

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DISSERTATION

EUROPEAN TRANSLATIONS OF HÂFEZ FROM THE END OF THE 18<sup>TH</sup> TO THE  
BEGINNING OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

by

KATALIN TORMA

Eötvös Loránd University  
Faculty of Humanities

Doctoral School of Literary Studies  
Doctoral Program in the Hungarian and European Enlightenment

Supervisors:

Dr. Éva Jeremiás, university professor  
Dr. habil. Márton Szilágyi, associate professor

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In this doctoral dissertation I discuss the reception of Ḥâfeẓ in Hungary as part of European Orientalism. I used modern Iranian (Persian) Ḥâfeẓ editions to compare and evaluate the first Latin, English, French and Hungarian translations of Ḥâfeẓ made between around the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These are presented in the Appendix volume, offering a convenient reference for the corpus of Ḥâfeẓ which was available in Europe during this period. The first contribution to be examined from this material is the earliest book-length translation of Ḥâfeẓ published anywhere in Europe, a work by the Hungarian Károly Reviczky (Vienna, 1771), while the last one is the first Hungarian edition of Ḥâfeẓ (Pest, 1824), by Gábor Fábián, who relied on Latin translations. The titles and bibliographic description of the translated volumes which are discussed in this dissertation are found below.

To summarise my research, the following results are proposed:

1. There is little authentic information at our disposal about the life of Ḥâfeẓ. Yet the problems associated with blind spots in his biography are secondary to the ones caused by the lack of an authoritative corpus of the poems of Ḥâfeẓ, the definition of which still remains to be done. Due to the traditional practice transmitting of manuscripts for many centuries, there are numerous versions of his literary work, including parts which modern philological research now considers to be of doubtful authenticity. Several collated editions have been published, mainly since the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, that allow the reader to compare the various versions, although most of these cannot be perceived as critical editions in the strictest sense, because they tend to merge several manuscripts into a single standardised text. Thus Ḥâfeẓ still lacks a canonical edition. At present, there are two different editions which are widely accepted in academic circles: one of them is co-authored by Qâsem Ġani and Moḥammad Qazvini (Tehran, 1320 š./1941), the other one is by Parviz Nâtel Xânlari (Tehran, 1337 š./1959). In my doctoral thesis I opted for the Ġani–Qazvini edition to use as the basis of my research. It is recognised as the best modern edition by several Ḥâfeẓ researchers (e.g. Arberry, Xorramšâhi) and it contains more *gazals* than the Xânlari compilation, therefore it includes more items as authentic than the latter. In the period under discussion, however, the canonical works of Ḥâfeẓ was even vaster, containing nearly six hundred poems, several of which have not become accepted as genuine by modern scholarship even though they gained popularity in Europe as such. These poems are in a separate chapter of the Appendix, which shows

a marked discrepancy between the European literary tradition and the modern scholarly canon.

