the municipality’s administrative, educational, religious institutions, the hospital (1886), the school (1901), the new town hall (1911/12) and the Szent Pál Church (1912/13) were established during this period.

Apart from agriculture being dominant, the development of industry and commerce also accelerated starting with the 1880s. At the turn of the century, besides a relatively advanced milling industry and construction industry, small scale processing industry played the most important role in the city’s economy. Of the factories employing mass work forces (80-150), only the First Brick and Tile Factory of Magyararkanizsa Inc. (1903) and the Vilmos Milkó and Sons’ First Steam Saw and Steam Mill Inc. (1909) are worth mentioning.⁷ Commerce was practically limited to the grain and livestock trade, despite this fact a colonial products shop and a hardware shop also operated in Magyararkanizsa. Modernization of transport and infrastructure was urgently needed, the steam-boat station built in 1872, the pontoon-bridge erected in 1886, railway transit implemented in 1889 all foresaw economic advancement. Credit institutes meant financial stability.⁸ The Savings Bank of Ó- and Törökkanizsa Inc., registered

in 1869, was the first legally operating financial institution, but the Ó-Kanizsa Mutual Cooperative, established in 1884 and the Christian People's Bank, founded in 1903 also reinforced this tendency aiding the quicker transmission of cash-flow.

The population of Magyarkanizsa, on the track of capitalization with a rising middle class, grew in numbers decade by decade: in 1880: 13 689 citizens⁹ resided in the town, in 1900: 16 532¹⁰ and in 1911: 16 899¹¹. The growth was slowed mainly by the emigration of migrant construction workers (kubikus). When we examine the religious and ethnic circumstances we can determine that during the period of Dualism, the population of Magyarkanizsa was over 90% Hungarian in ethnicity and of the Roman Catholic faith, while the Orthodox Christian Serbian nationals represented 5% of the population. It is interesting to note that their numbers decreased constantly (in 1857 there were 741 Serbian nationals, while in 1900 only 308)¹² over time, this tendency is in correlation with Hungarianization and emigration.

Most of the Magyarkanizsa population worked in agriculture in the Dualist era (95%) as well. It is characteristic of this period that only a small number of large landowners owned several hundred or possibly several thousand acres of land. The majority of landowners were small farmers, out of 5308 farmers 3866 owned less than 3.5 acres.¹³ In contrast with other North-Bácska townships, Ó-Kanizsa did not distribute significant amounts of land (15266 acres) among landowners, but left it instead to be managed by the town. Letting pastures became a major source of income, which could be used as a resource for developing administration, public health, education, etc.¹⁴ As a result of the economic changes, at the turn of the century, the number of tradesmen and merchants increased. Aside from the small scale processing industry, most people worked in construction, many of them became factory workers employed by large businesses. The intellectual strata (teachers, doctors, lawyers, government officials) played a large role in public life also due to Magyarkanizsa becoming a city with organized council. Besides the economic and social changes, modernization also took place in the areas of education and culture. The emerging middle class transformed the lifestyles of the different social classes. Among the factors of the middle class' lifestyle changes was that reading, going to the theater, social life, sports, bath-culture and spending leisure time in meaningful way all became fashionable. The main reason behind the advancement of education and culture is that the desire for higher culture had grown. On the other hand, during the implementation of the Dualist state's institutional system, the civil state strived to satisfy the ever-rising need for professional workers. In my study I will attempt to point out the most important elements of community cultural learning in this small, Southern Region (Délvidék) town during the Dualist period through the defining scenes of cultural life (education, civil society organizations, press and bath-culture), its advancement and gap-filling endeavors in certain segments.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

Minister of Religion and Public Education, József Eötvös' post-Compromise Public Education Act (Act 1868:38.) had a major effect on public education in Ó-Kanizsa as well. The implementation of general compulsory education, establishment of primary- and higher level people's school systems, providing the opportunity to attend state civil school, regulating the formation of school boards all meant the organization and modernization of the educational system.¹⁵ The liberal-minded act, allowing for denominational schools, merely made the founding of state and municipal schools possible. Consequently, the Public Education Act made it possible for local Serbian nationals and Jews to study in their mother tongue in church schools. Teachers' salaries were determined with no regard to religious faith.¹⁶ During Ágoston Trefort's term as minister, in accordance with the act pertaining to school authorities (Act 1876:28.), the system of school supervision was implemented, and besides the denominational people's schools, school boards were also organized.¹⁷ Among the supervisor's tasks was the oversight of municipal and church schools. In Ó-Kanizsa, based on the Representative Body's decision, the Catholic school board, made up of local chaplains and teachers, comprised 34 members, while the Serbian Orthodox and Jewish denominational school board had 7-7 members each.¹⁸ In 1879 it was made mandatory by law to teach the Hungarian language in all institutions of public education (Act 1879:18.), which modified the regulations pertaining to the operation of denominational schools somewhat.¹⁹ Between 1868 and 1886 the teaching staff in the town doubled in numbers.²⁰ However, for decades in Ó-Kanizsa education was limited to church schools and there were three unauthorized schools operating in the neighboring rural farming communities. 15% of children were not enrolled in any sort of educational institution.²¹

