

Korunk 1926-2016: The Emblematic Intellectual Workshop of Transylvania

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Abstract: *The study attempts to give a picture about the editorial conceptions of the three waves of Korunk – Transylvania’s emblematic periodical was founded by László Dienes in 1926 at Cluj. He edited alone three of the fifteen volumes of the first Korunk, and two and a half together with Gábor Gaál. The article presents the editorial model adopted by László Dienes and Gábor Gaál, which continued to be applied also during the magazine’s second period starting 1957, and the third starting in 1989. The paper also offers an overview of the history and agenda of the second period of the magazine, between 1957 and 1989 and outlines the targets and characteristics of the third period starting 1990.*

Keywords: *Korunk; editorial conceptions; the press of minority; the history of the press.*

*Korunk*¹ magazine, the emblematic intellectual workshop of Cluj, celebrates its 90th anniversary. On the magazine’s website, under the heading *The history of Korunk*, one may read: *Korunk is a social sciences magazine published in Cluj since 1926. At present it is at its third period. The three periods mark three stages in the history of the*

1 The name means *Our Age*.

magazine, connected to the historical and political transformation of the cultural region of Transylvania. The magazine published in Cluj intended to address the critical issues of the 20th century, the modernization problems of the Hungarian society in general, and of Transylvania in particular. The verdict formulated in the first issue of the magazine from February 1926 – the greatest danger is “fascism, bolshevism, and other dictatorships” – still points out the direction for *Korunk*.

In what follows, I wish to outline the editorial conceptions and tendencies serving as guidelines for later volumes and periods in the history of the early *Korunk*, and the editorial model adopted by László Dienes and Gábor Gaál, which continued to be applied also during the magazine’s second period starting 1957, and the third starting in 1989. I will also offer an overview of the history and agenda of the second period of the magazine, between 1957 and 1989, with interest in the additional activities that turned the editorial office into an artistic, scientific a cultural forum. I will also outline the targets and characteristics of the third period starting 1990.

The first *Korunk*

Literary historian János Kovács called László Dienes a characteristic intellectual type of the beginning of the 20th century, who had “undiminished illusions about the power of reason and culture”.² Dienes (born in Tokaj, on 27 March 1889) settled in Romania as a political emigrant with his friend, György Bölöni, in the autumn of 1919, and they started the daily newspaper *Bukaresti Hírlap* (Bucharest Gazette) in January 1921, which published Dienes’s first articles written in Romania. In 1922, he settled in Cluj, and acted as member of the editorial board of *Keleti Újság* (Eastern Newspaper) until 1925. His volume entitled *Művészet és világnézet* (Art and worldview) appeared in the summer of 1925, during the period of preparation of the *Korunk*. As János Kovács remarks³, this is the only avantgarde collection of studies published in the inter-war period in Hungarian literature, which “was an unusual sensation” and “was undoubtedly at the European standard of the age, and a significant intellectual accomplishment”.⁴ In addition to his work of a literary critic, he was an extremely active journalist in public affairs, his articles were polemical, his excellent argumentation and great knowledge met with an elegant style. At the time of the foundation of *Korunk*, he also took part in the foundation of the Social Sciences Society, with the objective of a sociological analysis of the social reality of Romania and the spreading of social sciences knowledge. He

2 Kovács János: *Előszó*. In: Dienes László: *Sejtelve egy fölindulásnak*. Kritikai írások (1921-1931) (ed. Sugár Erzsébet). Kriterion, Bukarest, 1977. 5.

3 Ibid. 19

4 Ibid.

was also an occasional announcer and perhaps also a spiritual patron of another avant-garde group, the Studio Society, founded in Cluj at the same time, led by Jenő Szentimrei.

The *Korunk* was launched in 1926, with the first issue published in February, as “A Monthly Ideological Gazette”. He edited alone three of the fifteen volumes of the *Korunk*, and two and a half together with Gábor Gaál. The magazine was published with the support of Hungarian emigrants in the West, primarily Lajos Hatvany. It was this intellectual workshop that the emigrants of the bourgeois left, settled in Romania and the neighbouring countries after the revolutions of 1918–1919, used to support and popularize Hungarian leftist ideas – although lacking sufficient funding, but with devoted work and “tenacious efforts”. (Pomogáts).

