

Media and Literature
in Multilingual Hungary
1770–1820

Edited by
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The Paper *Hazai Tudósítások* and the Beginnings of the Cult of Monuments Through the Lens of Ferenc Kazinczy's Articles (1806–1808)*

My study centres on the paper *Hazai Tudósítások* [*Domestic Intelligence*] published by István Kultsár in the summer of 1806 in Pest and the journalistic output of one of its most active contributors of the first couple of years, Ferenc Kazinczy. This work is a first attempt at outlining a longer-term research project. The conference's emphasis on media history made it possible for me to combine two areas that have long been the focus of my research and which deal with the decade after Ferenc Kazinczy was released from prison.

The first of these areas is Kazinczy preparing to publish collections of his notes, known as *Pandectas*, which offer an insight into the writer's workshop between 1806 and 1811. This collection allows us to explore Kazinczy's intellectual horizons.¹ The second area I focus on is how Hungarians received the aesthetics of the English garden as a new branch of fine art. Kazinczy's series of articles from 1806 in *Hazai Tudósítások* on the garden of Hodkovce [Hotkóc] in Szepes County are some of the first examples of this Hungarian view on English gardens. In them he expounded his own views on garden aesthetics.² We can also see Kazinczy's interest in aesthetics and his ambition to refine public taste in his *Pandecta* notes dating from the first decade of the 1800s. This material is not well known but it allows us to interpret memorial-building and memory as

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1 Manuscript Collection of the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (henceforward: MTA KIK Kt.), K633/I–VI.

2 “Hotkócz, Ánglus-kertek” [“Hotkócz, English Gardens”], *Hazai Tudósítások* I, No. 31 (1806): 262–263; I, No. 32 (1806): 268–271; I, No. 33 (1806): 276–279.

an imperative program of the decade. This centred on the so-called Arcadia debate on Mihály Csokonai Vitéz's sepulchral monument. We can do this work by emphasising the medium, *Hazai Tudóstítások*, which promised a new beginning in creating a broader readership for the limited contemporary press.

This topic is relevant and other recent literary historical research has already started to indemnify the connections I explore. This recent work includes Katalin Bódi's study, *Gólyafészkek és angolkert [Stork Nests and English Gardens]*, which puts Kazinczy's articles in *Hazai Tudóstítások* into context.³ Bódi makes a worthy contribution to the rather voluminous literature on the Arcadia debate, and her study is the first to focus on the problem of the memorial exhibition. In it she analyses the relationship between Kazinczy's description of the English garden in Hodkovce and his ideal of fine arts as represented in the Arcadia debate. It was Bódi who first noted that these texts were presented to contemporary readers in the same paper. She observes that if we re-read these articles with this connection in mind we will be able to piece it back together. She points out that both the articles and the correspondence testify to the fact that these topics did indeed preoccupy Kazinczy during this period. She also raises the question of whether there is a closer link between them.⁴

We can complete this picture with the series of articles entitled *Magyarok emlékezete [The Memory of Hungarians]*, which started to be published in December 1806. In these, Kazinczy introduced one of the basic motifs of his oeuvre: the Pantheon idea, which was an almost cult-like veneration of great men and faithful patriots and a quasi-religious view of literature. Although the Pantheon idea recurred again and again it was never, to use Tibor Porkoláb's expression, "validated with systematic consistence."⁵ When we examine the topics Kazinczy covered in the paper between 1806 and 1808, we see that all three are connected to the topos of erecting monuments in a broad sense.

I

The launch of *Hazai Tudóstítások* was a significant event in Hungarian media history. It is usually regarded as the first Pest paper with regular and uninter-

3 BÓDI Katalin, "Gólyafészkek és angolkert" ["Stork Nest and English Garden"], *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények* 118 (2014): 802–831.

4 *Ibid.*, 805–806.

5 PORKOLÁB Tibor, "Panteonizáció és vizuális reprezentáció" ["Pantheonisation and Visual Representation"], *Regio* 15, No. 3 (2004): 89.

rupted publication practice, and it marked the end of eighteenth-century journalistic literature and the beginning of a new era.⁶ However, this is only partly true, as the paper was firmly rooted in the previous century in many ways. Following the general decline of media after the fall of the Jacobin Movement, the publication of *Hazai Tudósítások* was the first sign of the slow renewal of progress. Kultsár made a conscious decision. He believed that to realise his cultural program, namely the civic revival of Hungarian language and culture, he needed a popular political paper with a broad readership. At the time, political news attracted much more attention than pieces on culture, so Kultsár published news pieces in the style of reviews twice a week, ordered according to sources and dates.