The turn of the century period was a milestone in the life of the municipality's educational institutions. This was when the third preschool was opened, the first having been formed in 1867. In 1893 the six-grade state elementary school for boys was founded where students could learn Latin and French languages.²² As a result of the upswing in industry and commerce, by 1897 there were four trade and commercial apprentice schools. As regards profession, most students chose to learn the trades of bricklayer, tailor, carpenter, miller, shoemaker or smith.²³ The most significant endeavor turned out to be the building and opening of the Lajos Haynald Girls' Institute. In 1890 Lajos Haynald, Cardinal Archbishop of Kalocsa donated a sum of 40 000 forints to the municipality going toward the building of a girls' school and a Catholic hospital.²⁴ Heated, recurring disputes lasting for years preceded the founding of the school. It became clear that to the municipal Representative Body and the city officials that the interest-bearing donated sum would not be enough to build the girls' institute and the public hospital. In 1895, council member,



*Image 1. Dr. Sándor Király,
First Mayor of Magyarakanizsa City
with Organized Council*



*Image 2. Mátyás Márton,
honorary prelate, provost*

Sándor Király (who would later become mayor) emphasized the need for a new institution of public education. Although his initiative was accepted by the Representative Body, this was not the end of the matter.²⁵ One year later Mátyás Márton, honorary prelate, provost, and deacon chaplain recommended that a new preschool be built. Dr. Gyula Roxer, a city physician opposed this due to its denominational nature, while Sándor Király advocated for another four-grade girls' school.²⁶ The year 1887 brought about the anticipated change, thanks to the organization of deacon chaplain Mátyás Márton and György Popovics, municipal judge, the decision was made that the proposition to build a modern girls' school suitable to the needs of the era would be accepted.²⁷ György Császka, who was Archbishop of Kalocsa at the time, donated an additional 10,000 forints to aid construction.²⁸ The modern, imposing building was consecrated on 9th of September, 1901.²⁹ A few days later the school was up and running and functioned as the most renowned girls' institute in the region during the latter part of the Dualist era. After the regime change it was nationalized and operates to this day as a primary school. During the period of Dualism plans of a high-school and a vocational secondary school of commerce were proposed several times, articles published in the local newspaper advocated for this matter.³⁰ However, the plans did not materialize (mostly due to a lack of funds), so secondary school students and students of commerce of the Tisza region would continue to pursue further education in the public institutions of Szeged, Szabadka, Zombor and Zenta.

THE LEVERS OF COMMUNITY CULTURE: CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

One of the implications of modern, middle class development was spending time in a meaningful way and the increase of forums for social interaction. With people being selective with how they spend their leisure time and the growing desire for higher cultural learning, the urban municipalities of the Southern Region sought to satisfy these needs. In this respect the Reform Era marked the initial period of the formation of civil society organizations. The “*Provisorium*” era after the defeat of the 1848/49 Revolution had a very negative effect on the function of civil society organizations. Along with the other cities of the Southern Region, Magyarkanizsa’s economy and social structure were seriously impacted by the Compromise. Churches were built, the People’s Bank opened, the Lords’ Casino and Haynald’s Girls’ Institute was built, a building that is used today as a primary school. It was not only the political situation and the swift economic growth that benefited the effective operation of community organizations, but also the entailing rise of the empowered middle class. During the time of the Austro–Hungarian Monarchy, high quality social life became commonplace.³¹ The main scenes of social interaction were the associations, civil organizations and clubs. In accordance with the 1868 Act on the subject of equal rights for nationalities (Act 1868:44.), citizens could, within the framework of the law, group into different societies and organizations.³² The languages of different scientific, economic and cultural organizations were determined by the founder. They could make rules, keep a house treasury and promote their culture and native language.³³ Government control was practically limited to a minimum.³⁴ As a result of the beneficial economic and social environment civil organizations sprang up like mushrooms.

The Ó-Kanizsa and later Magyarkanizsa organizations were formed almost without exception after the Compromise, primarily due to the influence of the larger cities’ civil society organizations (Zenta, Szabadka, Szeged). The records of the city and municipality council meetings and articles published in the local newspapers document the activities of 18 societies. The majority of the associations differentiate by religion (Jewish Women’s Society, Chevra Kadisa, Christian Women’s Society, Catholic People’s Circle), profession (Farmers’ Circle, Tradesmen’s and Citizens’ Choral Society, Young Men’s Economic Society) and nationality. The statutes of the Ó-Kanizsa Volunteer Firefighters’ Society, the First Magyarkanizsa Table and the Ó-Kanizsa Art Appreciation Association have all been preserved for posterity. The Ó-Kanizsa Volunteer Firefighters’ Society was formed in 1889. The reason for its establishment was mainly the spread of serious fire damage. The statute regulated the rights of the members and the tasks of the commanders, the officers and staff.³⁵ Anyone could join regardless of gender, as long as they were morally upright, at least 24 years of age and 150 centimeters or taller.³⁶ The volunteer firefighters

