Theses of a University PhD Dissertation

KAZINCZY Ferenc művei, Pályám emlékezete
Critical edition

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I. Objective

My PhD dissertation is a critical edition of the autobiographical writings of Ferenc Kazinczy. The volume titled '*KAZINCZY Ferenc művei, Pályám emlékezete*' was published in 2009. In this publication the 800 pages of records by the master from Széphalom, his diaries, autobiographies and autobiographical writings titled '*Pályám emlékezete*' are followed by 600 pages of notes.

The critical edition and the methodical and complete exploration of Kazinczy's writings started with editing his correspondence at the end of the 19th century. The latest, 23rd volume of the uniquely rich and extensive correspondence regarding its length and abundance of information was published in 1960. During the more than 170 years that have passed since Kazinczy's death (until 2009), from all his other writings it was only his poems that were published in a professionally annotated edition. The critical edition of his further writings, the reconsideration of the ones published until recently, and the methodical and complete exploration and cognition of all his writings have been undertaken by the academic workshop, the Classical Hungarian Literature Textological Research Group that can be found at the Hungarian Literature and Cultural Arts Institution of Debrecen University, and by the cooperating co-institutions and departments of Eötvös Loránd and Szeged University as well as researchers working in other institutions. Our research group restarted the Kazinczy critical edition by publishing his autobiographical writings, as the lack of publishing the autobiographical texts, the length and importance of which can only be compared to his correspondence, has been one of the biggest shortcomings of Hungarian textology.

II. Methodology

During the preparatory work of the edition we explored and systematized the texts of the Kazinczy heritage. While doing this work, we took into consideration not only the texts traditionally regarded as memoirs, autobiographies and diaries, but also other texts of 'distant' genres in the text heritage of several tens of thousand pages. This is due to the fact that Kazinczy's autobiographical activity extended for all his life, and for texts that are distant from each other regarding origin, elaboration, length and genre. Recognising Kazinczy's unique method as a writer resulted in publishing 70 'notes' of different lengths, besides the 6 'Pályám emlékezete', the 4 'autobiographies' and the 13 'diaries' in our publication.

When selecting the texts, besides *Az én naplóm, Az én életem…* and the six *[Pályám emlékezete]* we considered the texts textologically concordant with the ones mentioned above, and those with a form similar to that of a diary. This means that, on the one hand, we looked for texts that can be characterised by structural, syntactic and lexical equivalences, similarities and parallelisms, and on the other hand, for Kazinczy writings of different lengths related to dates which define themselves as diaries.

Instead of selecting texts on a genre theoretical basis, our edition preferred practical aspects. The reason for this is that the genres of Kazinczy's autobiographical texts often mix. An example of this is that the Kazinczy texts published in Orpheus with the title '*Útazások*' must have been written as biographies according to the original but deleted titles of the manuscripts, then after the corrections the genre of the (fictitious) letter was addressed. This means that, only by changing, the paratexts the same group of texts travelled three different genres. In addition, we could not accept the labelling of the genres by Kazinczy on a general basis, due to the fact that he used terms rather freely. All this led to the consideration that, instead of the traditional genre classification, we should speak about a group of autobiographical texts overall. The most important practical consequence of declassifying genre frames was that occasionally we were able to consider genres that are distant from each other, and to include in our edition, for example, a footage written for a newspaper note or a personal comment attached to the Szirmay family history.

The connection between the texts within the life work is based not only on the partial or complete equivalence of the pattern, author, narrator and the main character's course of life and name (Philippe Lejeune), but also on Kazinczy's work method. A perfect 'evidence of this is an autograph list titled '*Feldolgozni valók*' consisting of incomplete sentences, which proves the standardised background work of different autobiographical texts. The completion of the 'feldolgozni való' calling words was identified in 'Fogságom naplója', which was also written around 1828, and *[Pályám emlékezete I–VI.]*. It is not rare that in connection with certain stories and persons Kazinczy directs his readers to other texts of his (often to ones that have not even been written), while he reuses his earlier texts as building material. The permeability connects writings and genres. Therefore the text consideration of our volume is not alien from the connection system that can be traced from the Kazinczy texts, or from the demand towards critical editions that you should aim at exploring the connections of a given text within a life work.

