

THE BEGINNINGS OF PRINTED NEWS IN MAGYARKANIZSA

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ABSTRACT

The appearance of the print press in Magyarkanizsa is closely related to the municipality's change in its administrative status, i.e. when it became a town in 1909. It was then that citizens could read their own newspaper, the Kanizsai Újság for the first time. The four-page paper was issued every Sunday and informed the citizens of Kanizsa mainly about local events, although national and foreign affairs were also discussed on its pages. Its publisher was the owner of the local printing press and merchant, Pál P. Bruck, who was motivated in this new enterprise by the prospect of a new, lucrative business venture. Most of the first year's articles dealt with the newly received status of the town as well as the plans of development in connection with it. A cultural milestone in the history of Magyarkanizsa, this weekly publication, which appeared until May 1915, played a great role in the process of urbanization and the furthering of embourgeoisement. It established a modern local press and popularized interest in public affairs among the town's population.

With regards to modern and independent press, Hungary has had to make up for centuries of lost time compared with Western-European countries. While in London people were reading a daily paper in 1702 (*The Daily Courant*), in Hungary the first Hungarian-language, regularly printed weekly newspaper only appeared in the last quarter of that century (*Magyar Hírmondó* [Hungarian Herald], 1780). In today's

modern area of Vojvodina, the mentioned underdevelopment is even more pronounced than in the country as a whole: only in the middle of the 19th century did the first modern printing companies develop in the area, and the larger circulation of the local papers had to wait until the start of the 1900s. All of this naturally had not only economic but social and cultural reasons as well.¹

The emergence of the print press in Kanizsa is closely connected with the change in the municipality's administrative classification: the Minister of the Interior's regulation 10 018 dated March 12, 1908 classified the municipality as a town with a regular council effective starting the following year, and the young new small town's residents could almost immediately get their hands on their own press product, the *Kanizsai Újság* (Kanizsa Newspaper).² (The paper first appeared at the end of 1908, which is referenced by the fact that in 1909 it was marked as being the second annual issue, as well as the Letter from the Editor that was printed in the first issue of 1909, with a certain lack of humility;³ however, the first issue that is officially preserved is the issue published January 3, 1909, and so the first full year of the *Kanizsai Újság's* operation can be considered to be 1909.) The four-page long paper appeared every Sunday and primarily informed the citizens of Kanizsa about local events, although its columns regularly featured national news as well. (For half a year, from January to June of 1911, the paper appeared twice a week on Sunday and Thursday, after which they returned to one issue per week.)⁴

According to its masthead the publisher of the "*social and economic weekly paper*" was the local printing house owner and merchant Pál P. Bruck, who was no doubt motivated to start his new business primarily as a source of additional commercial profit, rather than by any sense of social responsibility.⁵ Evidence for this can be seen in the fact that a large fraction of the advertising space in his papers – in many cases at least half of it – was devoted to promoting Bruck's ventures, and four years later he used his publishing house's activities to forge political capital.⁶ The first editor of the *Kanizsai Újság* was Zoltán Tóth, who worked at the paper until the start of the following year (we last see his name in the January 9, 1910 issue, then Bruck carried out the editorial tasks in addition to other parts of the business); it is presumably from his pen or Pál P. Bruck's that the majority of front-page articles in the 1909 issues were written, although the author almost always maintained anonymity.

The editorials that appear on the front page faithfully reflect the municipality's political, economic and social conditions at the time. They show us those questions which were deemed most important to the 1909 residents of Kanizsa, whose population – according to data from the census conducted in following the year – was 17 018, for the most part Catholic Hungarians; the most significant national