of Magyarkanizsa achieved world fame after winning first place at the 1911 world championship in Turin, Italy.³⁷ The members of the First Magyarkanizsa Table Club, formed in 1906, were mostly of the town's political and economic elite. They used most of the exemplary revenues from their charitable efforts to support disadvantaged children.³⁸ The most important sections of their statutes emphasized the spoken Hungarian language, community culture and the cultural conservation. Section 21 of the statutes, which forbids discussion of denominational and nationality matters within the society, exemplifies their openness and code of moral conduct.³⁹ The statutes of the Ó-Kanizsa Tradesmen's Literary Circle were registered in 1883. Within community cultural education their aim was to spread knowledge in the areas of economics and industry.⁴⁰ Apart from increasing their exceptionally rich library, they held readings and dance events. The roots of the theater in Magyarkanizsa date back to the beginning of the 19th century. Among its most notable proponents were: Árpád Ozorai, Gyula Kafga and Ármin Reisinger. Until WWI the majority of civil society organizations (Lords' Casino, MIKE, Christian Women's Society, etc.) also included drama in their activities. On December 19, 1895 the Royal Hungarian Ministry of Internal Affairs validated the statutes of the Ó-Kanizsa Art Appreciation Association, thus making it possible for local amateur actors to form an organization.⁴¹ The amateur company is one the oldest societies, as their first performance was

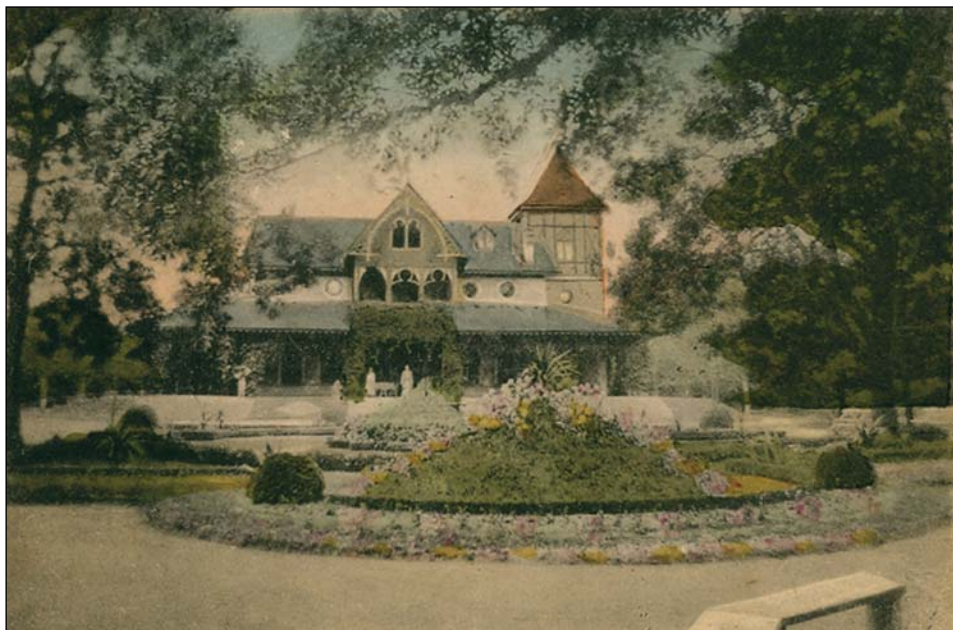


Image 3. Elizabeth's Park

in 1848. In accordance with the statute: “*The aim of the association is to form community and foster a tendency for cultural learning, to stimulate society, to provide it with noble and witty entertainment, to uplift it in the Hungarian spirit, especially to popularize theater among the citizens. (...)*”⁴²

The two most active associations mentioned in the local press were the Lords’ Casino and the Magyarkanizsa Youth Society for Community Culture (“MIKE”). The town’s political elite (Gyula Roxer, István Huszágh) and wealthy businessmen were represented in large numbers among the members of the Lords’ Casino.⁴³ They organized events such as carnival balls, Lent merriments and musical evenings.⁴⁴ MIKE functioned as the largest youth cultural society in Kanizsa of the Dualist period. Apart from organizing many plays and readings, they also took on a major role in public life. Building an ice-skating rink was on their agenda,⁴⁵ but they were also responsible for the foundation of the Kanizsa Marksmen’s Society.⁴⁶ For over a year in 1911–12, the local newspaper, the *Kanizsai Ellenőr* was published as the Magyarkanizsa Youth Society for Community Culture’s newspaper.⁴⁷

THE EMERGENCE OF THE LOCAL PRESS

When it came to the appearance of the civil press, Hungary had to make up for a century of deficit. In the Southern Region, it began at the end of the 19th – beginning of the 20th century, which was relatively late even when compared with the rest of the country.⁴⁸ This is when the first civil media of Szabadka and Zenta emerged serving as a positive example and encouraging the appearance of the Magyarkanizsa local press. Based on the March 12, 1908 Decree 10018 of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, on January 1, 1909 Magyarkanizsa became an organized town.⁴⁹ One of the main criteria for the status of a “*town with organized council*” was that there should be local press operating within the municipality. In the first decades of the 20th century two outlets sought to satisfy the needs of the readership in Magyarkanizsa.