Media history sources claim Kultsár's initiative would have called for a magazine, but the need to attract a wider audience and more subscribers prompted him to launch a paper instead, which had no real political content, despite being viewed as a political publication. This was all the more conspicuous as it was not allowed to publish foreign news items in the paper until 1808, and even domestic news pieces had to appear as strictly apolitical reports. The subjects *Hazai Tudósítások* covered included ecclesiastical and secular appointments, civil and military statutes, changes at county and municipal level and demographic information, as well as news on farming, harvest reports, corn prices and commerce. It also had contributions on science and book publishing, topics on which it welcomed contributions from its readers. From the summer of 1806 the paper gave authors, like Kazinczy, who had publics they wanted to address, a new place to publish their articles. Until that time the only other Hungarian paper, *Bécsi Magyar Kurír [Hungarian Courier of Vienna]* had enjoyed a monopoly.

Kultsár's paper was launched on July 2, 1806. Earlier that spring he had addressed a call to future readers, informing them of his plans. For Kazinczy, the launch of Kultsár's paper was symbolically important. The first post he received at his new estate at Széphalom on June 10, 1806 was about the planned launch of *Hazai Tudósítások*, the very day he moved in! Letters dated the same day refer to this event.⁷ After reading the call he envisioned a paper with a completely dif-

6 *A magyar sajtó története I. 1705–1848 [History of the Hungarian Press I. 1705–1848]*, ed. KÓKAY György (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1979), 247–255; *Hazai Tudósítások*, ed. S. VARGA Katalin (Budapest: Magvető Kiadó, 1985), 5–17.

7 1806. June 10. KAZINCZY Ferenc, *Levelezése [Correspondence]*, ed. (I–XXI:) VÁCZY János, (XXII:) HARSÁNYI István, (XXIII:) BERLÁSZ Jenő, BUSA Margit, Cs. GÁRDONYI Klára and FÜLÖP Géza, (XXIV:) ORBÁN László, (XXV:) SOÓS István (Budapest–Debrecen: 1890–2013) (henceforward: *KazLev*), Vol. IV, 184, 185.

ferent profile – a literary magazine – even though in point 6 of his call Kultsár detailed the topics he planned to publish reports on. In his mind's eye Kazinczy nevertheless saw a literary magazine specialising in literary and book reviews, and immediately compared the still un-launched paper with the German *Allgemeine Literatur Zeitung* and the Austrian *Annalen der Literatur und Kunst*.⁸

After his release from prison, Kazinczy gradually enlarged the scope of his regular reading, which included taking to reading journals written in German as of 1805. It seems that before this he knew one of the most influential and highly circulated dailies, *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung*, only by repute. As its name indicates, this paper published reviews and critiques on recent literary, academic and other work in various fields, in the spirit of free criticism. The Austrian *Annalen* was also a literary review, which started in 1802. In a letter to József Szentgyörgyi dating from 1805, Kazinczy mentions for the first time that the *Jenaische Allgemeine Literatur Zeitung* (JALZ) and the *Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek* had a direct influence on the evolution of German literature through their reviews.⁹ He considers these magazines as good examples, and emphasises the importance of writing reviews. Later, in 1809, he was even more emphatic about this. In one of his letters he writes that a “Hungarian *Literatur Zeitung*” should be founded after the fashion of JALZ and similar German literary reviews. A precondition of this would be to translate reviews relating to Hungary and other relevant topics.¹⁰

The concept of a Hungarian literary magazine, voiced by Kazinczy between 1805 and 1809, only partly came to fruition in *Hazai Tudósítások*. In order to revive Hungarian literary life Kazinczy wanted to adopt the role and editorial principles of German literary papers, but at the time it was not possible to put these principles into practice. Media history widely holds that early on Kazinczy was offended by the fact that Kultsár had published his responses in the Arcadia debate late or only in part.¹¹

It is important to point out that Kazinczy was disillusioned by the paper, and not just for personal reasons. He was also disappointed by the editorial concept mentioned earlier, as it became clear to him that it would not change. He made several passing remarks on the quality of the paper and it is clear that others

8 *KazLev* Vol. VI, 184–185.

9 *KazLev* Vol. III, 286.