1909	2. évfolyam, 38. szám.	szeptember 19.
<p>Előfizetési árak: Helyben: Egész évre . . . 8 kor. Fél évre . . . 4 kor. Negyedévre . . . 2 kor. Vidéken: Egész évre . . . 9 kor. Fél évre . . . 4 kor. 50 Negyedévre . . . 2 kor. 50</p>	<h1 style="margin: 0;">KANIZSAI ÚJSÁG</h1> <p style="margin: 0;">társadalmi és közgazdasági hetilap.</p>	<p>Apró hirdetések: árk. Egy sor 6 fillér. Vasnapiak hatóval 6 fillér. Hirdetések: közzé- kint a kocsona. A lap megjelenik minden vasnap. Egyes szám ára 6 fillér.</p>
Szerkesztőség és kiadóhivatal: MAGYARKANIZSA.	Felolvasó szerkesztő: TÓTH ZOLTÁN	Kiadótulajdonos: BRUCK P. PÁL
<p>Hirdetések a kiadóhivatal, közlemények a szerkesztőség címére küldendők</p>		
<p>Aktuális kérdések.</p> <p>Egy kereskedelmi szaktekinél- től kaptuk az alábbi cikket, amely — ha nem is mindenben értünk vele egyet — érdekes világot vet a ke- reskedők felfogására a jelenlegi nehéz idő- ben. A cikk így szól:</p> <p>Két évvel ezelőtt kezdődött gaz- dasági depresszió még mindig nem szűnt meg. Belpolitikai viszonyaink még mindig a forrongás állapotában vannak, az anyyira óhajtott konszolidá- ció a maga kedvező hatásaival, a nyu- godot egyenletesen halad munkás- ságával, a lassú, de biztos garanciái- val még mindig nem akar beállani úgy, hogy sem közönségünk sem piacunk, sem a külföld nem tudja bizalmát és tevékenységét gazdaságilag annyira le- kötni, amennyire az a magunk jól fel- fogott érdekében kívánatos volna.</p> <p>Immár 1897 óta tart ez a belső közlelem, amely nem tud nyugvásra akadni. Nem csak sajátos politikai, ha- nem kiválandó gazdasági kérdések szol- gálnak itt ütköző pontokul, csak hogy a közlelem hevében megfélemlenek arról, hogy a politika, főleg a pártpo- litika és a gazdasági érdek két egymás-</p>	<p>tól teljesen különböző valami és hogy az utóbbiakat sohasem szabad az előb- bieknek felfoldni. Az erkölcsi javak szaporítása, egy mint az egyesek csalá- ládi életében is, kell, hogy párhuzam- sban történjen a létfenntartáshoz né- külözhetetlen anyagi javak megszerzé- sével. Mert valamit kétségtelen, hogy tökéletlen dolgok művel az a család- apá, aki hozzátartozóinak anyagi exis- tenciális feltételeit elhanyagolva, esz- pán a maga és ezáltal hozzátartozói tekintélyének és presztízisének fokoza- sáról gondoskodik, megélhetésüknek bizo- nosítását pedig nem méltatván kellő si- gyelemre, családja tagjait hlyekppen ér- zékeny nélkülözéseknek teszi ki, úgy épp oly természetes, hogy csak a gaz- daságilag fejlődő államélet biztosítja a hazafias politika sikereit.</p> <p>Feleleges talán hangoztatnunk, hogy a magyar kereskedő tisztában van azzal, hogy hazájának az önálló mag- gyar jegybank felállítására feltétlen törvényes joga van és hogy mindany- nyiunk szigorú kötelessége annak mi- hamarabb való létesítését lehetővé ten- ni. A vitás kérdés tehát csak a körül foroghat, vajjon ez idő szerint mi ol- talmazza jobban ami különleges érde- keinket: az önálló magyar jegybank-</p>	<p>nak 1911-ben való felállítása, avagy az osztrák-magyar bankkal fenálló egyez- ményünknek még egy ízben meghosz- szabítása, hogy az egyezmény lejár- tóg cdtudatosan készítsük elő önálló bankunkat. Nagyrészt a politikai szem- pontoknak eddig is túllengése, tekint- hető annak egyik főokál, hogy a bank- kérdés a megújításra épp úgy mint pél- dával annak idején az önálló vámtel- rület felállításának kérdése is, teljesen készületlen találja közgazdasági életün- ket és ezért tartanunk kell attól, hogy az átmenetnek idejében való gondos és körültekintő elkészítésének hiánya a jövőben megint csak minket a me- megoldás elhalasztásának kényszerítő- gát fogja maga után vonni.