

Summary

This issue appears without the coronavirus age cover page of our recent issues, even if at the time of writing of this summary the number of fatalities is still approaching one hundred per day, and the count of newly infected people stands at over a thousand. However, thanks to vaccinations, the trend of the epidemic is showing a significant decrease (although not all over the world) and maybe by the time this issue reaches you—late once again—the results will have improved further and maybe we will even be able to take off our masks. We are anticipating the end of the virus war, if only because, unfortunately, we will still be at war, as the events in Israel that exploded as I write these lines show, and we are also already suffering from the hate campaigns of the 2022 Hungarian parliamentary elections.

The editorial introduction to this issue laments that a thirty-year tradition of our journal has fallen victim to the coronavirus: the *Figyelő* [‘Observer’] column, which archived Jewish-themed articles and books for researchers who will be interested in our history one hundred years from now. The column could not be published because since November 2020 public libraries have remained closed, and therefore the material of the bibliography could not be collected. Keeping public libraries closed not only sheds light on a projection of the pandemic, but also on culture, which is also accelerating the loss of space in the Gutenberg galaxy.

Márton Soltész’s essay evaluates in the light of the current events of the Covid19 era the centenary of János Pilinszky, the great Catholic poet who was almost alone in commenting in depth on the representation of the Hungarian Shoah in high art.

The poems of Ákos Szilágyi, which appear through the whole issue, react to the cultural divide caused by the coronavirus.

Gábor Kelemen’s essay summarizing the results of deep research on the friendship of György Lukács and Károly Polányi, sheds light on the historical and psychological fate of the Hungarian Jewish intelligentsia. Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s letter to György Lukács—with an introduction by translator Péter Ádám—documents his outstanding interest in the scientist who is now held in such low esteem by the authorities. The last living disciple of Lukács, Mihály Vajda’s essay entitled “Holocaust – Historical Public Consciousness of the Kádarian Age,” interwoven with personal and autobiographical motifs, nuances the Shoa memory politics of the Kádár era and complements it with novel psychological observations. János Dési’s investigative essay traces the process of Swedish rescuer of Jews Raul Wallenberg’s reception and myth from his disappearance to the present day.

The excerpt from a book, *Recipes from Auschwitz*, by Alex Sternberg, born in Szeged, tells a family Shoah story with a focus on recipes collected by his mother in Auschwitz. Ágnes Huszár, a non-Jewish chronicler of the Jewry of Pápa and a fighter for reclaiming its hidden traces also obtained and translated this excerpt. Her study, “The Perutz Family and Hungarian Industrialization,” presents the participation of Hungarian Jews in Hungarian modernity through a classic Hungarian Jewish family history.

Éva Nádor, whom we welcome for the first time as an author in our journal, archives something similar to Huszár. Through her own family tree, she examines the multifaceted and enriching activity that Hungarian Jews have played in Hungarian intellectual life. The novelty of Nádor’s research is that she presents not only world-famous artists and intellectuals, but also secondary figures, which illustrates further the depth of our embeddedness in Hungarian life.

In his pioneering study László Bernát Veszprémy, in addition to presenting the history of the already known and so neuralgic Jewish Council in Budapest, now also explores the work, role and leadership of the rural Jewish Councils.

Hedvig Ujvári In “Herzl Tivadar/Theodor Herzl, or Was Herzl Obligated to Have a Paradigm of German Culture?” examines the question of whether the founder of Zionism was obliged to follow the cultural patterns of Zionism.

Daniel Bolgár, whose work also appear for the first time in our journal, presents in a long and exhaustive study the peculiar historiography of positive and negative prejudices about the reported superior IQ of Jews.

Attila Iván Váradi, after an online introduction, also appears for the first time in our journal. He reports on an exhibition that due to the coronavirus was not able to achieve its aim of exhibiting the life work of too little-known artist, György Fenyő, the son of Miksa Fenyő, the founder of *Nyugat*. In September 2020, the Bodó Gallery worked hard to collect and exhibit the paintings of the forgotten painter, who was a worthy successor to the painters known as the *Nyolcak* [‘the Group of Eight’], both artistically and on the level of social embeddedness, and hopefully his reception will not come to a stop.

Anna Gáspár Singer examines three recently released documentaries which are not only Jewish-themed but have sparked serious controversy in our society today—all the more so because under the compulsion of the coronavirus they have reached a much wider audience than they otherwise might have. The topics of the three films are: to be born in Auschwitz and to live its legacy, the relationship of Tamás Barta, the guitarist of the music group Locomotive with his mother, and the Arrow Cross background of the Turul statue in the 12th district and the chronicle of its current existence.)