10 *KazLev* Vol. VII, 67–68.

11 KÓKAY György, *Felvilágosodás, kereszténység, nemzeti kultúra [Enlightenment, Christianity, National Culture]* Historia litteraria 8 (Budapest: Universitas Könyvkiadó, 2000), 178.

shared his opinion.¹² We can say that Kazinczy had an unflinching faith in the paper's ability to improve and with this in mind he started a series of biographical articles under the title *Magyarok emlékezete* [*Memory of the Hungarians*], of which he completed three.¹³ He wrote to his friend, the poet János Kis, as an experiment in genres and described the second of the three articles, this one about Gábor Baranyi. When writing this he was already thinking about revitalizing the already far too tedious paper. After the next two pieces in the series, sketches of Lőrinc Orczy and László Kazinczy, were published, he tried his best to convince others to follow his example of writing short historical biographies.

II

The short piece entitled *Csokonai Sírköve eránt tett jelentés* [*Progress Report on Csokonai's Sepulchre*] is the first manifestation of the modern cultural and aesthetic program of erecting monuments. This was initiated by the Transylvanian aristocrat and patron of the arts, Farkas Cserey, and Kazinczy himself, and appeared in the columns of the fledgling *Hazai Tudósítások* at Kazinczy's own discretion.¹⁴

The initiative to erect a monument in honour of Csokonai Vitéz from public donations was unprecedented. The idea itself came from Farkas Cserey, who first mentioned it to Kazinczy in April 1805.¹⁵ Kazinczy's reply does not survive, but we can get an inkling of its content from a letter he wrote a few weeks later. In this missive Kazinczy writes of a memorial to the German poet August Bürger in Göttingen, which was funded from public donations and which he considered exemplary. Cserey's proposal was ground-breaking and Kazinczy internalized it completely.¹⁶ Both of them knew that this would be the first time in Hungary that a poet and man of letters had been given a sepulchral monument in a public place, with funds from the public and stemming from patriotic enthusiasm. It was Kazinczy himself who admitted to having relied on European models when designing the monument. We learn from his *Pandecta* notes that besides the Bürger monument he had knowledge of practically all the European (German,

12 *KazLev* Vol. IV, 415–416, 496–498.

13 *Hazai Tudósítások* I, No. 37 (1806): 397; II, No. 21 (1807): 177; II, No. 22 (1807): 176–179.

14 KAZINCZY Ferenc, "Csokonainak sírköve" ["Csokonai's Tomb"], *Hazai Tudósítások* I, No. 14 (1806): 119–120.

15 *KazLev* Vol. III, 315–316.

16 *KazLev* Vol. III, 322.

Swiss and French) monuments erected to poets or scientists, well before Csokonai Vitéz's idea for a sepulchral monument was even brought up. The model for both Cserey and Kazinczy was no doubt the "idea of civic monuments" developed by the Enlightenment. It was connected to the use of monuments that had been so instrumental in defining the spirit and aesthetics of the English landscape garden. And erecting these monuments became commonplace due to the emergence of the bourgeois public sphere.

For a long time in European cultural history, public monuments had been exclusively erected for monarchs, generals and representatives of royal power. However, the idea of civic monuments goes back to classical antiquity and the Renaissance. The tradition of venerating poets also comes from antiquity. The first European monuments that were not dedicated to monarchs or generals were erected in countries where the criticism of religion and early bourgeois humanist thinking were most wide-spread: in 1621 in Rotterdam, Erasmus became the first person to be honoured with a monument, followed by a book printer in Haarlem in 1722.¹⁷

In Germany, literary achievement had become recognized as an important social and patriotic act since the Enlightenment, and writers were celebrated as being at the vanguard of the rise of the bourgeoisie. This change of attitude was coupled with the spreading practice of erecting monuments to poets, which first appeared in English gardens.

The first English examples became well-known through German authors, especially the seminal work of Ch. K. Lorenz von Hirschfeld entitled *Theorie der Gartenkunst*, which was influential in Central and Eastern Europe. Hirschfeld mentions the "Temple of British Worthies" in Stowe, a monument containing niches of sixteen busts of eminent personalities, including philosophers, poets and even a scientist.¹⁸ It is the spectacular manifestation of social memory in the modern sense that wishes to preserve and interpret its past by erecting statues of famous people. What we see here is the emergence of a modern, secularized and civic variety of the culture of memory.