As Béla Pomogáts expounded in his new literary history of Transylvania, “the intellectual strategy of the *Korunk* resulted in a pluralist perspective and editorial policy, the new magazine had to give voice to the various aspects and movements of the political left in order to have a say in the reorganization of the power.”⁵ The magazine, says Pomogáts, is characterized by a “polemical polyphony” on all covered territories, and a necessarily eclectic editorial practice: it had to offer a forum for all those who supported the leftist tradition of Hungarian culture and opposed conservative restoration and the political right (bourgeois radicalists, Octobrists, social democrats and communists). Authors who published in the magazine included: Lajos Hatvany, Lajos Kassák, Zoltán Fábry Tibor Déry, Aladár Komlós, Viktor Aradi, Jenő Szentimrei, Ervin Sinkó.

In order to better understand the editorial models and traditions of the *Korunk*, it seems justified to quote László Dienes’s editorial in the first issue of the *Korunk* at some length: “The whole world around us became problematic. [...] This gazette starting its way with this issue [...] considers its primary function to raise people’s awareness, in this place somewhat secluded from the West and amidst its modest influence possibilities, to those great problems which, if not solved, will not lead to a peaceful, constructive future, and make contributions so that thinking and pensive people closed off from the direct influence of Western spiritual movements may more easily clarify for themselves those painful questions from which no true man may seclude oneself.”

In Dienes’s view to be a true Transylvanian meant to be a true European, and the two were indeed successfully combined in the *Korunk* under his edition. After one year the *Keleti Újság* concluded: “After one year László Dienes may say in good faith that he guessed what we need here today. [...] The *Korunk*’s great success is due to the fortunate intuition which said to the editor that whatever they

5 Pomogáts Béla: *Magyar irodalom Erdélyben (1918-1944)*. Pallas Akadémia, Csíkszereda, 2008. 277.

say, whatever the appearance, Transylvania does need the European worldview, does need Europe. Dienes tried to create an organ which mediates the air of Europe to the Hungarian public of Transylvania closed off from the expensive books and periodicals of the Western countries.”⁶

Dienes created thus one of the most influential and valuable workshops of Hungarian (and Central and Eastern European) leftist spirituality. Already Ernő Ligeti considered the magazine meaningful and high standard, which at its early stage “has not yet taken on that rigidity in its perspective on society brought with its new editor, Gábor Gaál.” Dienes only lived in Romania between 1920 and 1928: because of his origin and views in the opinion of some, or because of his strict chemistry professor wife in the opinion of others – for instance claimed in a letter of Gábor Gaál⁷ – he was seriously beaten by students, and after the incident he left to Berlin with his wife, Irén Götz, professor of chemistry, and their children. His name continued to appear on the *Korunk* as co-editor until August 1931, when he moved to Moscow, where he worked as language teacher and bibliographer until 1945. From that year on he lived in Hungary, where he was Director of Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library in Budapest and Head of Department at the department of economy of the Faculty of Law.

Gábor Gaál, the other outstanding editor of the *Korunk*, was not from Transylvania either. He was born in Budapest on 8 March 1891, and was also educated there. After the Aster Revolution, in 1921, he immigrated to Vienna, where he belonged to the close circle of Lajos Hatvany. His writings were published in magazines such as *Jövő*, *Tűz*, *Bécsi Magyar Újság*, *Panoráma*, and other emigrant magazines. In 1923-24, he was a dramaturg in Berlin at the film studio of Sándor Korda. In 1929 he returned to Budapest, but he was arrested and brought to justice because of his revolutionary activity in 1919. After his temporary release he left to Vienna, then arrived at Cluj in the autumn of 1926. In the first years he worked as contributor paid by articles for leading newspapers of Cluj (*Keleti Újság*, *Új Kelet*, *Ellenzék*), but also published articles and reviews in *Erdélyi Helikon* and *Pásztortűz*.

He joined the *Korunk* as editor in 1928. His name appeared on the title page together with László Dienes’s from January 1929 to September 1931, then Dienes’s name was left out. In fact, he was the actual editor of the magazine since the end of 1928, when Dienes moved to Berlin, until its closure in 1940. As studies about him say: his life intertwined with the life of the *Korunk*.