Between 1908 and 1915, the *Kanizsai Újság*, dubbed a “*social and administrative paper*” was issued once a week, every Sunday. The four-page periodical, apart from discussing national matters, informed the residents of Magyarkanizsa primarily on local political, economic and social events. Its publisher, Pál P. Bruck was a local press owner and businessman, Zoltán Tóth acted as editor for a year.⁵⁰ Between 1910 and 1915 Bruck ran the newspaper as publisher and editor-in-chief. In the fiction column, apart from news of local events, short stories and poems were published on a weekly basis. Articles on agriculture, industry and commerce were published in the administrative column. The paper regularly informed its readers of different tenders, official news and the annual balance sheets of local businesses.⁵¹ A lot of gossip news was also published, this was in order to increase sales and make the periodical profitable.

Dr. Bata Lukás

Hetepente 4244 Csita
Hm. 69.

1913

6. évfolyam 33. szám

augusztus 17

Egyes szám
2 FILLÉR

MEGJELENIK
minden
VÁSÁRNAP

KANIZSAI UJSÁG

Társadalmi és közgazdasági lap.

Hirdetések
megállapodás szerint.

Nyitórésze: koron

Hivatalos hirdetések
soranként 30 fillér

Szerkesztőség és kiadóhivatal:
Magyar Kanizsa.

Felolvasó szerkesztőség és kiadóhivatal:
BRÜCKENPÁLY

Hirdetések a kiadóhivatal, közlemények
szerkesztőség címére küldendők

Megnyit a csodafürdő.

E hó 10-én, vasárnap reggel megkezdte üzemét a „Magyar Kanizsai csodafürdő” részvénytársaságunk a városi Erzsébet-ligetben épült fürdője.

Sietünk hozzátenni, hogy a fürdőépületnek csak felerésze, az előcsarnokot jobbra eső másodosztályú kád-fürdő csoportra még azidőszertel rendelésének átadva, tiszteleg a fürdőszobával. A fürdőépület másik része, mely a salón és első osztályú fürdőket foglalja magában, 8-10 napon belül szilón teljében készül és hazánálba becsapítható lesz.

Megnyit ezenkívül a külön épületben levő közös fürdő is, huszonnyolc öltöző kabinnal ellátva. Itt még a vele kapcsolatos hidegvizgyö-

intézet helyiségei várnak berendezésre.

A fürdő összes épületoportja saját teleppel bíró, villamvilágítással lesz ellátva, melynek felszerelése most van folyamatban; a salón és első osztályú fürdőhelyiséget, folyosó és az előcsarnok pedig, a téli kúrára tekintettel, központi gőzfűtésre van berendezve.

A főépület emeleti részén az igazgatóság négy vendégszobát rendeztet be, villamvilágítással, központi gőzfűtéssel, a mosdókni, hideg és meleg vízszolgáltatással.

Már a másodosztályú fürdő berendezése megkezdte az embert izlés és praktikus berendezésével.

Mindenütt a fehér szín dominál: ajtók, ablakok, padok, tolelt asztalok és lámpák, fogasok, tükör, szék, stb. Az első osztály berendezése pedig kiválóan díszes, csaknem fényűző lesz.

A hatalmas előcsarnok falai öt méterre vannak osztva. A bejáratnál szemközti csillag négy szelencsi tükör veri vissza a mennyezetre alkalmazott

villamos csillár pompás fényét. A másik négy falmezőre a pécsi Zsolnay gyár szállít négy, majolikára égetett festményt. Kényelmes ülőhelyek állnak majd itt a várakozók rendelkezésére.

Ezekben nyújtuk halvány raját Magyar Kanizsa város legújabb, kitűnő benyomást kelto kúzóépületnek, mely nagy mértékben hivata lesz annyira elhanyagolt közegészségügyeket előmozdítani.

A csodakút áldásos vizének gyógyító erejét nemcsak néhai dr. Lengyel egyetemi tanár konstatálta hivatalosan a polgarmester megbízása alapján, hanem többnyire az a gyakorlati életben is: tapasztalt gyógyító hatása már messze vidéken ömereg. Urak és egyszerű polgárok, városiak és falusiak egyaránt szívesen keresik fel a fürdőt, melynek vize hideg állapokban szívja és idegyengeség, megelöve pedig köztvény, reuma, stb. ellen valóssággal megelőző eredménnyel hat.