2. Despite the fact that Ḥâfeẓ did not introduce novel themes in Persian *ġazal* poetry, he undoubtedly opened a new chapter in the history of the genre with his mastery of technique as well as the dynamic and inventive application of the theme set inherited from his predecessors. His *ġazals* are threaded along daring, loose and at times even discursive associations that disrupt the solid coherence typical of previous pieces of the genre. These *ġazals* are not narrative and the sequence of the *beyts* is not governed by a logical or grammatical-semantic relationship: linear cohesion in the Ḥâfeẓ *ġazals* is fairly loose, at the same time the global coherence of the text is pronounced, owing to mainly the prosodic, stylistic and semantic-thematic unity employed that creates coherence in his poems. These parameters tend to make comprehension and translation processes very difficult, and the underlying reason for misinterpretation and mistranslation of his poetry often stems from the superficial knowledge and poor interpreting of the set of themes and symbology of Ḥâfeẓ's art.
3. The primary aim of this dissertation is to introduce three scholars who played a key role in the reception of Ḥâfeẓ's poetry during the Age of Hungarian Enlightenment: Károly Reviczky, Mihály Csokonai Vitéz and Gábor Fábián. Károly Reviczky and Gábor Fábián were the first translators of Ḥâfeẓ in Latin and Hungarian, respectively, whose books of poems were published as independent volumes. Regrettably, Reviczky's key role in the Ḥâfeẓ-reception was largely overlooked and for the most part remained unnoticed by the scholarship, despite the fact that his familiarity with Oriental literature and his translations of Ḥâfeẓ provided the basis and template for further Ḥâfeẓ translations to others, including Jones, who is perceived as a pioneer of the field, and Fábián, the first Hungarian Ḥâfeẓ translator. Reviczky's position as a pioneer is reinforced by the observation that most forewords of early 19<sup>th</sup> century Ḥâfeẓ editions make a reference to Reviczky. Furthermore, the publication of his Latin translations was shortly followed by an English (London, 1774) and a German (Vienna, 1782) edition.
4. Jones's ambition to popularise the art of Ḥâfeẓ among wider audiences was echoed by many, indeed his life's work attracted a lot of attention. Three years after the initial release of his book, which he intended for introducing Oriental poetry (London, 1774), it was republished by Eichhorn in Leipzig (1777), making it available for non-British audiences. Although both Csokonai and Fábián could easily acquire a copy of Jones'

anthology, Jones' superficial understanding of Persian was of a little avail for them to grasp the essence of Ḥâfez, as demonstrated in the dissertation through selected examples. One is under the impression that his inconsistency in transcription, his tendency to misinterpret the text and the seemingly intentional distortion of meaning serves to cover the shortcomings of his skills which did not extend beyond those of an enthusiastic amateur. At this stage of my research it appears as if he simply jotted down the acquired information without thoroughly examining the material. As a result of his superficial knowledge of the subject, his description of the Persian language lacks coherence, and his idea of the Persian style reflects little more than an attempt to force his adaptations of Ḥâfez into a readily available Greco-Roman mould. Overall, his translation often gives the impression of a forced adjustment of the Persian poetic style to the European taste, retaining only a lingering "exoticism" of the originals.

5. Csokonai's seminal importance in the European – and not merely Hungarian – reception of Ḥâfez cannot be overestimated. His poem, *A' Ḥâfiz sírhalma* (Grave of Ḥâfez) dedicated to the Persian poet preceded the *West-Eastern divan* of Goethe (Stuttgart, 1819) by almost two decades, yet it is Goethe's work which has been universally acknowledged as the first European poetic work, inspired by Ḥâfez. Csokonai's tribute to Ḥâfez was published in the *Anakreoni Dalok* (Vienna, 1806), because in the early Ḥâfez reception he was popularly regarded as the Persian Anacreon. This presumed kinship might have originated from Reviczky, because it was him who pointed out their thematic similarities in a letter to Jones, dated 19<sup>th</sup> February 1768. Jones, in turn, put these alleged similarities between the poetry of Ḥâfez and Anacreon in print before Reviczky did so. Csokonai also attempted to demonstrate this similarity to the Hungarian readership by composing the abovementioned poetry book and by a planned research. At the same time he supposedly aimed to introduce the Persian poet, mostly unknown in Hungary at the time.
6. Géza Képes claims in his comparative study titled *Hâfiz és Csokonai* (Ḥâfez and Csokonai) that Csokonai strived to write some of his poems in Persian-Arabic metric patterns. This thesis points out that based on Jones' book titled *Poeseos Asiaticae* (London, 1774) in which he dedicated a chapter to demonstrate Arabo-Persian prosody of verse, Jones himself did not entirely understand the <sup>ˆ</sup>*aruḏ*-system he hoped to introduce. This chapter was subsequently read and excerpted by Csokonai, but because of Jones' poor interpretation, no matter how much Csokonai wished to learn

the Arabic-Persian style of poetry, he could not obtain precise or applicable instructions From Jones' book.

