

Medium-term Strategic Plan of the Institute for Literary Studies of the Research Centre for the Humanities (2020–2023)

1) Analysis of the external environment and review of the internal capacities

The Institute for Literary Studies plays a decisive role in the development of Hungarian literary scholarship. The Institute is the biggest and most authoritative institution of the Hungarian literary science; its departments constitute the fundamental communities of the given sub-area of the discipline that shape the profile and thematics of the latter. It publishes the prestigious periodicals and book series of the discipline, it organizes conference and reading series of primary importance, and maintains good relations with foreign partner institutions and international organizations. Furthermore, the Institute regularly organizes joint conferences with fellow institutes of literary studies and related disciplines, university departments and public collections, both in Hungary and its neighbouring countries.

The Institute takes responsibility not only for its own researchers, but also for the state, quality and outlook of the entire Hungarian literary science. The orientations of the institution that comprises the biggest research capacity of the discipline is a point of reference for the entire profession, and provide its representatives an epistemic and scientific management model. The Institute for Literary Studies is determined to use all instruments at its disposal to orientate the public life of the Hungarian literary science academia towards openness for dialogue and an attitude of respect for professional achievements of unquestionable quality.

The Institute is involved in the systematic, organized and collective research of all the periods of Hungarian literary history, which is reflected in its organizational structure set up several decades ago: the Renaissance Department, the 18th-Century Department, the 19th-Century Department, and the Department of Modern Hungarian Literary History. There is a separate department for studying the intellectual and literary processes of the East-Central-European nations. The Department of Literary Theory works on the conceptual and methodological renewal of the Hungarian literary science and on reflecting on the trends of international discourse. The Bibliographical Department compiles a literary history bibliography.

2) Mission statement of the Institute for Literary Studies

The scope of the core activities performed by the Institute for Literary Studies as public functions is specified in the Organizational and Operational Rules of the RCH. In consideration of the scope of the core activities, the following *mission statement* can be formulated:

The task of the Institute is to perform the systematic study of the periods, trends, genres, and creators of the Hungarian and regional literary history, by which it prepares for the writing of a comprehensive *synthesis of the Hungarian literary history*. One of the preconditions of the latter is a sophisticated *textological* examination of literary texts. Using the latest methodologies and offering a comprehensive synthesis of current knowledge, the series of the Institute publish in *critical editions* the oeuvres of classic Hungarian authors from the Middle Ages up to Modernity, and thus guarantee the quality-assured processing and conservation of the literary texts in our national cultural heritage. Important sources of literary and cultural history, rare prints and manuscripts are made available in new scholarly text publications.

In addition to the works written in Hungarian, the Institute also studies works created in Latin in the territory of Hungary, as well as the ones written in the languages of the ethnic minorities. The work of the Institute covers research into the relations with the literature of the neighbouring peoples and Western European nations serving as models in certain areas of

culture (comparative studies). In addition to literary history, the Institute also studies the *history of literary thought, literary science and critical assessment principles*. The historical differences in the notions and interpretations of literature can be grasped through the description of the frameworks of grammar, rhetoric, poetics, aesthetics and language philosophy. It is in that context that literary education and the institutional system of literature as well as epistemological, philosophical and theological views embedded into literary thinking are studied within the realm of intellectual history.

The Institute promotes the study of *literary theory* according to both structuralist and post-structuralist trends. Thus, the main research topics in this area are the *theory of genre and of translation, narratology, tropology, reference and textual immanence*; and the *methodological problems* and the new trends in literary history writing.