He edited the magazine alone in the period of Stalin’s dictatorial and sectarian power which influenced all Central and Eastern European leftist movements, and the *Korunk* under Gaál’s edition also followed this dogmatic, one-sided, Bolshe-

6 *Önkénytelen értékmérés*. *Keleti Újság* 1927. január 9., idézi Kovács, In: Dienes, im. 49.

7 *Levél Hatvany Lajosnak*, In: Gaál Gábor: *Erről van szó*, Dacia, Kolozsvár, 1974. 33.

vik cultural policy. This “impatient and aggressive” cultural policy (to quote Béla Pomogáts) only softened towards the second half of the 1930s, “when under the influence of the newly initiated »people’s front policy« the *Korunk* also sought to recognize all leftist and progressive values, and spoke with due equity about the results of bourgeois humanist literature or the people’s movement.”⁸

The place and weight of Gábor Gaál’s work – or, so to say, his “difficult legacy” – will be treated, hopefully, with due distance, nuancing and balance by a future comprehensive history of Hungarian press in Transylvania; it exceeds the scope of this paper to embark on such an endeavour. The third period of the *Korunk* repeatedly gave place for self-revision, in an attempt to confront its one-time editorial legacy and the leftist orientation that has been associated with the name in the course of time. Several writings on Gaál and the old *Korunk* deal with this issue. The debate between Éva Cs. Gyimesi and Sándor Tóth is primarily literature-based. Cs. Gyimesi criticises the “spirited community work considered literary weed killing”⁹ led by Gaál (whom she calls a politician of literature: “For in my opinion he was not an aesthete, or a literary historian, or a literary critic. He was a politician of literature.”¹⁰), who re-read the Hungarian literature in a party spirit, and, as Cs. Gyimesi adds, froze the literary knowledge of new generations for two decades with a phraseology like “the imperialism of the idea of Saint Stephan”, the “capitalist marriage” in Móricz, or Petőfi’s “nobleman’s pessimism”. In Cs. Gyimesi’s opinion, “Gábor Gaál’s spirit left its mark” on four decades’ worth of literary misery, and this spirit “has removed from public opinion the true values, the works of the bourgeois writers of the Helikon”.¹¹ However, Sándor Tóth, who wrote a party-spirited monograph on Gábor Gaál, considered that “already since 1946, the removal of Gábor Gaál’s spirit from the public opinion (and of his person from public life) was on the agenda, and this process was over by 1950. After that, for fourteen years (until 1964), the primary enemy of the Stalinist (Zhdanovist) literary politics in the “frontline” of Hungarian literature from Romania was Gábor Gaál (and not the Helikon!).”¹² The G.G. debate started in the March issue on leftism, and finished with the December issue, when the editors ended it urging the reader to draw their own conclusion on the matter.¹³ In the first volume of the

8 Pomogáts, *op.cit.*, 279.

9 Cs. Gyimesi Éva: *Gaál Gábor újravolvasásához*. In: *Korunk*, 1991. 3. 314.

10 *Ibid.*, 312.

11 *Ibid.*

12 Tóth Sándor: *Pótlás a Gaál-ügyhöz*. In: *Korunk*, 1991. 12. 1537.

13 Lajos Kántor ended the debate with the following editorial remark: “I recommend to Sándor Tóth’s attention the Hungarian press of Romanian between 1946 and 1948, the *Világosság* as well as the beginning of the *Utunk* (for instance, that the chief editor of the magazine was GG instead of the previously designated Szentimrei). So S. T.’s claim that “already since 1946,