Ha még figyelembe vesszük azt, hogy a fürdőtelep az ország egyik el-

Hajnali vendég.

Írta: Nagy Lajos

Hajnali négy óra van. A kávéházban egy vendég sinez. A főpincér, egy pincér és a félróné a kassza szomszédságában ülnek egy asztalnál és beszélgetnek. A csillároknak csak egy része világít, a világosság alig nagyobb a félhómalynál. A kávéház sinez szúrke. A padló faparketta. A fal mellett zöld színi pamlag húzódik. A kassza-hőgy beszél:

— Hogy mért nem veszi el? Dehogyan veszi. Csak mondja, csak nem boldog, hogy elvegye! Egyáltalán nem is akar nőülni. Szabad ember akar maradni. Pedig szép asszony lenne, mondom. Zörög a külső ajtó. Mindhármán ar-

ra fele nézve a pincér a kassza-hőgyre. Előbb becsüti a kassza-hőgyre, mint a kassza-hőgyre. Az ajtó becsüti megint megáll, ide-oda néz és csak áll, küszködik, nehéskérdésnek most, hogy hova uljon. Leül az egyik oszlop mellett szomszédságában az asztalnál, a hógy háromtagu személyzetet diskurált. Most mártica a nőül ott kövér harmadcsévkorúul csunya. a pincér már ott áll a vendég ruhalett, várja a rendelést. Gyűrött, barna ruha van a vendégen, a cipője sáros. Hosszu fekete haja ritkás és kusztált. Töpreng, kutat, hogy mit rendeljen. Teára, sörré, ilkörre, fekete kávéra gondol, tétováz úgy érzi, hogy leginkább a fekete kávé az a mit kíván, vagy inkább a mit még magába tud

gyár. Fekete a kassza-hőgy. A félróné leül, néhány nagy mérték lépéssel felmegy a kassza-hőgy, ropogógyörgyök átutaz a parketta, a teate formittan, ingatlan is, megundorítón is rong rajta a sok huz. Fekete! — hallatszik hátul a pincér-kiáltása. Egy peremulva meg hozza a pincér a kávéat. A nő ott marad ülve a kassza-hőgy és szemléli a vendéget. A vendég issza a fekete kávé és est gondolja. Undok állat! Vén. De most ez is jobb lenne mint semmi. Inkább ez, mint így, súlyos, nagy éjszaka után hazameenni. Jaj, nem is lehet így hazameenni. Tovább, tovább, egyik kávéházból ki, a másikba be. Mig majd kimerülnek és összeroppannak a vágyak. A három tagu személyzet ismét

MEGJÖTTEK és naponta érkeznek nyári szövet ujdonságok
a legújabb **MAGYAR, ANGOL** és **FRANCIA** szövetekből készitek
VERSENYSZABÓSÁG
MÉRTEK UTÁN PRÓBALVA
URI ÉS POLGÁRI RUHÁKAT **LICHTIG JENŐ** angol uriszabó Magyar Kanizsán.

Image 4. Kanizsai Újság, front page

The weekly *Kanizsai Ellenőr* reached its readership regularly from 1911 to 1918 with a few interruptions, often acting as the *Kanizsai Újság*'s competitor. Its first editor-in-chief was János Mányi,⁵² who was succeeded by Illés Víg and József Pósa, who edited the periodical from 1911 to 1913. During WWI there were efforts to relaunch the *Kanizsai Ellenőr*, however, only one issue was published in 1915. The paper was relaunched in 1917 under the direction of Andor Pulay,⁵³ but due to economic difficulties caused by the war and the approaching regime change it was permanently discontinued in October of 1918.

Upon analyzing the articles in the two newspapers we can determine that their role in the city's cultural life, in maintaining a desire for cultural learning was indeed notable. These media, strongly representing the "*couleur locale*", reflect the socio-economic processes of the period as well.

THE SPREAD OF BATH-CULTURE IN MAGYARKANIZSA DURING THE DUALIST PERIOD

The history of the spa in Magyarkanizsa dates back to the 1890s. As an increasing number of artesian wells were bored in the municipality, it followed that the rural town with a rising middle class would build an artesian bath that met all the modern hygienic requirements. As a result, Sándor Csuka, municipality engineer drew up the plans of a Tisza-bath and an artesian bath in the public park in 1895.⁵⁴ Representative Dr. Gyula Roxer, chief physician argued that the maintenance of the Tisza-bath would mean a greater cost for the municipality and proposed that the Representative body accept the plans and budget for an artesian bath in the Népkert (People's Park).⁵⁵ In the next year, city authorities took into notice the Bács-Bodrog County Municipal Commission's decision to build the public park bath, however the construction of the bath was delayed for an indefinite time due to financial difficulties.⁵⁶