3) Setting strategic objectives for the Institute for Literary Studies in close correlation with the aims of the organizational units and groups

In conformity with the mission statement, the Institute for Literary Studies has set the following strategic objectives for the period of 2020–2022:

1. The Institute will continue the preparation of the critical editions in the *Régi Magyar Költők Tára XVI., XVII. and XVIII. század* series [Repository of Old Hungarian Poets, 16th, 17th and 18th Centuries], the *Bibliotheca Scriptorum Medii Recentisque Aevorum* series, as well as from the oeuvres of Miklós Zrínyi, Francis II Rákóczi, Ferenc Kazinczy, Dániel Berzsenyi, János Arany, Mihály Babits, and Dezső Kosztolányi. Based on the critical editions published earlier on paper, it will prepare an electronic critical edition and display it on the public and free textological portal of the Hungarian literary science, *DigiPhil*. With a view to that, the texts and notes will undergo a semantic processing and coding in XML-format conforming to the syntax of the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI), the international technical quasi-standard. About ten volumes can be processed in a year, which means that by the year 2022, more than fifty volumes will be integrated into the XML-based dynamic service. Besides the labour-intensive textological expert system, the extensive, static publication of text sources and scientific text editions aiming for a broad spectrum will also continue: by 2022, the series of the critical editions available on the Institute's portal displaying critical editions in a static, two-layered PDF format will be complete (with approximately 500 volumes).

2. The Institute will continue to look after *A magyar irodalomtörténet bibliográfiája* [The Bibliography of the Hungarian Literary History]. By retroconversion, it will digitalize the ten volumes of the endeavour already published (from the beginning till 1970, and from 1991 up to 2000). By taking two volumes completed per year, by the end of 2022, approx. 200,000 bibliographical items of eight volumes will be made available on the public and free bibliographical portal of the Institute. The collection of recent bibliographical data, ongoing since 2013, which became publicly accessible in 2016 on the same portal, has been continuously enriched: the analytic, classified, and annotated description of approx. 15,000 items is performed each year. By the end of 2022, the lag of the bibliographical tracking of recent professional literature will have been reduced to one calendar year.

3. The manuscript of the synthesis entitled *Magyar irodalomtörténet* [Hungarian Literary History] is under preparation. In the period of 2020–2022, the authors and the editors of the above work will be writing chapters in a regular and coordinated manner about the literature of each of the three periods of Hungarian Literature (Old, Classic, and Modern). By the end of 2022, about half of the planned synthesis, or approx. 150 author's sheets, will have been written.

4. The stocktaking processing of *periods, trends, schools, authors* will continue in the form of monographs and papers for each period of the Hungarian and regional literary history. The fellows of the Institute prepare at least as many studies, book reviews and talks as is required from them every year.

5. Besides the traditional cooperation projects pursued between the Central-European academic institutions in East-Central-European comparative topics, the Institute will continue its research project on the so-called *Long Reformation*, which will certainly be much sought after in the Western European scholarly market as well. The novelty of the topic as well as the REFORC-centre constructed behind it provides a firm regional role. The Institute is in charge of coordinating the work of the Eastern European partner institutions of REFORC, the biggest Western European scientific consortium involved in early modern research, and Budapest will host the annual international congress of the organization in 2023.

6. Master courses announced by the Institute for domestic and transborder higher education stakeholders in topics related to Old Hungarian Literature, 20th-century literature and Central European literary history will be pursued. This initiative will, on the one hand, create a new institutional profile of supplying postgraduate educational competences and functions, and on the other, it will increase the Institute's outreach in those student communities to which it would not otherwise have direct access for professional communication.

4) Setting up a system of performance indicators adapted to the profile of the Institute for Literary Studies, which will ensure that the implementation of the strategy could be monitored and directed

The apparently exact, albeit somewhat mechanical measurement of the individual research achievements is provided by the stocktaking of the publications registered in the MTMT (Hungarian Repository of Scientific Works). Although the use of the MTMT is a statutory obligation, a purely quantitative performance assessment is highly questionable in the field of humanities, and it is unable to represent the roles undertaken in the conception and organization of *conferences*, the management or performance of *other collective tasks*, and the thankless administration of *scientific management*. These malfunctions are remedied by the individualized *researcher assessment* to be prepared each year, which, in addition to verifying the performance of the minimum requirements of the employment criteria and job descriptions, can also function as a key component of the promotional and quality assurance system.

The *annual reports* as well as the *work plans* prepared for the next year ensure the measurement of individual and research team performance. Such documents have been prepared for several decades and are available at the Institute, and they are under continuous verification. Obviously, both the plans and the end-of-the-year stocktaking of the achievements may vary substantially, but the primary assessment criterion is whether the personalized objectives have been met.

