

Eötvös Loránd University  
Faculty of Humanities

## **COLLECTION OF THESES**

Zoltán Lukácsi

### **PULPIT AND LUMINANCE**

The Hungarian Catholic Sermon in the Era of Enlightenment

Consultant:

Dr. Márton Szilágyi CSc., associate professor

Doctoral School of Literary Studies

Hungarian and European Enlightenment Program

## **I. The choice of topic**

It was the examination of "late baroque" or "rococo" church literature that has led from old Hungarian literature to the era of enlightenment. The religious literature of the turn of the 18th–19th century is a rather undiscovered area of our literary history, although without it we are unable to draw a complete picture about the literature of the era and the appearance and reception of the enlightenment in Hungary. I have mentioned literature, because religious literature, in spite of its noticeable suppression, still played an important role – both in its quantity and influence – in the literature of the era; and the reception of enlightenment, because the ecclesiastical authors had strongly been preoccupied by the new thoughts, the effects and counter-effects of which are in various degrees and depths detectable in their works.

Owing to the process called laicization, literary history became more and more interested in profane literature and even in the examination of ecclesiastical authors, a special emphasis was laid upon their secular works.

I have concentrated my attention to the genre of sermon that was regarded as a "stepchild" even within the frames of religious literature, or after Sándor Lukácsy, as „disowned literature”. This is the era when sermons start to get frayed from canonized literature. The reason for this is not only to be found in the decreasing interest in this genre but also in the less talented nature of its authors and the transformation of the concept of "literature". The authors themselves considered their sermons belonging more to a theological than a literary genre, and since they deemed literature dangerous from many respects, they consciously evaded its exaggerated version.

My examinations are extended to the period between the 1770s and the 1830s. The beginning of this era is accounted for by the initiation of a change in discourse discernable in church literature, hallmarked by the names of Lajos Csapodi (1729–1801), Sámuel Vajda (1718–1795), János Molnár (1728–1804). The terminus of the era is indicated by the formal and essential renewal of catholic sermon, although it still cannot be pointed out by an exact date. In case of the oeuvre exceeding these confines, I sometimes examined texts written at an earlier or later date, but mainly focused my attention on sermons originating from the above-mentioned, roughly 60-year interval.

As source material I have used all the available sermons in their printed or manuscript forms. I have examined the sermon collections and the small tracts of the era in the most thorough way, and tried to explore and get familiar with the material of several archives and manuscript archives of libraries, so altogether I worked with a full knowledge of

thousands of sermons in their printed or manuscript versions. I endeavoured to represent all the layers of the clergy in the era. I examined secular, ecclesiastical, monastic as well as ex-monastic authors, even taking most of the possible orders of these latter ones into account. I have not only studied the renowned and educated priests, but the less known and less high standard authors, as well. Among the dozens of oeuvres presented in my dissertation, special emphasis has been laid on the works of János Molnár (1728–1804), Nárcisz Klenák (1741?–1805), Vazul Alexovics (1742–1796), Joákim Egyed (?–?), Máté Simon (1743–1818), Pál Negyedés (1753–1803), Damaszcén Török (1757–1824), György Fejér (1766–1851) and József Sombori (1783–1822).

## **II. Guidelines of the analysis**

In my dissertation I have analysed a vaguely researched area of Hungarian literature. I needed to walk on an untrodden path, which made my work more difficult. While the previous chapters of Hungarian sermon-literature have been if not totally, but quite well uncovered, the speakers and sermons of the turn of the 18th–19th century are (with the exception of a few advanced articles) very vaguely discovered. However, the sermon material we have inherited from the era is exceedingly abundant, regarding either its printed or manuscript version, which has raised further difficulties. The in-depth exploration of a long-forgotten author or his oeuvre provides sufficient tasks for our literary historiography for a long time. The aim of my dissertation is not this. I have endeavoured to draw attention to the Hungarian sermon-literature in the era of enlightenment in its entirety. I aimed to stretch the period of sermon-histographic research that has mostly focused on the era up to the end of baroque, and intended to further specify the results of Hungarian enlightenment research. For a fuller understanding of the Hungarian reception of enlightenment with the complex system of its effects and counter-effects, sermons serve with many new guidelines. The well-known heterogenic nature of enlightenment is further shaded by church literature, especially the sermon-literature of the era.