The Dualist period heyday of the Bácska small town with a rising middle class was shaken up by a sensational piece of news. It was discovered that the water of the artesian well bored in Járás in 1908 had healing properties. City officials operated a rudimentary spa on the scene with nine basins from 1909 to 1913. Gyula Köves's pub and József Börcsök's restaurant provided hospitality services to its guests.⁵⁷ As early as the first bathing season, in 1909, wealthy local businessmen came up with a completely new idea on how to use later the waters of the Csodakút (Magic Well). Herman Grünfeld, local businessman and municipal council member (director of the First Brick and Tile Factory of Magyarkanizsa Inc.) drafted ideas of the construction of a spa in the Népkert (People's Park) to the Representative Body.⁵⁸ Headed by Grünfeld, the Csodakút Artesian Spa Incorporated was formed on May 29, 1912, with which the municipality made a concession agreement.



Image 5. The Artesian Spa of Magyararkanizsa

According to the agreement the incorporated was granted exclusive use of the water from the two artesian wells bored in Járás (30 years), with the purpose of using their water for the spa, under the condition that they have the Csodakút's water transferred to the Népkert via iron pipes where they would build a spa to fit all contemporary needs.⁵⁹ After Gyula Porgányi, certified engineer drew up the plans necessary to transfer the water, construction could begin, which lifted Magyararkanizsa to the ranks of the modern European bath-cities.

On Sunday morning, August 10, 1913 the Csodafürdő (Magic Bath), built in the Népkert (People's Park), opened its gates.⁶⁰ Its hallway, designed by István Király and noted by Budapest architect Zoltán Reiss, provided visitors with an imposing sight.⁶¹ The Venetian Mirror placed opposite the entrance, the Zsolnay flower pots and the tapestries all attested to results of high-quality work. The institution ran a first class luxury bath and a luxury bath with earthenware tubs as well as a second class tub-bath. There were a total of twenty tubs for patients to use, the medicinal water was heated and used by bathers in its natural state.⁶² On doctors' orders patient could take mud- and carbonated water baths, the Csodakút Artesian Spa's water was well suited for treatment of arthritic muscle and joint ailments, gout, sciatica, but proved effective for anemia, neurosis, heart problems and female troubles as well.⁶³ The Csodakút's water was later bottled and used to treat people with gastro-intestinal

illnesses in the form of drinking-cures. At the time, the plant's medical oversight was carried out by the town's chief physician, Dr. Miksa Dömötör.⁶⁴

A summer swimming pool with 28 dressing cabins and a boiler room providing steam-heating also belonged to the building.⁶⁵ The park, which surrounded the modern spa complete with electric lighting and central heating, and its establishments (The building of the Vigadó [*entertainment hall*], József Longa's confectionery, the tennis and bowling courts and the small lake for row-boating) also served the comfort and entertainment of the guests. The Erzsébet Park (today known as People's Park) was illustrated by the county monograph as "*the beautiful Népkert (People's Park) under Magyarakanizsa, along with its excellent tree nurseries and flower gardens, meets all the requirements of modern gardening and will surely satisfy even the most particular of tastes. Its ornate paths, English Gardens and flower-circuses and shady groves leave one with a most pleasant impression and could easily compete with the resorts of other towns.*"⁶⁶ The groves of the Népkert, which transformed it into a charming French landscape garden, were maintained by Károly Bednárz, head gardener of the city, with great professional competence.⁶⁷ One was in front of the spa building with a statue beside it, the other decorated the English garden in front of the Vigadó and the confectionery.

Despite the difficulties of the regime change following WWI, the spa retained its former glory, in fact its management even made smaller investments. In 1936 a whirlpool bath and a modern mud bath were built. The concession agreement between the city and Csodakút Artesian Spa Incorporation expired on May 1, 1943; therefore the operation of the spa was now in the hands of the municipality. On February 29, 1944 the city council rented the buildings of the spa and the Vigadó to the First Magyarakanizsa Savings Bank Incorporated.⁶⁸ After WWII, within the framework of Yugoslavia, factories and companies were nationalized. The Kanizsa spa and the neighboring Vigadó suffered the same fate.⁶⁹ Sadly, the ornate walkways of the Népkert were not maintained with the appropriate know-how, the imposing buildings fell into disrepair and slowly deteriorated. The spa's hallway was transformed to fit the requirements of the era, strongly bearing the marks of socialist realist architecture. The situation improved somewhat, when in the middle of the 1970s the co-operative of Kanizsa Banja Health and Resort Center initiated that a new spa be built in the Népkert. In 1980, near the old Monarchy era spa (today: Hotel Abella) a new health and resort center was opened (Hotel Aquamarin).⁷⁰ The building of the old spa was renovated, but along with its surroundings it lags far behind its shining turn-of-the-century status as a modern spa meeting all contemporary requirements. Since the spa is an establishment that enriches our city's history, generates tourism and plays a defining role in its economy, it is rightfully listed among the Municipal Values of Magyarakanizsa.