</p> <p>Nem kételkedünk abban, hogy lé- nyeges hátfias állózat árán nem ül- köznék nehézségek az önálló magyar jegybank felállítására. Ha nálunk sokkal kisebb és szegényebb államok kétsé- gesen arra, a magyar állam bizonyára szin- tén nem lenne rék képtelen annál ke- vésebb, mert nem szűkölködik a szük- séges szakértelem nélkül sem. A kér- dés azonban úzetlenül szerint az vaj- jon, kívánatos és szükséges-e, hogy né- hány évi késés elkerülése végett, eset- leg rázkodtatásnak tegyük ki hazánk</p>
<p>A Kanizsai Újság tárcája</p>	<p>— Persze, hogy vérenek kell folyni. Egyedül az használni! Sokkal okosabb lenne, ha ti azzal a sok gazambertekkel sommásan bánatok el. Vagy talán az használna, ha tíz, húsz évre becsuktak valakit kényelmes börtön- tőbe, ahol pompás türődszobák is vannak, meg ahol a gazemberek ebédhez almát is kapnak, hogy becsés gyomrukát valahogy el ne rontsák! Akasztótát meg virgacset nekik nem almát.</p> <p>— Jó, jó, lehet, hogy a gazemberek- kel szemben csakugyan túl humanussak va- gyunk, de hát a szegény munkásember csak más elbírálás alá esik?</p> <p>— Eh ez is gazember. Ha fel akarja lorgatni a meglévő, jó társadalmi rendet.</p> <p>— Csak hogy a megélhetéshez minden- kinek joga van, aki dolgozni tud és dolgoz- ni akar, és ebből kifolyólag ahhoz is joga van, hogy a társadalmi rendet úgy igye- kezze megváltoztatni, hogy neki is jusson legalább minden nap százsz kenyérre valója. Ami pedig a „meglévő, jó” társadalmi ren- det illeti; hát ez nem jó, ha a munkatörő embernek nem képes a minimális megél- tét sem biztosítani.</p>	
<p>Becsületes gazember.</p>	<p>— Sok az ember, már csak azért sem ártana alaposan elbánni velők.</p> <p>— Először is fel kellene öket világo- sítani, hogy nem a fizikai munkás a nyomor- rút, hanem mi, akik szellemi munkát vége- zünk, mi vagyunk a nyomorutak; a szelle- mi munkás az igaz proletár, ezt kellene a fejükbe verni, hogy minket ne irigyljenék, de legfeljebb sajnáljanak, mert az igazi nyo- moruságot valóban nem a hétk munkásrub- bony takarja hanem a föltos, fényes szalon- kabát.</p> <p>— Se fenyegetés se atítás nem haszn- nál itt — mond a bírő — a munkás- ember nyomoruságán így nem lehet segíteni. Persze, hogy rosszul van a földön beosztva, hogy az egyik ember száz koronás vasca- rát egyék a másiknak húsz fillér se jusson vascsóra, de hát ez már így van ezen a bajon bajos segíteni akár fenyegetéssel, akár tanítással. Legfeljebb, hogy trigyelhetjük a gazdagokat és sajnálhatjuk a szegényeket.</p> <p>Igy történik azán, hogy mi akik tel- jesen át tudjuk érezni a szegény emberek nyomorát, miután sem felesleges pénzzel nem rendelkeztünk, amiből adhatnánk nekik, sem gyárakkal, ahol mindnek adhatnánk al-</p>	
<p>Itta: Vértesy Gyula.</p> <p>A munkás kérdéssel beszélgettünk. Hármian voltunk. Katonatistát, bíró és én az író.</p> <p>A kérdés megoldásáról megélhetősen ellentétes véleményeink voltak. Legsomá- sabb megoldást ajánlotta a főhadnagy.</p> <p>— Ha nem akarnak dolgozni, be kell őket csuktatni, ha ez sem használ, meg kell őket tizedelni! Még csak az kellene, hogy ezek a rongy szocialisták pacakazzanak az állammal. Biztatok csak öket miránk, ka- tonakra, majd elbánnuk mi velők. De el ám, hamarosan. A szép szó nem ér itt semmit. Ezekkel nem lehet és nem érdemes disku- rálni, csak a puskacsővel kell keresztülni. Egy jó sor tíz jobban rendbe tanítja öket, mint ezer szép beszéd, amelyben ígérünk nekik mindent.</p> <p>— Vér, mindig csak vér — szólalt meg a bírő.</p>		