The huge source material carries the most diverse types and phenomena in space, time, thinking, mentality, educatedness, style, intention and in addressing the audience. Therefore I intended to define and demonstrate the most typical and basic tendencies, and to draw attention to the most important characteristics. However, I did not have the possibility to elaborate on a number of details and to answer numerous emerging questions, owing to restrictions of time and length. I was determined to avoid all preconceptional theories and

supported each of my findings with texts. At the end of my dissertation I intended to put together an anthology which is especially characteristic of the era and contains sermon fragments unknown up to date. However, I am aware of the fact that many of my observations may raise questions and debates.

My basic question was how the duality of tradition and progression is manifested in the sermons of the time, to what extent sermon is a traditional and a progressive genre at the turn of the 18th–19th century; and what kind of dialogues were the preachers induced by the intellectual tendencies unknown by then. I intended to explore the kinds of interpretation and filters through which priests made their "ordinary" churchgoers familiar with the diverse contemporary views, opinions and tendencies. Although catholic sermon is one of the most permanent genre in literature, it is also the most vivid one, due to the fact that spoken word and direct connection with the recipients creates a specific speech-situation, opening possibilities for fast reflections and actualizations.

In my dissertation I analysed the external features of homilies, attempting to learn how much they preserve from the formal characteristics of earlier, mainly baroque sermons, paying particular attention to the structure and length of the speeches. Apart from the formal considerations, I have paid great attention to essential features. What were the main genres of sermons before? What argumentation and sources did they dispose of? What conceptual traditions can be observed in the choice of topics for given passages of the Bible? Did anything from sciences, especially natural sciences, infiltrate into the sermons? How much did the ratio-centered nature of the era leave its mark on the literary and stylistic composition of the homilies? Were there any stylistic means the use of which were suppressed, remained unchanged or became more frequent? Are any new means of expression detectable in the texts? How did the respect of authority and source-criticism, as two typical features of the era of enlightenment, influence the role of sacral and prophane sources (the Bible, the Church Fathers, documents of councils, historical and poetic works, etc.) in argumentation and polemy? In what ways and measures did they regard the homilies of earlier and contemporary authors as "auxiliary" preaching materials?

The topic of my research required to take account of the references of the sermons about the reception of enlightenment. I was interested whether the clergy of the time was merely an observer, a passive endurer, or an active participant of the paradigmatic change starting in the 1770s. How did the pastors interpret their own roles in the emerging tendencies against religion and church? How did the polemy continue with protestantism and how did it develop in contrast with the fashionable theological views (jansenism, febronianism,

gallicanism, reformed catholicism, etc.), philosophical and political trends (e.g. josephinism)? What do they refuse and what do they accept from these? What kind of theological features characterise the sermons of the time? To what extent is tolerance and ecumenical thinking detectable in the speeches? What became the main directions of the polemy? Can tendencies be formulated at all or does each author relate to all these according to individual conceptions? Finally, I intended to take into consideration the social and political reflections of the homilies, most especially the texts and references about the French revolution and the events of the Napoleonic wars.

My dissertation is meant to be the first instalment to pay off a debt. I wished to serve a basis for the further research of the sermons of the era. I am aware of the fact that there might be many other possibilities and additional methods to approach the texts apart from the ones used in my analysis and that the viewpoints raised by myself can be further shaped from other aspects. The homilies of the era dispose of an incomprehensibly rich source value for the study of history and local history, philosophy, sociology, ethnography, orthography, cultural history, religious philosophy, the so-called Alltagsgeschichte and other scientific research. The unhidden goal of my work is to set a long process into motion, even if at the expense of debates, objections and completions.

### III. The establishments and results of the research

#### 1. The formal characteristics of homilies

Homilies at the turn of the 18th–19th century continuously follow the formal characteristics of the sermons in the baroque era. The structures of both the printed sermons and the manuscripts are similar, the characteristic features and differences between the individual authors are not significant. At the beginning of each sermon there is a quotation from the Bible (most frequently from the Gospels), almost always from the pericope assigned for the day, in Latin and Hungarian languages.

The speech starts with an introduction (*exordium*), most often it comprises the delineation of the topic (*propositio*). It is an obligatory part of the sermon to give an outline of the structure of the speech (*partitio*) that is often drawn up in a dichotomic way. After the *partitio* an optional part of the text is a call for attention (*captatio*) or calling out for help (*invocatio*).

Then comes the essential part of the speech called discussion (*tractatio*) that is sometimes referred to as the elaboration of the topic (*argumentatio*). At this point there is a possibility for argumentation, confirmation (*confirmatio*), and also for the refusal of contrasting views, false doctrines (*refutatio*). In most of the cases the sermons have two or three parts (*partes* I, II, III). The further division of the individual *partes* depends on the authors: there are ones who further divide them very thoroughly, with Roman or Arabic numbers, letters and other signs (e.g. –, §), most of them, however, merely structure their texts by distinguishing the paragraphs from each other, sometimes by leaving space or drawing a horizontal line between them. Most of the times speeches are ended by a separate final part (*epilogue* or *peroratio*). This may comprise summary, exhortation and prayer.