SUMMARY

The economic and social changes of the Dualist era significantly influenced the small Southern Regional town's cultural life. Development can be well-documented through certain areas of education and culture (education, civil organizations, etc). The ever-growing middle class's desire for community culture increased, which resulted in a rise of the standard of education. The modernization of public education had an especially positive effect on the cultural life of Magyarkanizsa. With the establishment of preschools and schools illiteracy was decreased to a minimum and the problem of the lack of trained workers was also on its way to being solved. The civil society organizations, in their heyday faithfully carried out their community-forming roles in societal life. While the emergence of local newspapers sought to make up for a century's hiatus, a new industry took root with the spread of bath-culture and the establishment of the spa. We must mention that following the regime change (1920) and amid transformed circumstances, the town retained its success achieved in the areas of education and culture for in the operation of the schools and civil societies one can see continuity during the period between the two World Wars, which drew from their roots planted firmly in the Dualist era.

NOTES

- ¹ Fejős, Sándor – Forró, Lajos – Kávai, Szabolcs (ed.): *Kanizsai Képeslapok*. Szeged, 2013. (Henceforth: Kanizsai Képeslapok, 2013.) p. 9.
- ² Zenta Historical Archive. (Henceforth: ZHA) F.004. Magyarkanizsa City with Organized Council. Council meeting records 1870–1874. No. 1870/20.
- ³ ZHA F.004. Magyarkanizsa City with Organized Council. Council meeting records 1870–1874. No. 1871/6.
- ⁴ *Ezer év törvényei*. www.1000ev.hu/index.php?a=3¶m=5484. (Last downloaded: 2016. 03. 28.)
- ⁵ Kozári, Mónika: *A dualista rendszer (1867–1918)*. Budapest, 2005. pp. 210–211.
- ⁶ A town with an organized council (rendezett tanácsú város) was one of the administrative categories for Hungarian towns from 1870–1929. As result of the so-called municipal laws rural towns which did not have the economic capacity to form their own legislative authority became "towns with organized council". They were directly under the jurisdiction of the county.
- ⁷ Urbán, János: *Parázsföld*. Kanizsa, 1988. (Henceforth: Urbán, 1988.) pp. 57–58.
- ⁸ Appel, Ede: *Ó-Kanizsa nagyközség történelmi, helyrajzi, gazdasági, népmeszei és statisztikai ismertetése*. Szabadka, 1886. (Henceforth: Appel, 1886.) pp. 44–46.
- ⁹ Dobos, János: *Kanizsa múltjából*. In: A csönd városa. Újvidék, 1982. (Henceforth: Dobos, 1982.) p. 17.
- ¹⁰ Ibid.
- ¹¹ National Széchenyi Library Microfilm and Photograph Archive B1 FM3/4374. Kanizsai Újság, Magyarkanizsa, 1911. IV. Vol. 8. No. 2.
- ¹² Kávai, Szabolcs: *Magyarkanizsai társadalmi egyesületek 1945-ig*. Szeged, 2008. (Henceforth: Kávai, 2008.) p. 12.
- ¹³ Urbán, 1988. p. 59.
- ¹⁴ Dobos, 1982. p. 17.
- ¹⁵ *Ezer év törvényei*. www.1000ev.hu/index.php?a=3¶m=5360. (Last downloaded: 2016. 04. 28.)