7. The first Hungarian Ḥâfeẓ translation released as an independent volume was published by Gábor Fábián (Pest, 1824) who did not engage in Oriental Studies and nothing suggests that he was in contact with anyone who may have directly encouraged him to study Persian poetry, therefore quite possibly Csokonai's poem initiated Fábián's interest in translating Ḥâfeẓ. Two quotes underpin this theory in Fábián's volume from the poem *A' Ḥâfiz sírhalma*: one is on the front page of the *ġazals* and the other one is before the Fragments. In the lack of Persian language knowledge Fábián used Reviczky's book, titled *Specimen Poeseos Persicae* (Vienna, 1771) and Jones' volume *Poeseos Asiaticae* (London, 1774), as well as prepared a poetic adaptation of Gábor Döbrentei's two works in prose that was originally published in the scientific journal *Erdélyi Muzéum* (1816). Fábián might have relied mainly on Reviczky's work for he not only published all the *ġazals* but he did so in the same arrangement as he found them in the Latin translation. It was followed by the two poetic adaptations published in the *Erdélyi Muzéum*. Finally the Hungarian version of the *ġazals* of *Poeseos Asiaticae* have been rearranged to an order different from the one in the source volume. Curiously enough, the rare Reviczky edition that was out of reach in Hungary for quite some time, after some half a century later was finally made accessible for the Hungarian readership, even if in a somewhat altered and extended version.
8. The purpose of the Appendix volume that accompanies my dissertation is to gain an insight into the making of the "Ḥâfeẓ phenomenon" around the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, by presenting a fictional anthology compiled from the Ḥâfeẓ translations of the discussed translators, and as an extra benefit, it presents translations of the same *ġazals* in different languages, to enable comparison.

The primary aim of this study is to re-evaluate the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century translations of Ḥâfeẓ through the knowledge of Persian linguistics and philology, i.e. scientific disciplines which are necessitated by the interdisciplinary nature of the topic.

Brief summary of research outcomes:

The aim of this paper is to introduce the art of the world-renowned Persian poet in depth.

In this essay I compiled 87 different Ḥâfeẓ-*ġazals* along with their 273 translations in four languages (Latin, French, English and Hungarian). The Ḥâfeẓ text corpus used to include considerably more poems during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, out of which 64 *ġazals* are currently considered as canonical, with their 210 translated versions; as well as 19 more *ġazals*, currently considered as non-canonic, with their 53 translations, and an additional 4 unidentified pieces with 10 of their translated versions were included in my thesis.

Discrepancy between the Eastern and European methodology of philological research makes the understanding of the notion behind the canonization process rather difficult, without which the knowledge, or at least the awareness of the basis for the evaluation and selection of the poems of Ḥâfeẓ is considerably more challenging to follow. In general terms, European philology tends to critically evaluate and select based on well-defined viewpoints, while the Persian approach is primarily intuitive. An acclaimed Persian researcher once made a simple yet profound statement regarding the authenticity of a Ḥâfeẓ *ġazal* by saying that the author of the poem in question (App.II.a.4.) is by no means Ḥâfeẓ, because ‘it is not a pretty one, and he did not write anything such the kind’. Interestingly, four complete translations of this poem have been published: one in Latin, two different in English and one in Hungarian, and the adaptations were the works of no other than Jones, Nott and Fábíán themselves.

The 87 Ḥâfeẓ poems and 273 translations in the Appendix gives the reader an idea of the Persian poet’s esteem in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, whose art made an impression on Goethe, the latter largely aimed to popularise acclaimed and sought after literary works which were little known to the general public.

As a further outcome of my research, I hope that I have drawn due attention to the familiar poem by Mihály Csokonai Vitéz, and the translations by Károly Reviczky and Gábor Fábíán of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, respectively.