Image 1. The first front page of the Kanizsai Újság

Elismert kitünő gyártmányú
karikahajós és Singer
 varrógépeket 3 évi jótállással részletfizetésre is
 rendkívüli olcsó árak mellett ajánlunk

Óriási pénz és idő megtakarítás
mosógépek

használatát által három mosónő két napi munkája
 a nálunk kapható mosógéppel egy asszony által egy fél nap alatt végezhető.
 A ruhát habfeléire mossa és nem rongálja.
 Érdeklődőknek szívesen mutatjuk be, vételkényszer nélkül.

BRUCK és TÁRSA
 Magyarkanizsán.

Hofherr és Schrantz
 budapesti gazdasági gépgyár bizományi raktárában
 — MAGYARKANIZSÁN —
 Bruck és Társánál, állandóan kaphatók

Vetőgépek
 Szecskavágók
 Járgányok
 Kukoricamorzsolók
 Szőlőruzdók
 Szőlőprések
 Ekék

Különleges patent kettős **HKHK** 3 LÓ UTÁN
 több évi lefizetésre

továbbá karikahajós és Singer
 Varrógépek és kellékek is.

ELSŐRENDŰ POROSZ FŰTŐSZEN.

Bruck és Társa
 MAGYARKANIZSÁN.

A híressé HOFHERR és SCHRANTZ budapesti gazdasági gépgyár bizományi raktárában
 Kedvező fizetési feltételek mellett olcsó árakon ajánlanak:

Vetőgépeket, szecskavágókat darálókat,
 járgányokat, aratógépeket, ekéket, kukoricamorzsolókat, mázsákat, szénagyűjtőket, szőlőpréseket, esőpléköszieteket

több évi lefizetésre
 továbbá karikahajós és Singer
 VARRÓGÉPEKET és kellékeket is.

Előrendű porosz cséplőszén.

Különleges patent kettős **HKHK** 3 LÓ UTÁN

Bruck P. Pál Magyarkanizsán.

— MINDENFÉLE —
 új és használt
Tankönyvek
 valamint
 író és rajzszerkek

olcsón kaphatók
BRUCK P. PÁL könyvkereskedésében
 Magyarkanizsán.

Image 2–5. Bruck's ventures in the advertising space

minority were the Serbs with 396 people. More than two thirds of the local residents were employed in agriculture, a large fraction of whom lived outside the small town, in remote rural areas. All of this played a defining role in determining Magyarkanizsa's social and cultural conditions: the settlement was a typical lowland agricultural small town at the beginning of the last century, which officially was now considered a town for administrative purposes, and in certain respects did meet this qualification, but its low level of infrastructural development, the lack of industry, the lifestyle of most of its residents, and their level of educational and mentality gave the municipality more of a village character.⁷

The leading articles in the 1909 issues mostly discuss these subjects: the first issue of the year greeted the residents of Kanizsa with the title *Magyarkanizsa is a town*, and in a grandiose style it welcomes Kanizsa's reclassification as a town, but also calls on residents of the municipality to do everything in the interest of development: "The town council has been formed, it held its first election of officials, and with this, *Magyarkanizsa has joined the towns with a regular council. Large, passionate struggles preceded the classification of the municipality as a town, just as they had the elections. (...) As we welcome the new officers, we also look forward with confidence to its operation, and, where we have some little power to act, we will never delay in supporting it. But we also don't delay in calling attention to that large work and responsibility which awaits each member of the town council. (...) We can carry out successful work shoulder to shoulder, supporting each other. Without this the work of the council and the operation of the representative body will be a waste. Perhaps individual vengeance might be satisfied, but only at the untold expense of the public good. This is why we expressed above our wish that passions should be abated, for differences to disappear and for every citizen of the town of Magyarkanizsa to be united under the flag of progress. Only then can we reach the goal which the classification of Magyarkanizsa as a town has promised us.*"⁸



Image 6. The new city hall



Image 7. The new city hall

The reader's letter is also telling, which was published on the front page of the last issue of February: *"In my quiet town, where not so long ago the topic of the day was if Mr. Kántram's cow Bossy got ill, or if Szabó, Esq. bought brand new felt clothes, and where it was a veritable sensation if one or two noble carriages scooted along the dusty streets, – here there are now events that are worthy of being immortalized in the press? Well, in Magyarkanizsa do people now read not only tax summons, and prayer books? What a wonderful thing it is, sir! It is almost as remarkable as if the dead had sprung to live. (...) Of course, we have to make sacrifices if we want to put down the cornerstone to a flourishing, modern, large town. Magyarkanizsa still needs to create a great many institutions for its status of a town to go from paper to reality and for it to reach the standard that it would be a true crime against culture not to attain."*⁹