- ¹⁶ Appel, 1886. p. 38.
- ¹⁷ *Ezer év törvényei*. www.1000ev.hu/index.php?a=3¶m=5741. (Last downloaded: 2016. 04. 30.)
- ¹⁸ Appel, 1886. p. 38.
- ¹⁹ *Ezer év törvényei*. www.1000ev.hu/index.php?a=3¶m=5848. (Last downloaded 2016. 04. 30.)
- ²⁰ Appel, 1886. p. 38.
- ²¹ Kanizsai Képeslapok, 2013. p. 15.
- ²² Szöllősy Vágó, László: *Iskolánk krónikája*. Kanizsa, 1991. p. 58.
- ²³ Urbán, 1988. p. 19.
- ²⁴ Kávai, Szabolcs: *Emberségünk vára*. Tóthfalu, 2001. (Henceforth: Kávai, 2001.) p. 10.
- ²⁵ ZHA F.004.23. Magyar Kanizsa City with Organized Council. Council meeting records. No. 203.
- ²⁶ ZHA F.004.23. Magyar Kanizsa City with Organized Council. Council meeting records. No. 216.
- ²⁷ Kávai, 2001. p. 15.
- ²⁸ Kávai, 2001. p. 16.
- ²⁹ Ibid.
- ³⁰ Kanizsai Újság, Magyar Kanizsa, 1909. II. Vol. 4. No. 1.; p. 20. No. 2–3.
- ³¹ Kávai, 2008. p. 11.
- ³² *Ezer év törvényei*. www.1000ev.hu/index.php?a=3¶m=5366. (Last downloaded: 2016. 04. 30.)
- ³³ Ibid.
- ³⁴ Kósa, László (ed.): *Magyar Művelődéstörténet*. Budapest, 2006. p. 362.
- ³⁵ ZHA F.127/1. Statutes of the Ó-Kanizsa Volunteer Firefighters' Society, Ó-Kanizsa, 1890.
- ³⁶ Ibid.
- ³⁷ Kanizsai Újság, Magyar Kanizsa, 1911. IV. Vol. 60. No. 2.
- ³⁸ Kávai, 2008. p. 25.
- ³⁹ Statutes of the First Magyar Kanizsa Table, Magyar Kanizsa, 1906.
- ⁴⁰ ZHA F.374/5. Statute of the Ó-Kanizsa Tradesmen's Literary Circle
- ⁴¹ Statutes of the Ó-Kanizsa Art Appreciation Association. Ó-Kanizsa, 1895.
- ⁴² Statutes of the Ó-Kanizsa Art Appreciation Association. Ó-Kanizsa, 1895.
- ⁴³ Kávai, 2008. p. 41.
- ⁴⁴ Kanizsai Újság, Magyar Kanizsa, 1909. Vol. II. 49. No. p. 3.
- ⁴⁵ Kanizsai Újság, Magyar Kanizsa, 1909. Vol. II. 39. No. p. 3.
- ⁴⁶ Kanizsai Újság, Magyar Kanizsa, 1913. Vol. VI. 7. No. p. 3.
- ⁴⁷ Kanizsai Ellenőr, Magyar Kanizsa, 1912. Vol. II. 1. No. p. 1.
- ⁴⁸ Pető, Bálint: *Magyar Kanizsa városi státusának első esztendeje a helyi sajtó tükrében*. Délvidéki Szemle, Szeged, 2014. Vol. I. No. 1. pp. 31–32.
- ⁴⁹ Baráth, Katalin: *Revolver és vasvilla. Kisvárosi médiarítusok. (Magyar Kanizsa 1909–1914)*. www.mediakutato.hu/cikk/2006_03_osz/03_kisvarosi_mediaritusok. (Last downloaded: 2016. 03. 24.)
- ⁵⁰ Kanizsai Újság, Magyar Kanizsa, 1909. Vol. II. No. 1. p.1.
- ⁵¹ Kanizsai Újság, Magyar Kanizsa, 1910. Vol. III. No. 1. p.3.
- ⁵² Kanizsai Ellenőr, Magyar Kanizsa, 1911. Vol. I. No. 1. p.1.
- ⁵³ Kanizsai Ellenőr, Magyar Kanizsa, 1917. Vol. VII. No. 1. p.1.
- ⁵⁴ Valkay, Zoltán: *Gyógy- és szikósfürdők Kanizsán és környékén*. Új Kanizsai Újság, 2009. Vol. XVI. No. 41. (Henceforth: Valkay, 2009.) p. 13.
- ⁵⁵ ZHA F.004.23. Magyar Kanizsa City with Organized Council. Council meeting records. No. 29.

- ⁵⁶ ZHA F.004.23. Magyarkanizsa City with Organized Council. Council meeting records. No. 330.
- ⁵⁷ National Széchenyi Library Microfilm and Photograph ArchiveB1 FM3/4374. Kanizsai Újság, Magyarkanizsa, 1910. Vol. III. No. 28.
- ⁵⁸ Fejős, Sándor: *A Csodakút*. Szeged, 2008. (Henceforth: Fejős, 2008.) p. 23.
- ⁵⁹ ZHA F.004.23. Magyarkanizsa City with Organized Council. Council meeting records. No. 428., No. 429.
- ⁶⁰ ZHA F.435.1. Kanizsai napi- és hetilapok gyűjteménye 1911–1944. Kanizsai Újság, Magyarkanizsa, 1913. Vol. VI.
- ⁶¹ Valkay, 2009. p. 13.
- ⁶² *Tájékoztató a Magyarkanizsai Csodakút Ártézifürdőről*. Magyarkanizsa, 1915.
- ⁶³ Ibid.
- ⁶⁴ Fejős, 2008. p. 33.
- ⁶⁵ Fejős, 2008. p. 34.
- ⁶⁶ Borovszky, Samu (ed.): *Magyarkanizsa*. In: Magyarország vármegyéi és városai. Bács-Bodrog vármegye I. Budapest, 1909. p. 319.
- ⁶⁷ Kanizsai Képeslapok, 2013. p. 23.
- ⁶⁸ ZHA F.101.2. Magyarkanizsa Város (1941–1944). 6/kgy.ad 4.049/kgig. No. 1944.
- ⁶⁹ Fejős, 2008. p. 47.
- ⁷⁰ Fejős, 2008. p. 57.