literary history of Hungarian literature from Transylvania, Béla Pomogáts mentions, in his evaluation of the activity of Gaál Gábor, that he organized a circle of leftist Hungarian writers and thinkers from Transylvania: Edgár Balogh, Viktor Brassai, Béla Józsa, Andor Becsky, Gyula Csehi, Ernő Gáll, Lajos Jordáky, Mózes Kahána, Jenő Kovács Katona, József Méliusz, István Nagy, András Szilágyi, Ernő Salamon. His work encompassed the majority of the dispersed Hungarian leftist intellectuals, and he also followed the development of Romanian literature: the works of Tudor Arghezi, Emil Isac, Lucian Blaga, Liviu Rebreanu, Mihail Sadoveanu, Alexandru Sahia, Geo Bogza. He also published progressive world literature: Bertolt Brecht, Ernst Toller, Stefan Heym, Romain Rolland, Carol Čapek, Jaroslav Hašek, Panait Istrati, and especially Soviet literature: Gorkij, Majakovszkij, Gladkov, or Solohov. Pomogáts also mentions as one of Gaál's merits that, with great difficulties, he managed to raise the funds for the publication (the production and distributions costs were supported by circles of friends across the country, and also in Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia), and he was also who managed to keep away the constant threat of being banned.

Pomogáts thinks: "this virtue of lucidity amidst any circumstances caused also some of Gaál's serious mistakes in criticism: the assuredness of reason in his case was coupled with a doctrinaire rigour. This was the cause that he confronted, with a lack of understanding and even with hostility, the anti-class-struggle part of Hungaria literature from Transylvania, the Erdélyi Helikon movement and authors, and that he failed to take seriously the real values of the Hungarian literature and culture of his age."¹⁴

As we have seen, László Dienes and Gábor Gaál, albeit following different directions, managed to create a defining forum between February 1926 and September 1940. The magazine, known as an outstanding intellectual workshop of the left, was very popular, it appeared in 1000-1200 copies at its prime, which was a significant publicity at that time. The editorial models they propagated have served ever since as examples for the editors of the *Korunk*, and their influence has undoubtedly left its mark on the following periods of the *Korunk*. The editors of the second period starting in 1957 and the third period starting in 1990 all used the tradition they represented when elaborating their own editorial conceptions.

the removal of Gábor Gaál's spirit from the public opinion (and of his person from public life) was on the agenda" is clearly false. Let the reader judge his other arguments. We consider the polemic of Sándor Tóth and Éva Cs. Gyimesi about GG finished, without claiming, of course, that the debated questions are settled once and for all."

14 Pomogáts, *op.cit.*, 285.

The second *Korunk*

The second period of the *Korunk* marked by Ernő Gáll openly built on the legacy of Gábor Gaál in the elaboration of the magazine's editorial conception. Ernő Gáll says in his work *Számvetés* (Reckoning): "With respect to the tradition to be continued – as I have said – we considered the *Korunk* of Gábor Gaál our own. We followed much less the legacy of László Dienes, and there was a time when we even distanced ourselves from it. It was not until much later, at the 100th anniversary of the founder's birth (1989) when I had the chance to publicly express the recognition that I myself had slowly come to, that we had neglected his legacy for too long."¹⁵

The restart of the *Korunk* in 1957 was made possible by the political opening of the countries of the Soviet bloc. The first issue – not accidentally pushed by the state power, as we shall see – appeared on 21 February 1957, 17 years after the ban. The traditional heading, the orange-coloured cover reminded the readers of the old *Korunk*, as if the magazine continued where it had left off on the autumn of 1940. The new editorial board found it inexplicable why the republication of the magazine became so urgent all of a sudden – because the editors were asked to publish the first issue already in January 1957. They realized only later that the first issue was printed in a much larger number than the 3000 copies intended for the national market, and the extra amount was transported to Hungary, where the writers' strike was at its peak, and the magazine appeared thus on the newspaper stands as strike-breaker. Not to mention of course how the authors and editors were seen in the eyes of their colleagues in Hungary. It was then that the editors realized how subordinated and exposed they were to the political power, which continued to interfere with the editorial works and control the content of the published issues in the years to come.