A recurring issue on the front page is the question of the bridgeover the River Tisza: there has long been felt a need to connect the two Kanizsas (Törökkanizsa, modern Novi Kneževac, and Magyarkanizsa or Kanizsa) with a modern bridge capable of supporting rail traffic, a problem that the residents of the city felt to be even more pressing since the municipality became a town, in order to speed up the process of urbanization. As the *Kanizsai Újság* writes in February: *"The pedestrian and coach*

traffic between the two Kanizsas takes place on imperfect, rickety structures of bygone centuries even today. From spring to autumn vehicles and people use the pontoon bridge, a junk from Szeged, and when the Tisza freezes over, well, one can get from one shore to the other on a ferry or boat riding the back of the ice. This is a medieval, intolerable state of affairs to the untold expense of the two Kanizsas... (...) A permanent bridge would make it possible to fulfil the now audacious-sounding plan to connect the two Kanizsas with a narrow-gauge passenger- and freight-railway. And this is the great perspective that the plan of a permanent bridge offers.”¹⁰ Then, more than three months later the editors return to the subject with an article titled *Reflections on our town’s Tisza bridge*. The article makes concrete proposals for financing the costs of a permanent bridge: “We are all convinced that one of the best ways to ensure that our city flourishes is a permanent railway bridge. Faithful patriots of the city who hold its future close to their heart should not be afraid to make the greatest sacrifices necessary to create it. (...) We cannot borrow such a large sum of money, because the interest on it would be so great that it would exhaust our financial resources. Thus, it is impossible to build our permanent bridge in any other way than Zenta did it, that is, through an interest-free loan provided by the state. (...) A committee will likely be sent by the ministry this very month to determine the new toll rates for the bridge and ferry, which have expired. We ask the mayor to use this opportunity to raise the issue of the permanent bridge and to procure the necessary technical documentation.”¹¹

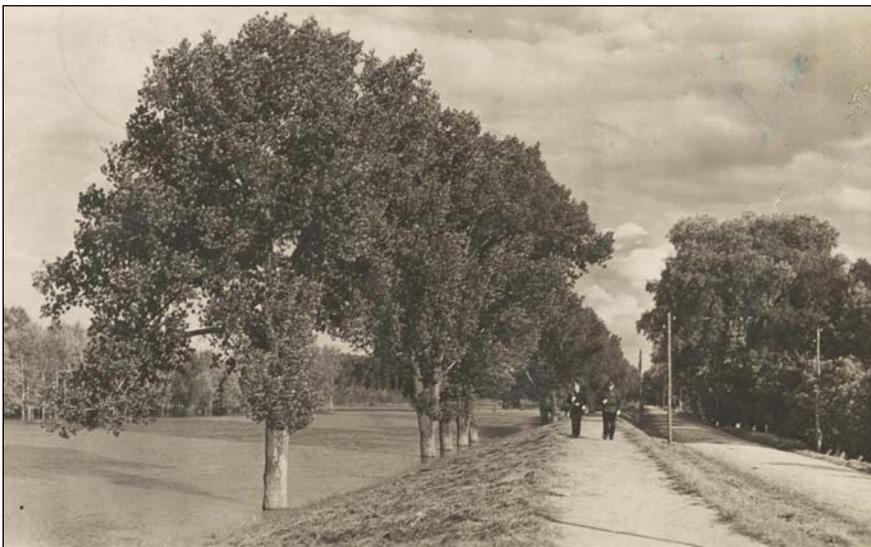


Image 8. A recurring issue is the question of the Tisza bridge



Image 9. A recurring issue is the question of the Tisza bridge

The editorials also encourage other areas of modernization, ranging from modernizing the railways to developing industry,¹² to creating a park in the downtown area and to building a local thermal spa. In the autumn, the newspaper is happy to report some success in creating a few – though not high-profile, – yet visible and useful results in the process of urbanization: *“It’s now been three quarters of a year since we received the status of a town, however, we have not yet had an occasion to appraise the work of our council. We find that the reason for this is the secretive manner in which everything is done or carried out. We think that the council is working, – and especially the mayor performs work that is greatly deserving recognition around the development of the town, and we are all the more happy to observe this because up until now we have always criticized him for his interest in creating big things only. We are happy to see and are glad to record these merits because in addition to several required large plans he does not forget about smaller issues. There is a visible sign of his consistent and prudent work. Our main streets, although they were only rarely and insufficiently watered in the course of the summer, and swim in oceans of dust, have finally been cleaned up of the dirt that has built up for a long time. This in itself is a great achievement, because aside its the aesthetic benefit it forestalls the spread of tuberculosis and other diseases.”*¹³ However, there were some downsides to the fact that the status