However, in spite of the standardising aspects of the selection, you can't read 'the same' in the texts having been chosen for Kazinczy's autobiographical text universe, although

the names of the characters are *mostly* the same, and the place and time of the stories and memories are *mostly* identical, as well. The richness of the variances is bewildering and inspiring at the same time.

The readings searching for the historical and literary history sources drew your attention to the confusing contradictions of the data taken from different texts as early as at the beginnings of the assimilation of Kazinczy's life work. Possessing an enormous knowledge, Ferenc Toldy and János Váczy's Kazinczy monographs, which are dominant even today, strived for the most complete and most authentic biography and description of the age as possible. However, to preserve the self-identity of the would-be Kazinczy portrait, they were often forced to select from the contrasting data of the different autobiographies, notes, diaries, letters etc. Moreover, at some points they had to excuse the unveiled writer for his mistakes and weaknesses. This aspect presumes the existence of a 'reality' which the writer sometimes 'changes intentionally', but you can get familiarised with it thanks to the literary historian who explores even 'the least significant data'. However, no matter the biographer conceals or reveals the modifications of an autobiography, he eventually interprets and grades data and stories as true or false on the basis of his presumptions, since he can only find the references of certain texts in further texts. Therefore, if we have to select from the data of several Kazinczy texts, there is no secure guideline according to which we can choose the real and sincere version. Autobiography as a genre loses its reference basis by querying a course of life that can be reconstructed from data and that is independent of the biographer's activity. The history of Kazinczy and his age cannot be found written in the different texts or hidden behind the texts, therefore it is impossible for the literary historian to provide the reader with 'reality'.

That is the reason why the objective of the present edition cannot be an approach to the text following classical historical-critical principles which intend to reconstruct or reproduce Kazinczy's only authentic autobiography. An edition which separates the text regarded as 'good' from the antecedents and later revisions sets up a value hierarchy, since it distinguishes one text and subordinates the others to it. An unquestioned advantage of this approach is that it creates a text that reads well, but at the same time it also implements a very powerful interpretation. The text and the medium of the text greatly adds to the illusion of the authenticity of the memories (data) recorded in writing. The editorial approach that is interested in an unchanged main text and several text versions subordinated to that results in a strong, final writing and a publication of the same kind, while it hides, for instance, the time changeability of writing, and that of remembrance, which is particularly significant in the case

of autobiographical writings. The completed and non-overwritable publication titled *Pályám emlékezete* strongly suggests a reading method which makes Kazinczy's autobiography and course of life seen as a completed and non-overwritable work.

The extraordinary length and deep connection system of Kazinczy's autobiographical writings together led to a new approach to the principles and technical solutions of the paper-based classical and genetic publications, and the electronic ones.

Theoretically, a genetic publication would be suitable for handling the rich text folder that was created during the selection of the texts. However, such a publication would not be able to handle Kazinczy's autobiographical text collection perspicuously; it would not work even within the most coherent text group, i.e. the six known texts of *[Pályám emlékezete]*. Even with this work, the variation and commutation of the structural, syntactic and lexical equivalences and differences would create a rather complicated and unreadable structure, and this particularly applies to the smaller autobiographical texts that can be found throughout the Kazinczy life work. Therefore, we neglected a purely classical-historical edition for principle reasons, whereas we neglected a purely genetic one for practical reasons.

An ideal edition of Kazinczy's autobiographical texts would at the same time provide an independent, co-ordinated and well readable publication of the different texts, and a comparison of the texts with a genetic approach (i.e. for instance, the horizontal traceability of a story or a structural element spanning in several texts), plus it would also secure the usage of the different levels of the note collection. What is more, it would provide all these in an optional form. These requirements would be met by an electronic edition the most. An electronic and a book-form edition cannot be inverted or replaced by each other, but it is worth considering some of the technical solutions and mainly the text approach of the digital edition.