Gardens became the first places for these kinds of monuments, and Alexander Pope, William Congreve, William Shenstone and James Thomson were soon immortalized in them. The first European monument, a sepulchre in honour of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, was placed in Ermenonville on a small park island

17 Rolf SELBMANN, *Dichterdenkmäler in Deutschland: Literaturgeschichte in Erz und Stein* (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler Verlag, 1988), 3.

18 Ibid., 6.

surrounded by poplars. The scenic beauty of the monument to Rousseau and its island location made such a great impression on contemporaries that several other monuments were erected in Rousseau's memory, including in Wörlitz. In Kazinczy's notes we can find two versions of the reference to Rousseau's cenotaph in Ermenonville.¹⁹ He first copied the epitaph in 1802 from W.G. Becker's *Taschenbuch für Gartenfreunde*.²⁰ Then in 1808, he copied the same text into the first volume of his *Pandectas*.²¹ Rousseau's monument thus launched a wave, which broke most forcefully in Germany. Compared to the original monument in Ermenonville though, what gradually changed was that consecrating places where people had died started to become less important. It thus became common practice to erect monuments to famous personalities in private gardens, a phenomenon Hirschfeld had considerable influence in spreading.

The intention of the garden owners was to bring an intellectual horizon to the physical landscape – his garden – through which he could define his own relationship to past and future. In Hungary, Prince Lajos Batthyány was the first to start erecting garden sculptures. He did this at his Körmend estate and his work was unique. Besides Homer and Cicero, he also erected a statue to his favourite poet, Salomon Gessner, in 1786, when the latter was still alive.²² The Gessner monument was of crucial importance to Kazinczy, too. But let us now return to the monuments to German writers and poets, which Kazinczy noted and copied examples of for himself. The first of these was Christian Fürchtegott Gellert. Kazinczy saw Gellert's sepulchral monument in the Johanniskirche in Leipzig on a print in the tenth volume of Gellert's collected works. In 1808 he suggested that it be taken as a model for the artistic realisation of the cenotaph of Ábrahám Barcsay in Transylvania. We know he was well aware of the Bürger monument erected on public land in Göttingen in 1799. Bürger's statue was the first to be put up in a public place and be financed from public funds collected through a call in a newspaper (which was also a first). Friedrich Schiller was among the donors. The next important sepulchral monument is that of Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock in Hamburg, whose epitaph was published in a

19 ADRIAN VON BUTTLAR, *Az angolkert: A klasszicizmus és a romantika kertművészete [The English Garden: Garden Art of Classicism and Romanticism]*, translated by HAVAS Lujza (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 1999), 133.

20 W. G. BECKER, *Taschenbuch für Gartenfreunde* (Leipzig: Voss, 1795), 178.

21 RÁDAY Gyűjtemény, Szemere-tár [Szemere Collection of the Ráday Archives], I, 208; MTA KIK Kt., K633/I 181b

22 GALAVICS Géza, "Magyarországi angolkertek" ["English Gardens in Hungary"], in BUTTLAR, *Az angolkert*, 1–136, 23.

German paper. Kazinczy copied it into the first volume of his *Pandectas* under the heading “Klopstock’s memory in Hamburg”. Klopstock’s sepulchre still stands in the garden of the Lutheran Christianskirche in the Ottensen district of Hamburg.

If we leaf through what is left of Kazinczy’s first notes after he came out of prison, we can find several consecutive notes and sketches, each of which was based on Becker’s *Taschenbuch für Gartenfreunde*, which are very similar to the description of Rousseau’s cenotaph. Kazinczy read the book in the summer of 1802, copying designs for monuments and including a drawing of Carl von Linné’s monument in Uppsala.²³