of a town had been attained, for example, the drastic rise in property prices, a fact to which the paper brought attention twice in the spring of 1909: *“But during the transformation to town, new families of officials came to the settlement, who needed an apartment. This fact contributed to enormously raising the previous rent prices. At present, the situation is that in Kanizsa a 2-room apartment costs four hundred koronas (crowns), just as in Budapest. And while in Budapest for this much money one gets a comfortably furnished modern apartment, in Kanizsa one cannot even find an apartment if one begs. (...) We must remedy this problem. God forbid we get a district court and tax office soon, because these officials and the lawyers who might come with them would have to be put into tent camps.”*¹⁴



Image 10–11. The local thermal spa

Besides the above, two other issues arose which kept the residents of the town greatly interested and thus became recurring topics of editorials: the first was the lack of a telephone network,¹⁵ the other being a plan for a new town hall.¹⁶ Besides this, the editors regularly criticized the municipal administration for all of their decisions – or failure to make decisions – which, according to the journalists, impeded the further development of the town. However, – albeit rarely – the editors offered a chance for alternative viewpoints to be voiced in the form of letters to the editor, and on the front page a writing by Mayor, Dr. Sándor Király himself was published, in which the town's leader hopes for the introduction of mandatory fire insurance in the municipality.¹⁷ (The newspaper could do this from a position of editorial independence and comfortable external observer status, all the way up until 1913, when the owner, Pál P. Bruck, who at that time was also responsible for editorial tasks, became a member of the municipal council – as we have previously mentioned.)



Image 12–13. The local thermal spa

In addition to local issues, on more than one occasion the paper drew attention to national affairs in its editorials: for instance, in the September 5, 1909 issue it published an article with the title *Intellectual Proletariat*, in which the author criticizes Austria for purposefully keeping Hungary underdeveloped and not letting it break free from its agrarian country status. In addition, we found pointed social criticism on the paper's front page – for example, on the disadvantages of favoritism and its adverse effects (July 18 and 25 leading articles), on the weakness of the middle class of landowners (September 12), on the migration from rural areas to the capital (November 8), etc. We read an interesting story on a subject titled *National threat* on the front page of the December 19 issue, which scrutinizes the problem of gambling addiction: “*Our nation is one of the those with the most violent, most heated temperament. Hungarians come from the race of humans in whom hot blood has always played a large role. Even at times when common sense requires them to listen to the voice of reason telling them to stop. Ah, but how often their blood gets people to do reckless deeds! It's no use – we are an Eastern people! We are descended from the race of hot-blooded Orientals. The multitude of unfortunate victims of gambling addiction is one of the misbegotten offspring of our temperament. In this hardly noble competition of the races the Hungarian is there among the first, right beside the Italian and the Russian. The Hungarian plays with his money and often with his life at the card table, at the horse races, in the class lottery, everywhere where two people mix. The most dangerous of all the games is the one that is rightfully called the Devil's Bible or the thirty-two leaved, people killer, country-destroying card game.*”¹⁸ In contrast with its earlier issues, a festive writing appeared as an editorial in the last issue of 1909 with the title *Christmas*, which concerned love and the support of those who have been left behind and the poor: “*We must do away with the traditional pride and not neglect the poor class – at least on this day!... The gratitude will not be lost, the children enjoying the warmth of our affection will forever bless their benefactors and this day will live as an indelible memory in their hearts.*”¹⁹

Several columns of the paper paint a nuanced image of the social and economic culture of the municipality that was recently made a town. The second and third pages of the paper regularly report on the various events of the large number of associations active in Kanizsa – the vibrant social life is definitely a sign of the beginning of civilization in the small lowland town. One of the most significant was MIKE, the Magyarkanizsai Ifjúsági Közművelődési Egyesület or Magyarkanizsa Youth Cultural Association, (which, from 1912 had its own independent newspaper when an other local paper that had started publication a year earlier, the *Kanizsai Ellenőr* (Kanizsa Inspector), became the association's mouthpiece).²⁰ But the town's fire brigade, the Jewish women's association, the Industrial Book Club, the Economic Young Men's Association,

the Red Cross Association, the Christian Social Workers' Association and last but not least, the Gentlemen's Casino – one of the main arenas of public debate –, were also actively rallying the well-to-do and influential members of the local population. The paper's inside (second and third) pages regularly report various tenders and auctions and various official notices (for example the mandatory animal testing, the worm extermination, vaccinations, tax notices, public notices; it reports on the appointment of new public officials (teachers, pastors, police officers, judges, doctors, etc.), the events of the various associations, births, deaths, marriages – and on more than one occasion engagements as well –, the date of fairs; it even considers newsworthy when a citizen of Kanizsa has finished serving a prison sentence and is freed.²¹