In the case of length, the difference between the electronic and the paper based edition is fundamental and determinative: for length reasons our edition cannot include all the Kazinczy-texts that can be regarded as autobiographical. The text relations and notes of a book-form publication are recorded by the editorial work, whereas in a computer database users can freely search for every word independent of the editor, they can create new connections (links, text fields, text groups), and even modify the notes. A significant difference is that in an electronic edition most of the texts and notes can be accessed as an independent database from anywhere, while a book means a permanent, fixed context.

Benefiting from the approach and technical solutions of the paper-based classical and genetic editions, and those of the electronic ones, our publication aimed at publishing texts of

independent status that read well, with an editorial method offering the possibility of collation from a genetic viewpoint and with an interest in origin history, and the possibility of text linking known from electronic editions. When structuring the text relations we allowed the reader/user to decide whether to promulgate the editorial interference overwriting the independence of the texts, the interpreting work of the editor. In other words, it is the reader's decision whether they turn to the linking text places identified by the marginal page numbers.

The main methodological invention of our edition is that we tried to make the editorial interference creating the independence and/or dependence of the texts visible and hidable at the same time. This option resulted in a special, double natured volume. The target was that a connection system with a genetic approach could be projected onto the independent, well readable texts. However, the basically linear structure of a book, as opposed to the flexible structure of the database of a digital edition, inevitably sets up a hierarchy and, by creating a new context that had never existed before, emphatically represents an editorial conception, as well. The selection, the grouping of the chosen texts, and the establishing of the sequence of publication unavoidably suggest a certain kind of evaluation and rank. The book-form edition is an ideal ground for the practice of classical textology. To moderate opposition, creating the possibility of reading the texts in several directions seemed to be the most obvious solution.

Therefore, the matching text places of the different texts are linked by marginalia (thus, for example, offering the possibility of the spanning reading of a story or thought); the data of the catchword giving information about the time of origin or narration make it possible to examine a period of creation, a life period, or the distance between the two; and the note fields created according to the time and space parameters offer a thematic reading starting from the notes.

In Kazinczy's autobiographical writings the contextual and structural changes range from units smaller than words without their own meanings through words and syntactic units to independent paragraphs and chapters. Describing the ways of changes with the help of the concepts of classical rhetoric, four basic operations can be distinguished: expansion (adjection), reduction, detraction, exchange, transmutation, replacement (immutation). To handle this peculiarity, we assigned the text sections containing typical equivalences, and we added notes to the differences markedly. We made the dynamics of the similarities and differences visible by a note-taking technique which can be systematically compared. As a result of this, Kazinczy's autobiographies can be examined as independent texts, as each other's different text versions or variances, as well as notes.

The connection system linking the independent texts of the volume was created from several partial systems. First of all, we divided the complete texts of all six *[Pályám emlékezete]* into *text fields*, then we numbered these text units, and we assigned the text fields with marginal page numbers. Thus we created the network of the text fields. We wrote up the identity numbers of the text fields in a summarising table, so that we could present the structural and contextual transformations of the *[Pályám emlékezete]* texts, and the moves of their text fields.

We found that within the text groups of Notes, Diaries and Autobiographies there is no such textual accordance as in the texts of *[Pályám emlékezete]*, therefore they cannot be divided into text fields consistently. However, due to the aspects of the selection, in every case you can find a text place that can be assigned to one of *[Pályám emlékezete I–VI.]*, *Az én életem…* or *Az én naplóm* (except for the late diary-form texts), and there is a detectable connection between these texts, as well. We built the links between the texts around the typical lexical elements (calling words, phrases), dates (dates as calling words), and stories (events that can be dated precisely: i.e. dates). Thus the system of the text fields of *[Pályám emlékezete I–VI.]* became an integral part of the network of the texts and text groups. The texts of Notes, Diaries, Autobiographies and *[Pályám emlékezete]* are linked by the marginal page numbers.

Beyond the origin history lessons, the connection system of the texts also gives a guideline for interpreting the different text places, which means that it replaces many of the editorial explanations. This in practice creates the first level of the explanation system of our publication, greatly reducing the explanatory notes.