Mark-up language processing and bibliographical work may be expressed in terms of the *number of records, characters and syntactic markers*. For those fellows who work on these types of tasks, it is possible to establish a quota.

5) Determining the strategic action plans: the planning of institute-level programmes and projects in a yearly distribution

2020: On the occasion of the 400th anniversary of Miklós Zrínyi's birth, the Institute will hold its annual "ReBaKucs" big conference on *Baroque epic poetry* in Eger, which will also be one of the highlight events for the REFORC membership of the Institute. The preparations of the

critical edition of Miklós Zrínyi's poems will begin. Already organized on five instances since 2016, the one-day methodological workshops entitled *Az értelmezés hatalma* [The Power of Interpretation] will continue with a junior conference. The proceedings of the *Andor Tarnai memorial conference* of September 2019 will come out as a collection of studies. Zsombor Tóth will publish a collection of studies on Mihály Cserei reflecting research into writing and reading history (*Cserei Mihály: homo scribens*). The 19th-Century Department will organize a scientific session within the series *Hagyományfrissítés* [Dusting Off Traditions]. The *Régi Magyar Költők Tára: XVIII. század* series will publish the critical edition of the poems of György Kalmár (*Kalmár György versei*). The fourth volume of the *Közköltészet* [Popular Poetry] subseries of the above mentioned series will be released (*Ünnepi köszöntőversek*). A selection from the works of György Kalmár on linguistic theory will come out in the *ReTextum* series (*Kalmár György nyelvelméleti munkái*) (multi-lingual critical edition). The source edition of 18th- and 19th-century Hungarian pulp fiction literature will be pursued. István Csörsz Rumén is working on a small monograph titled *Újdonnan új régiségek: Magyar ponyvakultúra a 18. században*. A volume of *Doromb: Közköltészeti tanulmányok* will be published. The following volumes will come out in the critical edition series of János Arany's works: *Kisebb költemények I., Szentivánéji álm, Dalgyűjtemény, Toldi* and *Lapszéli jegyzetek II. Folyóiratok II.* Péter Dávidházi will publish his English-language collection of studies: *Studies in Shakespeare, Biblical Allusions and Hungarian Literature*. Zsuzsanna Török will give an account of her research in a monograph entitled *Íróői életpályák és sajtóirodalom a 19. század második felében*. Tamás Berkes will publish his monograph on Czech Decadence. In the framework of the cooperation between the Department of Modern Hungarian Literary History and the Department of Hungarian Literary History of the University of Novi Sad, the next conference will be organized in Novi Sad, and a retrospective collection of studies will be published about the five-decade history of the conference series. An interdisciplinary conference will be organized about the history of the cult surrounding Ady. The proceedings of the 2018 conference entitled "*Üdvözlét a győzőnek*" [Salutation to the Victor] will come out in a book. Works on the Babits critical edition will continue. The proceedings of the 2018 conference entitled *Újabb fejlemények a kortárs prózában* [New Developments in Contemporary Prose] will come out in a book format.

2021: The second volume of the source edition of 18th- and 19th-century Hungarian pulp fiction literature will be released (*Vegyes műfajú dalok és versek*). Another volume of *Doromb: Közköltészeti tanulmányok* will be published. Sándor Hites will publish an English-language monograph about the versions of the notion of world literature in economics. Árpád Csonki will publish a monograph about the epic poem as a genre and its Hungarian-language tradition. The following volumes will come out in the critical edition series of János Arany's works: *Lapszéli jegyzetek II. Könyvek I.* and *Arisztophanész-fordítások II.* The 19th-Century Department will organize a scientific session within the series *Hagyományfrissítés* [Dusting Off Traditions]. Works on the Babits critical edition will continue. A monograph will be prepared about the connections between cultural translation studies and Hungarian literary science. A conference will be organized on the usability of the notion of realism. In the framework of the cooperation between the Department of Modern Hungarian Literary History and the University of Novi Sad, the next conference will be organized in Budapest.

