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Fragmenta Takátsiana

sources and supplements to the biography of József Takáts (1767-1821)

(thesis of doctoral dissertation)

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I. Main objectives

József Takáts, former private instructor of Count László Festetics (son of C. György Festetics, 1785-1846), was an accomplished Hungarian representative of the philanthropism, and also an important link in the network of Hungarian literateurs in Vienna. Both in his life and in the appreciation of his walk of life, the years between 1790 and 1799 had the most important role. The main objective of this dissertation was to collect and publish the sources connected to József Takáts from this period of time. The aim of my dissertation is to describe those aspects of József Takáts's life, that had not been presented in his biography (and in other studies based on this work, as well): his *pedagogical work* and his *publishing activity*, and, using these new sources, to reappraise the role of József Takáts in the Hungarian cultural history.

II. Methods of research

The substantive part of this dissertation is collected from the three largest public collections, the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the National Archives of Hungary and the National Széchényi Library. By the systematical examination of the records, the part of the legacy has been found. A part of it is similar to the researchers, because it was published in the biography in 1890 and after. Some of the quoted sources are known from here, because the manuscripts kept in Kolozsvár, thanks to the WWII, are now at unidentified places (if not destructed). But after the WWII, thanks to the secularization of private archives, now the archive of the family Festetics is opened for scholars, who have never seen these manuscripts before – neither the writer of the monograph, Sándor Takáts. The personal files and writs of the family members and the manorial files are now in the National Archive, the manuscripts of the family library are kept now in the National Széchényi Library.

In 1967, István Kostyál has pointed to the significance of the files, and their application in more fields of historical studies like cultural, literature or educational history, but the systematical elaboration of these files were postponed until now. The newly found sources of the archives of family Festetics, that contains 224 unknown letters and 11 miscellaneous manuscripts.

III. Achievements

1. The educational work of József Takáts is a composite thing. From 1790 to 1799, Takáts was the private instructor of László Festetics. In 1793, they moved to Vienna, thereafter he was in a frequent connection with György Festetics. His letters paint us a very accurate picture on the education of the young aristocrats at the end of the 18th Century, from their coursebooks and daily routine to their instructors, travelling and public life. The written plans based on Rousseau's and the german philanthropists' (Basedow's, Guthmuth's and Salzmann's) thoughts show us an accordance between György Festetics and József Takáts in the principles of education. Uniquely between the Hungarian aristocratic educational plans, under the influence of german philanthropists, besides sports (swimming, horse-riding, running, skating) the physical work (like joinery) was built in Takáts's plan. After 1793, moving to Vienna, the scope of his duties has changed. The most important field remained the moral education of the child, but after 1793 Takáts did not teach the young count. As the child was given to public school, Takáts's duties diverged from a traditional private teacher's, and focused on repetitions and language teaching (French and Italian) beside moral education. To fill out his work time, count György Festetics assigned him some agential duties like financial cases and book acquisition – or managing the Minerva-project.

His work as a private teacher is not a ordinary one. He had to give up teaching, so we are not able to appreciate this field of work, but according to count

László's walk of life and his attempts on enriching the Hungarian cultural heritage, the moral education was successful.

2. Every summer, as a part of his education, the young count did a short travel in the parts and states of Hungary (Transdanubia, 1794; Great Plain, 1795; North Hungary, 1796; South Hungary and Transylvania, 1797) and the Austrian Empire (Italy and Croatia, 1798) with his instructor. According to their aims and the special parameters (the young count's age, available time) they can be classified as a special (patriotic) homeland journey with significant style of the Grand Tour or Kavalierstour. The first and main goal was to earn first hand informations about the homeland, that's why their descriptions makes the travelogues an important source of the Hungarian cultural and local history. Another speciality is the another aim of the travels: to establish and to attend social connections with family, politicians and scholars – preparing to his carreer as a Hungarian aristocrat. Some of the visitations (like that one at Sámuel Tessedik, in 1795) was symbolizing a patriotic union. Analysing the different types of manuscripts (from bills and itineraries to travelogues) we can follow every moment of the journeys they had taken.

3. As a talented employee of the greatest Hungarian maecenas of the century, Takáts had got to know the significant Hungarian literateurs in Vienna, such as Sámuel Kerekes, Demeter Görög, Miklós Révai, or János Batsányi, and, by the time, became one of them. His book of verses was released in 1796. In 1798, Takáts started a series of books, called Magyar Minerva with the subsidy of György Festetics. The aim of this enterprise was to publish helpful and useful works from Hungarian scholars. After a successful start, the main purposes of the enterprise diverged from the original plans of the maecenas, to a direction of printing the unpublished works of contemporary Hungarian writers such as Pál Ányos and Benedek Virág. Takáts built out a nationwide network for collecting and

distributing these works. According to his letters, he was in connection with all the important literateurs: György Aranka, Benedek Virág, Dávid Baróti Szabó, Sándor Báróczy, István Kultsár.

Analysing the different manuscripts, we have more information about the published works and the distribution of them, so we can appreciate the role of Takáts more stressful in the Hungarian cultural history than it was estimated.

IV. Printed publications

1. Festetics László neveltetéséről. In: *Lymbus: magyarságtudományi forrásközlemények*, szerk.: Monok István, Nyerges Judit, Budapest, BBI, MOL, OSZK, 2008. 211-233. (About the education of László Festetics)
2. Adatok Festetics László korai neveltetéséhez. In: *Képzés és Gyakorlat*, 2008/2-3 84-87. (Supplements to the early education of László Festetics)
3. Magyar Minerva. In: *Magyar Művelődéstörténeti Lexikon VII. köt., főszerk. Kőszeghy Péter*, Budapest, Balassi, 2007, 171. (Lexicon of Hungarian cultural history, items: Hungarian Minerva, József Takáts)
4. Festetics György Plánuma fia neveltetéséről, In: *Kutatások az Eötvös József Főiskolán 2007*, szerk.: Steinerné Molnár Judit, Baja, EJJF, 2008. 309-312. (György Festetics's plan on his son's education)
5. A magyar utazási irodalom egy ismeretlen fejezete: Péteri Takáts József úti beszámolóí és levelei 1795-1798. In: *Tanulmányok 2006*, szerk. Szendrey Sándor, Kölcsey Ferenc Református Tanítóképző Főiskola, Debrecen, 2007 (An unknown chapter of the Hungarian travel literature. Reports and letters of József Péteri Takáts between 1795-1798)

6. Az utazás mint a nevelés eszköze. Péteri Takáts József és a magyar utazási irodalom. In: *Kutatások az Eötvös József Főiskolán 2006*, Baja, EJF, 2007, 151-154. (Travelling as a mean of education. József Péteri Takáts and the Hungarian travel literature)

7. Péteri Takáts József irodalmi kapcsolathálója a Magyar Minerva körül. In: *Kutatások az Eötvös József Főiskolán 2005*, szerk. Steinerné Molnár Judit, EJF, Baja, 2006. 229-236. (Literary network of József Péteri Takáts around the Magyar Minerva)

8. Adatok Péteri Takáts József nevelői tevékenységéhez. In: *Könyv és nevelés*. 2005/4. 88-90. (Details on József Péteri Takáts as private instructor)

9. Péteri Takáts József Költeményes munkáji, Bécs, 1796 (online kiadás; 2003, <http://www.tar.hu/ptj>)