List of the translation volumes discussed in this thesis:

- Count Károly REVICZKY, *Specimen Poeseos Persicae, sive Muhammedis Schems-eddini notioris agnomine Haphyzi Ghazelae, sive Odae sexdecim ex initio Divani depromptae, nunc primum latinitate donatae, cum metaphrasi ligata et soluta, paraphrasi item ac notis*, Kaliwoda, Vienna, 1771.
- John RICHARDSON, *A Specimen of Persian Poetry; or Odes of Hafez: with an English Translation and Paraphrase. Chiefly from the Specimen Poeseos Persicae os Baron Revizky, envoy from the Emperor of Germany to the Court of Poland. With Historical and Grammatical Illustrations, and a Complete Analysis, for the Assistance of those who wish to study the persian language. A new edition, corrected and enlarged by S. Rousseau, teacher of the persian language*, London, 1802. (1. ed. 1774.)
- Sir William JONES, *Histoire de Nader Chah, connu sous le nom de Thahmas Kuli Khan, empereur de Perse, Traduite d'un manuscrit persan, par ordre de sa majesté, Le Roi de Dannemark, avec des notes chronologiques, historiques, géographiques et un Traité sur la Poésie Orientale*, vol. II., P. Emsly, London, 1770; *A Grammar of the Persian Language*, W. and J. Richardson, London, 1771; *Poems Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatik Languages, to which are added two essays, I. On the poetry of the Eastern Nations, II. On the arts, commonly called Imitative*. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1772; *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri Sex, cum Appendice, sublicitur Limon seu miscellaneorum liber*, T. Cadell, London, 1774.
- John NOTT, *Select Odes from the Persian Poet Hafez, translated into English verse with notes critical and explanatory by John Nott*, London, 1787.
- John Haddon HINDLEY, *Persian Lyrics or Scattered Poems from The Diwan-i-Hafiz, with paraphrases in verse and prose, a catalogue of the gazels as arranged in a manuscript of the works of Hafiz in the Chetham Library at Manchester, and other illustrations*, Oriental Press, London, 1800.
- Samuel ROUSSEAU (ed.), *The Flowers of Persian Literature, containing extracts from the most celebrated authors, in prose and verse; with a translation into English, being intended as a companion to Sir William Jones's Persian Grammar to which is prefixed an essay on the language and literature of Persia*, Samuel Rousseau, London, 1805.
- Gábor FÁBIÁN, *Hafiz Persa Költő' Divánjából Gházelák 's Töredékek*, Mátyás Petrózai Trattner, Pest, 1824.

## Publications related to the topic of the dissertation:

2013. *Sa<sup>c</sup>di korai hazai recepciója. Fordítások magyar folyóiratokban a 18. század végén és a 19. század elején*, Irodalomtörténet – (accepted for publication)
2012. *Sir William Jones Hafez-fordításai = A szótól a szövegig*. ELTE, BTK, Gólyavár, Transcript of the lecture given on 22 June 2011 on campus by the Modern Philological Society, ed. Vilmos Bárdosi, Segédkönyvek a nyelvészet tanulmányozásához 137, Tinta Publishing, Budapest, 2012. pp. 237–245. ISBN 978 615 5219 07 8
2011. *Jellemábrázolás és jellemfestés a Šáhnâme Bižan és Maniže című történetében* = vetted online journal of Modern Philological Society of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences  
<http://www.filologia.hu/tanulmanyok/jellemabrazolas-es-jellemfestes-a-%C5%A1%C3%A2hn%C3%A2me-bi%C5%BEan-es-mani%C5%BEe-cimu-torteneteben.html>  
 ISSN 2062 7858
2008. *Gyöngyök fűzése a penna gyémánt hegyével vagy Hanno homályos pun beszéde? Csokonai Vitéz Mihály ismeretei az arab–perzsa verselésről = Prima Manus. Tanulmányok a felvilágosodás korának magyar irodalmából*, Ráció Publishing, Budapest, 2008. pp. 82–99. ISBN 978 963 9605 46 6
2006. *A' Háfizi dalok = A látható könyv. Tanulmányok az irodalmi medialitás köréből* (ed. Hász-Fehér Katalin), Tiszatáj Könyvek, 2006. pp. 83–111. ISBN 978 963 8496 591