The length of the sermons is various, but generally shows a decreasing tendency in comparison with the previous eras. Sermons lasting for 1-1.5 hours are rare, an average Sunday sermon must have lasted for 30-45 minutes. On the occasion of patron festivals or other feastdays they might even have lasted longer. We cannot ascertain the length of the homilies with certainty, as we do not know if the written version was delivered in its entirety from the pulpit. We are not aware of the delivery speed of the individual preachers either that would influence length in great deal. There are printed "speeches" with enormous length, which have certainly never been delivered in that form. These are the full, many-sided elaborations of a topic, which were meant for the fellow pastors of their authors to select from

them according to their needs, and for their readers to find everything they need to know about a topic at one place.

## *2. Characteristics of the content*

A huge part of the sermons of our era are dogmatic or moral speeches (*sermones*). *Homilies* occur rarely, at special occasions we meet glorifying speeches (*panegyricus*). "Pure" sermons, however, are very rarely to be found: dogmatic speeches almost always have moral references, exhortations, and moral speeches do not lack the dogmatic establishment of the given topic.

The main sources of the sermons are still the Bible, the Church Fathers, the teaching of popes and councils; but the significance of these sources is reevaluated. Although for catholic believers they are obviously still unswerving authorities, in certain argumentations the authors feel the vulnerability of the demonstrative power of their sources. Certain Church Fathers, popes and councils of the modern age dispose of convincing power only for catholic believers, for members of other denominations, however, they are difficult to be used. Against the views attacking Church and religion neither these, nor the Bible is a decisive proof, since the adversaries stepped up precisely against revelation and respect for authority. Therefore, mainly in polemic speeches many authors try to set their argumentation on firm grounds. They intend to show that their arguments are supported not only by the teaching of the Church but also by common sense and the laws of nature, and that catholic teachings are the most useful ones regarding nation and society. At the same time, they emphasise that ratio in itself is not sufficient to get acquainted with the world and God: faith is also indispensable. In the same way, they remind us that the laws of nature can only give us right moral guidance together with revelation, and morality, without religion they are incomplete and insufficient for the benefit of the society, not to mention salvation. General human values and virtues (often supported by pagan history, philosophy or other religions) gain more and more emphasis in the sermons. At the same time, they intend to prove that these had only been endeavours, fragmentary in themselves, and their completion was achieved by christianity.

The sermon-building process widely employed since the middle ages is still characteristic in the examined era: the authors of the sermons first analyse their topic's prototypes that appear in the Old Testament, then present their topic's bases in the New Testament and support their arguments with the teaching of the Church – the Church Fathers, the popes, councils, respected spiritual writers – and possibly with legends of saints (while

perhaps refute the opposing confessions, heresies). In addition to these they write their comments and exhortations.

Beside the most important source groups we should not neglect the various sacred and profane sources, such as liturgy, offices, commentaries on the Bible, theological works, prayer books, florilegies, historical works, ecclesiastical and secular laws, newspaper articles, etc. More rarely there are secular literary as well as historical or poetic works among the sources.

Many precedents prove that the speakers made use of each other's works for preparing their sermons. Printed books were often published expressly to facilitate the work of pastors. The authors adapted the former and more recent texts with considerable freedom. Sometimes they only employed certain thoughts, argumentations or shorter quotations from the works of their fellow authors, at other times, however, long passages. Péter Pázmány has a powerful effect on sermon literature even 150 years after his death. In this genre the requirement of "originality" does not prevail and the compilation methods have gone through little change since the ancient times. The adaptation of certain texts, thoughts, topics of other authors can sometimes be very well demonstrated, however, the route of their majority is difficult to follow.

It is striking to see that the sermon writers of the enlightenment era keep away from the employment of legendary sources and those of uncertain authenticity in their texts. It should not be forgotten though, that contemporary source criticism was often mistaken about the authenticity of sources.

The relationship of sermons and profane sciences is contradictory: the authors dispose of decent expertise in the fields of linguistics and history, most of them are distrustful of literature, and the vast majority shows considerable ignorance in sciences.