The magazine admittedly followed thus the spiritual legacy of Gábor Gaál, as also stated in Edgár Balogh's programmatic editorial, *Az új humanizmusórhelyén* (At the guard post of the new humanism): "In our spiritual attitude in socialist humanism we wish to be devoted disciples of Gábor Gaál, former editor of our magazine."¹⁶ The editors of the second period hoped that the new reforms would continue despite the events in Hungary. The *Romániai Magyar Irodalmi Lexikon* (Lexicon of Hungarian literature from Romania) states: "the editors tried to apply two approaches, polemical and intersecting: one approach expected the "liberalization" of socialism, trying to induce critical doubt towards the bureaucracy of the party by its economic, sociological and political writings, the other tried

15 Gáll, *op.cit.*, 35.

16 Balogh Edgár: *Az új humanizmus órhelyén*. In: *Korunk*, 1957/1. Újraközölve: *Program és hivatás*. Magyar folyóiratok programcikkeinek válogatott gyűjteménye, Bp. 1977. 499 – 506.

to mobilize the spiritual energies of Hungarian language care, folklore, historical consciousness and minority protection by the revival of “popular democratic” traditions. However, the party controlled both approaches with the means of censorship and the compulsory material forced onto the magazine, breaking it in the end by the terror of the homogenizing nationalist dictatorship.”¹⁷

This strict frame loosened up a little beginning with the years 1963 and 1964, important thematic issues were published about theatre, medicine, world literature, and then fashionable topics of sociology were also published in the magazine. From the second half of the 1960s the importance of thematic issues further increased, the magazine managed to offer a comprehensive image in subjects such as: cybernetics (1965), local history (1969), structuralism, problems of national history research (1970), the socialist concept of nationality, problems of literary history (1971), music and native language (1972), Kalotaszeg region, the Madách-question, jurisprudence and legal practice (1973), fine arts, contemporary philosophy (1974), Ady (1977), the art of theatre (1978 and 1980), Zsigmond Móricz, sociology and sociography (1979), Attila József (1980).

This editorial conception introduced the most recent texts of modern science and cultural studies, publishing the most important representatives of scientific, cultural and political life abroad – U Thant, Claude Lévy-Strauss, Michel Foucault, Sir Bernard Lowell, Herman Kahn – as well as at home, both Romanian and Hungarian. As Pomogáts mentions, the thematic issues “were also meant to hold together and organize the Hungarian historiography, philosophy, sociology and pedagogy from Romania, previously dispersed and working under the pressure of the government politics of Bucharest, constantly attacking Hungarian culture. In addition to this organizational role, the information offered by the rich material published in the *Korunk* was also of primary importance: the Hungarian minority of Romania of almost two million was supplied with the results of modern science primarily through these thematic issues – almost self-standing »volumes of studies«.”¹⁸

The need to revive sociography, previously largely published in the magazine but silenced in the 1950s, the research of the past appeared once again in this period, for example in the articles of Lajos Jordáky, Zsigmond Jakó, Ákos Egyed, Lajos Demény, István Imreh, Samu Benkő. In addition to offering comprehensive information as much as possible under the circumstances of the age, the magazine also became, through the events organized around the magazine and the publications, beginning with the 1970s, an institution with a leading role in the preservation of the cultural consciousness, scientific knowledge, mentality and national identifica-

17 Ibid.

18 Pomogáts Béla: *A második Korunk*. In: *Erdélyi tetőn*. Pallas-Akadémia, Csíkszereda, 2004. 221.

tion of Hungarians from Romania. This is a socially significant role of the *Korunk*: through its various events it managed to attract representatives of various disciplines among its authors who otherwise would not have appeared in the magazine in lack of their ambition or talent for writing. The editorial office had a strong connection with the contributors, organized round-table discussions, and beginning with 1968, also organized seminars in social ethnography and sociology mainly with the participation of students. This was the Főiskolás Korunk-barátok Vitaköre (Debating Society of Student Friends of the Korunk), which analyzed the results of ethnographic surveys of Csík, Szilágyság regions and the hóstát, whose writings were published in the *Korunk*.

The issues of the magazine were also completed, beginning with 1973, with the *KorunkAnnuals*. The first of these appeared in 1973 with the introduction of János Ritoók, and offered an overview of scientific research in Romania through the articles of 24 authors. Outstanding of the series of annuals were the 1974 volume edited by Zoltán Veress, presenting the situation of the Hungarian press in Romania, and the 1976 volume entitled *Egy alkotó műhely félévszázados történetéhez* (To the half-century history of a creative workshop), edited by Júlia Szilágyi, which presented the history of the *Korunk* itself. The volume of 1979, edited by Gusztáv Herédi, commemorated the great figure of the Sekler region, Balázs Orbán on the 150th anniversary of his birth; the 1980 volume, *Ember, város, környezet* (Man, city, environment) was also edited by Zoltán Veress, while the 1981 volume of the annual, edited again by János Ritoók, presented the history of the second period of the magazine.