Deserving special mention in the local news are the various acts of violence, which occur in a large number in the life of the municipality, and which the *Kanizsai Újság* covers in a detailed “*tabloid fashion*” – sometimes humorously but sometimes in almost horrific detail.²² All this is understandable, since despite the town status that had been granted there was a still largely rural, rather closed community, whose need for information had to be met. The “*gossip*” naturally spilled over into the printed press – and all this presumably contributed largely to the rise in the newspaper's circulation.²³ The news, which were not only about Kanizsa but a larger geographic area, contained a conspicuous number of stabbings, robberies, thefts, drunken acts of vandalism, fights, accidents, fires, murders, various family tragedies, and reports of suicides were also rather frequent.

In addition to politics, public life and local events we can also read about other subjects in the paper. The fiction column every week publishes poetry, short stories or excerpts from short stories, humorous pieces and other types of literature, and what's more, in a featured location: the fiction column starts on the front page and usually continues on the second page. Besides local authors, there are a few nationally famous writers, poets who appear in the newspaper: the *Kuruc nóta* by Gyula Juhász, or the writing titled *Intra dominium* by Kálmán Mikszáth. The business column contains expert analyses, which appeared fairly regularly at the beginning but later only sporadically. We can also find messages from the editor, in which the editors reply to pseudonymous messages and questions in one or two sentences. Another way of giving more information than providing local residents with general news is e.g. when the paper prints excerpts from the constitution and history of United States or you can read about Hungarian freemasons and the role Lajos Kossuth played in that organization; about the adventures of a young man from Szeged in the French foreign legion, or a travel report about Archduke Franz Ferdinand's trip to Sinaia. In the article *A pusztuló Bácska* (Bácska in decline) the author writes about the mass migration to America and about criminalizing the enticement of others to do this. As a clever trick by the editors – and in a rather manipulative way –

following the above article there is a report about a tragedy as a “detering example” with the title *The misfortunes of a boy from Zenta in America*. From the story we learn that Lajos Kocsis, a young man who had emigrated from Zenta was run over and killed by the “Chicago express train” and his dead body had to be picked up in pieces.²⁴

In sum, we can say that the elevation of the municipality to a higher rank in 1909 gave this southern market town a new momentum for development, the first results of which were apparent within a few years: in 1912 a new town hall was inaugurated, a thermal spa opened, economic and cultural life were booming. The first locally printed weekly newspaper, the *Kanizsai Újság* played a substantial role in the process of urbanization and gentrification. Despite all of its shortcomings, it was a cultural milestone in the history of Magyarkanizsa: it created a modern local civic press which became a popular reading for the town’s residents.