### *3. Stylistic characteristics*

The number of literary means of expression in the sermons of the enlightenment era is rather deficient. The primary goals of the authors were education and conveying message. In the threefold mission of sermons – *docere-movere-delectare* – the strongest emphasis was consciously put on the first one. Devices of raising affection, sentimental descriptions, exclamations, exhortations for compassion mainly characterise the sermons written for feast days like Easter (especially Good Friday) or Christmas texts about certain saints.



Contemporary authors consciously avoid the exaggerated literary ornamentation of the speeches. They very rarely use similes and metaphors. There are hardly any examples to be found in the speeches. The only exceptions are certain authors who take pleasure in listing examples of ancient history.

Speeches are made more colorful and scientific with the – often etimological – explanations of words and concepts. A particularly popular means of expression in the sermons is *sermocinatio* that means "making someone talk", it is used when the author pretends to quote another person. It is not rare that the *contionator* takes the role and speaks in the name of Jesus, Mary or a saint in the sermon.

Other approved devices of the authors of the sermons are amassing, especially amassing questions, structuring the sentences anaforistically, drawing parallels and contrasts and employing idioms and proverbs. Instances of exclamations, addressing and questions serve for maintaining contact with the audience.

#### *4. Sermons in the altered intellectual environment*

Examining sermons, we can ascertain without doubt that pastors experienced the development of a new, from the previous ones in every respect different era starting from the middle of the 18th century. This novelty was primarily perceivable in the expansion of ideas that opposed to the teachings of the Church and the catholic religion, which soon had a powerful effect on the mentality and moral attitude of catholic believers. Therefore the task of speakers altered, which is often expressed from the pulpit: it is not enough to make the audience familiar with the different branches of confessions and exhort them, but new and unconventional topics needed to be addressed, many times adjusting them to the opponents' train of thought, in order to defend their faith with the armament of the other side.

The majority of the clergy did not have deep knowledge of the different philosophical branches of the age of enlightenment. Sometimes the names of Voltaire and Rousseau, very rarely those of Bayle and Locke were mentioned in the sermons, but others hardly ever. It rarely happens that their views are systematically presented or refuted, these authors are most often condemned by very general, sarcastic or exasperated sideswipes.

"Naturalists", deists, materialists and representants of other tendencies are frequently disparaged from the pulpit, who are most of the time mentioned as "enlightened" or "little savants of our days", without detailing their doctrines. In the sermons the preachers condemn the "deranged" philosophers of the era and their doctrines superficially, jumbling up the most

diverse points of view. Most preachers – perhaps precisely because of their hasty observations or their own convenience – have the opinion that these ”new” teachings are not new in their entirety: they originate from the old false doctrines, heresies. And because these had without exceptions been refuted by the old councils and Church Fathers, the task is to transfer an in-depth knowledge of these teachings to the people, since it is only the ignorant who can become victims of these mistaken doctrines.

Another rather wide-spread idea of theirs is that there is a relation between the new teachings and the morals of their creators and followers: they ruin the respect of the Church and question its ethical system in order to deliberate their conscience. They create these theories to explain their sinful lives: they deny the spirit’s immortality, the Last Judgement Day, the rewarding of the good and bad in the afterlife to be able to calmly keep living their immoral lives.

Catholic clergy was in union to oppose josephinism and most of the proceeds of the ”enlightenment”, mostly their revolutionary tendencies. Most of them refuted the theological views spreading even in our country at the time of enlightenment, questioning even the former status of the Church (febronianism, gallicanism, jansenism). The judgement of the so-called reform-catholicism or catholic enlightenment expanding even in our country, hallmarked by the name of Antonio Muratori, is not so obvious. Although in their sermons they often judge the catholic believers who wish to change the ancient traditions, in practice they represent a balanced, restrained religiousness, free from exaggerations concerning the respect of saints, liturgy and religious traditions.

Thus, we cannot claim that enlightenment has left the clergy unaffected. The demand for modern scientific thinking, the development of source criticism, the idea of tolerance, the care taken of the Hungarian language, the national traditions, the questions of trends and education serve as opportunities for the formation of many kinds of opinions among the clergy. From the speeches it appears that the clergy not at all represented a unified opinion about the issues of the era; we even meet contradicting views within the same religious order.

### *5. Changes of the polemy*

Polemy taking place in the baroque era was solely directed against protestant doctrines and was primarily of theological nature: the eucharist, the religious system, confession and other sacraments, questions concerning Church-discipline and the interpretation of revelation served as main topics. In our era the debate has become manifold. Polemy with protestantism

has been preserved but has subsided. The endeavour of speakers was more and more directed towards the suppression of views against revelation, religion and eternal life. The courageous catholic tone of the time after catholic restauration has again lost confidence. It was difficult for them to strike the right note and find the antidote against the view that considered every cult, sanctuary, religious tradition redundant and regarded Christ as a mere human being, the Bible as a sheer creation of the human mind. Traditional catholic argumentation proved to be weak against these views.