During the 1970s and 1980s the *Korunk* had a significant role in popularizing scientific knowledge in the Hungarian society of Transylvania, with an outstanding role in this endeavour of Zoltán Veress, whose name repeatedly appeared as editor of *KorunkAnnuals*. He initiated in 1982 the series *Korunk Füzetek* (*Korunk* notebooks), publishing three collections of articles in 1982 and 1983.

The *Korunk* Gallery, which opened in 1973, and became almost an independent institution in time, had the role of a forum in art, culture and cultural preservation, functioning in the editorial offices of the magazine. The institution presented the works of Hungarian artists from Romania, the temporary exhibitions displayed the best works of painting, graphic arts, sculpture, photography and applied arts of Hungarian artists of Romania. At first, the contributing artists of the magazine exhibited their own creative work at the gallery. Later talented young artists and consecrated artists of Transylvanian fine arts who were ignored by official exhibition rooms were also presented, breaking thus the ceremonial monopoly of these exhibition spaces. Lajos Kántor had an outstanding role in presenting these artists with a good flair. The openings at Saturday noon were a veritable event in Cluj: the exhibiting artists, locals or those who originated from Transylvania, were pre-

sented by editors, writers, critics, and performances of actors or musicians made the programme more colourful.

Another institution around the *Korunk* was the *Korunk-mornings*, a kind of substitution for a missing Hungarian academy of Romania. This started after the publication of the first volume of *Erdélyi magyar szótörténeti tár* (Hungarian etymological dictionary of Transylvania, 1975), as the editors invited the representatives of Hungarian culture from Transylvania, mostly contributors of the magazine, for the critical assessment of this accomplishment. The event was a success, and other discussions were also organized about other timely accomplishments of intellectual life, and the debates of an important work also offered the possibility to discuss theoretical questions. Amidst the constantly restricting possibilities of the 1970s-1980s, these *Korunk-mornings*, which took over academic and scholarly tasks, became celebrations of Hungarian science in Transylvania until 1983. Zoltán Veress had a major role in organizing these events. In this period the Bolyai Award was offered twice; the statuette created by Gábor Tőrös was awarded in 1982 to historian Ákos Egyed and mathematician Tibor Weszely, and in 1983 to works of linguist Attila T. Szabó and physicist Zoltán Gábos. After 1984, because of the increasing constraints of the dictatorship, the *Korunk* could no longer fulfil its tasks in the Hungarian cultural and scientific life of Transylvania. At the middle of the 1980s, all institutions and events organized around the magazine were interdicted, the editors could only proceed with the internal editorial activities of the magazine under strict supervision. The magazine could no longer publish materials connected to the identity of Hungarians from Romania, vacancies were left unoccupied, the number of the so-called "compulsory materials" was increased, and the issues were published with much delay because of increasing censorship. Ernő Gáll was sent in retirement before due time, and in the time of the new, appointed chief editor, Győző Rácz, the spirituality of the magazine declined to a vegetative state.

The third *Korunk*

The third period, starting with Lajos Kántor as chief editor, continued the Dienes-model, as stated in the programmatic editorial. The text written by Kántor, after a sketchy presentation of the two previous periods, highlights from both periods the elements that can still be valid in 1990, and openly undertakes the continuing tradition of the Dienes-model. A special place is given to the revival of the magazine's dialogical nature, as one of the most important goals and tasks, and it is emphasized that it can only become a timely and original publication, lacking provinciality and meeting the challenges of the age, through the constant dialogue and constructive debate of the best representatives of various (scientific) disciplines.