In addition to the page numbers indicating the connections between the texts, there are marginalia that refer to a certain group of notes. From the references operating the text connections and philological tools, we aimed at creating a unified system with elements supporting each other, so that the volume could be technically used as a whole. Thus one group of marginalia directs the reader to the explanatory notes, the *note fields*. The note fields are related to a place, a shorter or longer period, or maybe a remarkable person in Kazinczy's life. The notes consisting of 90 note fields altogether contain all the topical and linguistic explanations linked to the text places, and above that, they also give background explanations separate from the text places.

III. Results

The traces and linking points of the editorial work in the link system of the notes, explanations, marginalia and text fields remained partly visible, but the decision and activity needed for their operation is the reader's task. This means that, while the possibility remained to read continuously from the first note in the volume to the last *[Pályám emlékezete VI.]*, and to examine the different texts and text groups independently or comparing them, it is also possible to apply a branching reading method. Our edition published Kazinczy texts which can be handled easily and which have an independent status, in a way that at the same time it allowed a kind of reading which is open to genre theory questions and ones with a genetic viewpoint, i.e. with origin history interests. Knowing this, we can hope that hereafter a conscious receiver's decision is needed for interpreting any of Kazinczy's autobiographical writings as independent, completed works.

With the pattern of equivalences and differences, during the edition work it was possible to explore and create a link system that provides connections all over Kazinczy's life work. For the most complete realization of this idea a digital edition is the most suitable form, as the different capabilities, tasks and length limitations of a paper-based edition are obvious. The two media as information giving vehicles cannot be exchanged or replaced, due to their nature, although applying some of the technical solutions and text approach of the digital world in a paper-based edition was an unavoidable challenge. Thus the marginalia and text field numbers correspond to the links of a digital edition, and the text network with a genetic viewpoint, which was created with their help, refers to a future electronic form. Overall, it can be established that there is a process from precise textological work through the book-form critical edition to an electronic edition which aims at elaborating the network with an extraordinary size and a great number of layers that is referred to as the Kazinczy life work.

V. Publications in the domain of the dissertation

- *Kazinczy Ferenc Pályám emlékezete címen ismert önéletírásának kéziratai és kiadásai*, Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények, 2002/5–6 (106th year), 627–650.

- *Kazinczy önéletírásai: a Kazinczy-emlékkert*, in: *„Et in Arcadia ego" A klasszikus magyar irodalmi örökség feltárása és értelmezése*, edited by Attila DEBRECZENI, Monika GÖNCZY, Debrecen, Kossuth Egyetemi Kiadó, 2005, 203–210.

- *KAZINCZY Ferenc művei, Pályám emlékezete*, Debrecen, Debreceni Egyetemi Kiadó, 2009, 1404. (Critical edition)

- *A tinta színe*, in: *Leleplezett mellszobor, Nyomozások Kazinczy birtokán*, edited by Mariann CZIFRA, Bp., Gondolat Kiadó, 2009, 199–247.

- *A Maris históriája*, in: *Ragyogni és munkálni, Kultúratudományi tanulmányok Kazinczy Ferencről*, edited by Attila DEBRECZENI, Monika GÖNCZY, Debrecen, Debreceni Egyetemi Kiadó, 2010, 451–464.

V. Further publications

- *Idegenek az éjszakában (Mikhál és Simon-kommentárok)*, Studia Litteraria, XLII (2004), 88–109.

- TOLDY Ferenc, *Valami Kazinczy Ferenc életéhez K[azinczy] Gábor elbeszélése után*, in: *Széphalom, 17, A Kazinczy Ferenc Társaság évkönyve*, Sátoraljaújhely, 2007, 35–39.

- KAZINCZY Ferenc, *Pályám emlékezete, Fogságom naplója* (Osiris diákkönyvtár), edited by László ORBÁN, Márton SZILÁGYI, Bp., Osiris Kiadó, 2009, 5–210 (text publication), 351–382 (notes), 407–414 (biographical notes with Márton SZILÁGYI)