NOTES

- ¹ “The demand for a local paper developed gradually, in parallel with the development of the society of the municipality. A large role in this process is played by the population’s social and financial stratification but their mentality as well. By itself the fact that a wealthier class requires this form of information to rise above the majority does not create a need. This is because they must take action not only as a consumer but to a certain extent they also need communal self-awareness to recognize the role of the local press and to support its appearance.” (Pejin, Attila: *The historical bibliography of the Zenta newspapers [1875–1962]*. Zenta, 2004. p. 13.)
- ² Baráth, Katalin: *Revolver és vasvilla – Kisvárosi médiaiítások. (Magyarkanizsa, 1909–1914.)* http://www.mediakutato.hu/cikk/2006_03_osz/03_kisvarosi_mediaritusok. (Henceforth: Baráth)
- ³ “Whoever would like to buy or sell any kind of house, land, furniture, car, cattle, or any kind of equipment, or who is looking for an apartment, or would like to rent the same, should advertise in the *Kanizsai Újság*, which in its brief existence already has a wide circulation.” (*Kanizsai Újság*, January 3, 1909.)
- ⁴ Klamár, Zoltán: *1848 a század eleji kanizsai sajtóban*. Híd, Year LXII. (1998.), Issue 3. p. 290.
- ⁵ Simonyi, Mária: *A magyar politikai sajtó története 1918-ig a mai Vajdaság területén*. Budapest, 2003. (Henceforth: Simonyi) p. 328.
- ⁶ “Pál P. Bruck was not yet a member of the 164-member town council that debuted in 1909, »which is why he was able to maintain the appearance of the newspaper’s independence in the beginning«, however, from 1913 onward he was able to personally play a role in the bustling society of the city fathers, in order of his assets »as a newspaper owner with legally doubled income«, being the 45th property owner representative. »Eight out of the first ten, and so at the top of the list János Mátyás Dukai, based on the income from their land ownership, were admitted to the council, though at that time only into the council of a virtual town hall – temporarily into the Great Dining Hall.« *Half of the Kanizsai Újság’s back page, however, from the beginning showed their advertisements, from which it became evident that the honorable editor of the paper financed his everyday life less by serving the public through his noble work but rather from his income stemming from the commercial ventures operating under his name* »where anything could be procured from him, from a prayer book to a threshing-machine.«” (Baráth)
- ⁷ Baráth
- ⁸ *Kanizsai Újság*, January 3, 1909.
- ⁹ *Kanizsai Újság*, February 28, 1909.
- ¹⁰ *Kanizsai Újság*, February 21, 1909.
- ¹¹ *Kanizsai Újság*, June 6, 1909.

- ¹² “When you see the proud chimneys of the factory reaching toward the sky and when you hear the steam whistles indicating break time in work, you can’t help but think that in the wake of the machines rattling new shapes and new levels are taken on by life and near the sooty walls you meet all the blessings of culture. And experience proves that in the modern age there is only prosperity, the accumulation of wealth where industry begins to develop in the wake of which trade quickly burgeons.” (Kanizsai Újság, June 20, 1909.)
- ¹³ Kanizsai Újság, October 31, 1909.
- ¹⁴ Kanizsai Újság, March 14, 1909.
- ¹⁵ “... Our leaders are incapable of arranging for a telephone network... So let us we, residents turn to the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and make them intervene for Kanizsa to join the network...” (Kanizsai Újság, October 3, 1909.)
- ¹⁶ “The plans for a new town hall are ready. Members of the municipal council also consider it urgent to go ahead with the construction. The old municipal building is useless. There are some reluctant people, however, who are worried that the 250 000 crowns necessary for the construction are not yet available...” (Kanizsai Újság, April 25, 1909.)
- ¹⁷ “Compulsory fire insurance should be introduced and managed by local municipalities. This would increase their income, which they could use partly for their own purposes while they could provide a better service against fire damages, better than the insurance companies...” (Kanizsai Újság, February 14, 1909.)
- ¹⁸ Kanizsai Újság, December 19, 1909.
- ¹⁹ Kanizsai Újság, December 26, 1909.
- ²⁰ Simonyi. p. 328.
- ²¹ “Nagy, who was sentenced to two years in prison, has been given conditional furlough.” (Kanizsai Újság, April 18, 1909.); “A youth named Mihály Csikós, who stabbed a fellow lad one and a half year ago, has arrived home on conditional furlough...” (Kanizsai Újság, September 5, 1909.)
- ²² “Mladen Bakality, a barber’s apprentice, was courting Miss Jelena Kordován in the Serbian ball. While courting he stole a gold necklace from the girl... The thief was arrested and he gave the gold jewellery back. However, as the robber was being escorted by policemen he managed to escape and there is no trace of him...” (Kanizsai Újság, January 31, 1909.); “Mrs. Andorné Keszthelyi, a 76-year-old widow has filed a complaint at the gendarmerie of Baja against her son-in-law, Dávid Cseszler, who had beaten her. Earlier, Cseszler was looking for his wife and eventually found her with his mother-in-law shouting in a pub while drunk. Mr. Cseszler was so upset that he grabbed his merry mother-in-law by the hair kicking and beating her up...” (Kanizsai Újság, November 14, 1909.); “Mr. Bata denies the fact that he committed a premeditated murder and claims that while arguing with his wife she attacked him with a pair of scissors. At that point he picked up a knife lying on the table and stabbed her five or six times...” (Kanizsai Újság, May 16, 1909.)
- ²³ For more on this topic, see Katalin Baráth’s analysis mentioned previously (the author’s note) .
- ²⁴ Kanizsai Újság, September 26, 1909.