So far we have looked at examples of monuments that served as models for Kazinczy. In 1803, however, he was intrigued by the composition techniques for inscriptions on monuments and cenotaphs. This is attested to by a series of notes in a manuscript volume of miscellaneous subjects, a copy of which was included in the first volume of the *Pandectas*.²⁴ Based on dates of the notes around them in the manuscript, we can assume that these notes were taken between May 31 and June 14, 1803, during Kazinczy’s visit to Vienna. During this fortnight he made a point of visiting the busts of two Austrian military men, Field Marshal Franz Moritz Lacy and General Gideon Ernst Laudon in the building of the Viennese court-martial, and made careful copies of the Latin inscriptions. The next notes include a copy of the inscription on Laudon’s gravestone in the garden of the general’s country house near Vienna at Hadersdorf. It is followed by the text of the inscription on the pedestal of the equestrian statue of Emperor Joseph II in the park in Laxenburg. Kazinczy saw these in 1803, and later he visited the huge equestrian sculpture in memorial of the Emperor in the Josefsplatz in Vienna, which was completed in 1806. The bronze statue on a granite pedestal was commissioned by Emperor Francis in honour of his uncle Joseph II. This was the first monument in Austria to be erected in a public place. Kazinczy was so captivated by monuments and their inscriptions that when visiting the English garden at Hodkovce in 1806 he studied the epitaphs of the Csáky family and included them verbatim in his description of the estate.

Kazinczy’s notes on monuments and inscriptions appear mainly in his notebooks dating from 1802 to 1808. After the drawn out debate over Csokonai Vitéz’s sepulchral monument was closed in 1808, Kazinczy was asked by Gábor Haller to write an epitaph for the monument of Ábrahám Barcsay, and in 1809

23 Ráday Gyűjtemény, Szemere-tár I, 209–210.

24 MTA KIK Kt., K604/I. 80a; MTA KIK Kt., K633/I. 180a–181b.

Miklós Wesselényi the Younger asked him to do the same for his father's grave-stone.

III

After this long detour we must now return to Cserey and Kazinczy's mutual decision about Csokonai Vitéz's sepulchral monument. The case took an interesting turn in August 1805 when Kazinczy changed his mind and suggested that rather than appealing to the public for funds for the tombstone they should do the fundraising privately.²⁵ His feeling was that the greater public should be involved only when the cenotaph was finished. Over a month later, Cserey announced that he had started collecting donations.²⁶ However, between the autumn of 1805 and the spring of 1806, Kazinczy and Cserey seem to have neglected the subject of the monument in their correspondence. Cserey undertook the task of raising the money while Kazinczy promised to design the cenotaph, but he wanted to agree with Cserey on what models to follow. In the autumn of 1805 he suggested taking inspiration from a collection of prints representing Etruscan, Greek and Roman antiquities from the collection of William Hamilton, the British ambassador to the Kingdom of Naples.²⁷ Cserey first asked Kazinczy whether he had made any progress with the design in April 1806, to which Kazinczy replied on May 19 that he would soon send him the sketches. One gets the impression from this letter that by this time he had reverted to the possibility of making an appeal to the public, enthused by the news of the launch of *Hazai Tudósítások*.²⁸ Cserey took note of this but in his reply he suggested placing a call in the well-established *Magyar Kurír* as well.

Kazinczy's articles written during the Arcadia debate, between August 1806 and late spring 1807, as well the ideas he expressed on the matter in his letters, are very much open to interpretation. At the same time, how the controversy over the Csokonai Vitéz monument influenced his artistic conception of the moment has been somewhat neglected by researchers. Suffice it to say that noting the unfavourable reactions, Kazinczy partly changed his conception of the sepulchral monument and began to look for more cost-effective and durable solutions. The Gessner monument erected by Prince Batthyány at Körmend

25 *KazLev* Vol. III, 409–410.

26 *KazLev* Vol. III, 441.

27 *KazLev* Vol. III, 449.

28 *KazLev* Vol. IV, 155.

was crucial in Kazinczy's thought process. József Csehy's detailed description and sketch of the monument, which he sent in the winter of 1807, proved to be an ideal model for the Csokonai Vitéz monument. This was something that Kazinczy and Cserey could agree on. The sculptural program of Batthyány's English garden was based on the same neoclassical ideal of taste that Kazinczy wanted to spread in Eastern Hungary through the Csokonai Vitéz monument. He also made many statements on the topic in the Arcadia debate.²⁹ No wonder Kazinczy was preoccupied by the monument erected at Körmend by Batthyány. He considered the prince another, if not the most, outstanding representative of the Arcadian ideal in Hungary.

Kazinczy and Batthyány strived to adapt the same European, cosmopolitan culture in local settings at two very distant points within Hungary: Széplalom in the east and Körmend in the west. In a series of articles he published in *Hazai Tudósítások*, Kazinczy was the first to connect these ideals of the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that were so popular in Western Europe; namely, the regeneration of nature, the veneration of great personalities as a tool to unify a nation in space and time, beauty and remembrance.

29 *KazLev* Vol. IV, 476.