2022: The second volume of the critical edition of Nicolaus Olahus's letters will come out in the *Bibliotheca Scriptorum Medii Recentisque Aevorum* series. The only remaining work from the *Régi Magyar Költők Tára: XVI. század* series is the second volume of the critical edition of Miklós Bogáti Fazakas's oeuvre, which will be finished by 2022. Two 18th-century French translations of Francis II Rákóczi's Latin-language work entitled *Egy bűnös vallomása* will be published in a critical edition at Honoré Champion, Paris. An international conference will be

organized under the title *Janzenizmus Közép-Európában* [Jansenism in Central Europe]. A monograph will be published about the reception of popular poetry between 1780 and 1850 (István Csörsz Rumen). Another volume of *Doromb: Közköltészeti tanulmányok* will be published. The 18th-century translation literature database will be finalized. The 19th-Century Department will make accessible the directory of 18th- and 19th-century Hungarian novels. In connection with 18th- and 19th-century aesthetic thinking, Gergely Fórizs will prepare a monograph on the history of aesthetics, and a collections of studies on the history of aesthetics in German. Sándor Hites will publish an English-language monograph on the 19th-century literary intellectual history of the notion of “national wealth”. The critical edition of Dániel Berzsenyi’s poems will come out. The following volumes will come out in the critical edition series of János Arany’s works: *Lapszéli jegyzetek II. Könyvek II.* and *Toldi estéje*. The 19th-Century Department will organize a scientific session within the series *Hagyományfrissítés* [Dusting Off Traditions]. The second volume of *Versek* will be released in the Babits critical edition series (1906–1910), and the fourth volume of *Babits-kronológia* will come out, covering the period from 1921 to 1926. In the framework of the cooperation between the Department of Modern Hungarian Literary History and the University of Novi Sad, the next conference will be organized in Novi Sad. A monograph will be published on the female authors of the Hungarian avant-garde (Györgyi Földes) and the poetic models thereof (András Kappanyos). A representative comparative publication will be finished: the manuscript of the volume titled *Hungarian Literature as World Literature* for Bloomsbury’s *Literature as World Literature* series. The monograph of Gábor Bezeczky examines periodicals as the medium of literature. Zsófia Kalavszky will publish her monograph (*Puskin életműve az orosz és a magyar kultusz kutatások kontextusában*).

6) Planning of the economic background of the Institute’s action plans (business plan)

The Institute is not an independent business unit; its budgetary operational resources are ensured by the financial chapters of the RCH distributed in an appropriate proportion. Since the aggregation of the research centre in 2012, the direction of the Institute has been organizing the scientific life and general operation of the Institute along new logistic perspectives and a more rational administration.

In addition to the basic budgetary subvention, we continuously apply for funds available for research, publication and digitalization. The financial background of scientific endeavours can only be guaranteed through successful and well-managed tendering activities, one of the conditions of which is continuous professional innovation – such as the assimilation and productive application of the novelties of digital philology, besides traditional textological projects. With a view to a more successful securing of foreign funding, the Institute has been steadily building and expanding its network of international relations.

Our strategy carefully blends traditionally well-functioning and marketable enterprises (e.g. the editing and annotating of the textual corpus of the national cultural heritage) and initiatives implying innovation and learning, and involving and expanding the network of international contacts.

7) Monitoring the measures following from the strategy (feedback); measuring and verifying the implementation of the strategic actions

The chief institutional forms of feedback are the following:

- continuous media monitoring to analyze media coverage, taking into consideration the opinions and feedback of the interdisciplinary partners, and the evaluations of the RCH and Eötvös Loránd Research Network as governing boards;
- individual and department-level annual self-evaluation presenting the scientometric and citation figures (see Point 4 above) and an overview of the plans for the next year;
- convening the meeting of department heads with the direction of the director of the Institute, asking them to give their opinion on all professional decisions and issues that will exercise a significant impact on the development of the Institute;
- convening a plenary meeting to discuss strategic matters;
- the executive members of the Institute (director, scientific secretary, representative of professional advocacy organization) discuss the things to do, make decisions, and monitor the execution of the decisions.

17 December 2019, Budapest

Gábor Kecskeméti
Director

Pál Fodor
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