The first years of the new *Korunk* are marked by a spiritual search, a mapping of how a magazine with a tradition can react to the challenges of the age, what strategy it can follow to be able to survive and remain authentic in an agitated transition period. In contrast with magazines *Utunk* and *Igaz Szó* changing their names to *Helikon* and *Látó*, respectively, the idea of the name change never occurred at the *Korunk*. Lajos Kántor thought¹⁹ that the history of *Korunk* was incomparable with any of the former two, since, in addition to the values accumulated throughout its several decades-long history, it had an outstanding role in the modernization of Hungarian intellectual life. It must not only be understood in reference to the so-called “cosmopolitanism”, but also in the context of the identity of the Hungarian society in Transylvania. In this respect Kántor mentions ethnography, which developed with the support of the *Korunk*: most of the decisive figures of ethnography in Transylvania contributed to the *Korunk*. The second period of the *Korunk*, from the 1960s to the 1980s, when the state power controlled all intellectual work entirely, was a sort of reservoir of modern thinking, so “I think it would have been almost a suicide to give up this name, it was a powerful name, so it was a smart and necessary step to keep it”, Kántor argued.

However, the decision to keep the name and re-create an authentic magazine entailed a kind of confrontation, or in Kántor’s words, “a fight on a double front”. This meant on the one hand that the change in mentality made it necessary to change a part of the editors, and on the other hand that the magazine had to decide which line to follow in the future, and how to deal with the leftist (communist) label associated with its name. The reaction to the third period of the magazine was different than for the second period, and the positive echo was determined by the influence of “memories, legends and nostalgias decisively connected with the old magazine”.²⁰

Kántor formulated in his programme article the goals of the new editorial board for the magazine: they wish for a periodical of young spirit, with essays and studies in the fields of philosophy, sociology, political sciences, ethics, aesthetics, economic studies, history, ethnography, and interdisciplinary studies. They go with the tradition of the 1920s-1930s *Korunk*, but “we don’t want to publish a successor-magazine, but at a 1990 world-standard: (our) *Korunk*.”²¹

It can also be seen that the *Korunk* of the 1990s was pervaded by a strong interest in public life. Questions connected to: the press, media, television; minorities, European relations, education, native language education, the university; faith, the church; politics, political culture; Transylvania, Transylvanianism; civil soci-

19 The author’s interview with the former chief editor.

20 Gáll Ernő, *op.cit.*, 41.

21 Kántor Lajos: *Történelmi tévedések. Távolatok?* *Korunk*, 1990. 1. 8.

ety; money, economy, corruption; autonomy; the transition period, the young generation appeared with a significant weight and often scholarly treatment in the magazine. Nevertheless, the *Korunk* was primarily a magazine of cultural rather than public life interests, which published the most important representatives of Hungarian culture from Transylvania.

The same line formulated in the programme article was carried on by chief editors Imre József Balázs and Gyöngy Kovács Kiss. As Kovács Kiss stated at the anniversary celebrations of the magazine,²² the third period of *Korunk* presents a periodical which is neither leftist, nor rightist, but simply a publication guided by principles of quality, which invites its authors on the basis of their expertise, and not political preferences. She also writes in the commemorative issue for the 90th anniversary: "The *Korunk* in its current form invariably wished and wishes to be an intellectual forum, a mediator of the results of science, while it also claims itself to be an organ which preserved its traditional profile, partly as an amalgam of Europeanness and Transylvanianism – by the analysis of global and local problems – and partly as a bridge between segments of Transylvanian and general Hungarian spiritual life."²³ As a specifically minority magazine, an institution of a nationality, the magazine wishes to serve the Hungarian as well as European spirit even today by writings in philosophy, sociology, political science, ethnography, literary history and theory and literature. In addition, continuing the abovementioned traditions, it also takes on other tasks: as of 2007, it organizes open university lectures by the name of *KorunkAkadémia*, operates a fine arts gallery called *KorunkStúdiógaléria*. Also, the publishing house Komp-Press publishes books connected to the materials and the spirituality of the magazine mainly in Hungarian, but occasionally also in Romanian, English or German.

Browsing through the thematic issues of the *Korunk*, one may rightly say: the magazine we salute now is indeed a carefully edited periodical with a high scholarly profile, open-minded and open to the new spirit. This tendency is enforced by the additional institutions, which turn the *Korunk* into a veritable intellectual workshop with an outstanding role in displaying the best results and representatives of Hungarian, Romania and European research.

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3. Balogh, E. (1986). *Férfimunka*. Budapest: Magvető.

22 The magazine celebrated its 90th anniversary in Cluj with a document exhibition and a commemorative issue and performance on 10-15 February 2016.

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