They should have taken up arms also against josephinist, febrorian and other views attacking the former status of the Church. The attempts to respond the challenges are as various as many authors we can encounter. In this way, concerning a few issues, we can find contrasting viewpoints even among the clergy: the more indulgent priests attack the ones who keep more to traditions, and also the reverse tendency can be observed: the ones who prove to be conservative regarding certain questions, can have a liberal opinion about others. Our age is the era when catholic sermon was trying to find the right path. The greatest dilemma of every author is to be able to effectively address the audience influenced by the diverse tendencies of the era in such a way that their catholic preaching remains intact.

In the same way, it was difficult for them to cope with the challenge that there appeared more and more believers who considered themselves good catholics, but their view of life, religious thinking and lifestyle differed from the norm accepted by the clergy. Most of the authors call them "cold" catholics within the sermons. The gap between the clergy and the believers became wider and wider. Tolerance, questioning certain dogmas, moral laxism, the subsidence of strictness in education, the indecency of amusements among believers called for the creation of a novel pastoral strategy, a novel rethorical attitude, which found the authors rather difficult. The fact that the respect of the clergy and the Church was pushed into the background also contributed to this. The speakers themselves felt that their education carries no such authority as that of their predecessors. Believers, even if they listen to it, less effectively walk on that path and are not afraid to flirt with the ideas, morals and sciences condemned in the sermons.

We need to highlight the confidence of authors against "indecent books". They admonished the believers about the dangers of the books reproved by them not only in the sermons but also in monographs. These were either theological or philosophical writings, works against the state of the Church, however, mainly literary products: "romances", historical poems, racy, erotic or humorous works. It is also important to note that the sermons

of our era were the ones that started condemning theatres first, mostly as rivals of church and places of superfluous and immoral amusement.

#### *6. Social and political views in the sermons*

Cocionators did not only experience the spread of ideas criticising traditional Church but also traditional society. Theories relating to the equality in legislation, the creation of democracy, the abolition of congenital privileges and the fact of French revolution itself awaited some kind of reaction from the pulpit.

Contemporary speakers' vision of society is conservative. Each of them considers the hierarchical structure of society concordant with God's will, and regard its criticism and the protests and grumbles against it as serious crimes. They continuously warn the inferiors to the faithful, obedient service to their superiors. At the same time, however, they prompt the rulers and superiors to complete their duties conscientiously, and also remind them of their responsibility in front of God. Speeches usually take aim at extended families, either of middle- or of lower classes. Sermons addressing and being based on the values of noble- and courtmen are completely forced back. Moral speeches address parents and masters having maids. Sermons of the era seize every opportunity to exhort christian education. Parents are warned about the dangers of "trendy" education. Masters and housewives are reminded to be responsible not only for the material and physical supply of their servants but also for their salvation. They are required to show both a religious and moral example for them.

The cult of equality of the era is considered false and misleading and they emphasise that the real kind of equality and brotherhood was created by Christ and his Church, since in baptism everyone becomes God's child and virtues make everyone, irrespective of their ranks and social classes, capable of saintliness.

We can sometimes feel as if French revolution had come in very handy for the speakers. Its events are frequently used as illustrations and evidences to show what kind of monstrosities are bound to happen if a nation refutes its traditions, turns against its king and Church. It is not verifiable any more but very likely that the clergy's criticism of French revolution allayed revolutionary enthusiasm in our country. And when owing to the Napoleonic attack Hungary was also threatened by the French danger, many speakers levelled an exhorting speech to protect the country and the traditional values. Sermons relating to the battle of Győr in 1809 (the preceding exhortations or the thanksgiving speeches anticipating the withdrawal of the French troops) are special relics of the era.

The growing political interest of the sermons primarily refers to the events of the French revolution (anti-Church actions, the assassination of the king, the pope's capture and get-out, Napoleon's rise and downfall, etc.), but more rarely there are also references to other political-military events of the era.

The number of political references of the sermons is strongly increasing. At the same time, we need to confute the erroneous belief that sermon of the age of enlightenment has become a political means, the church mouthpiece of the profane goals of the ruler or the rudders. Utilitarian sermons popularising enactments, disposing of sheer worldly reasonings, serving with practical (agricultural or medical) advice can hardly ever be found in this era.

### *7. Theological views and the connection with other religions*

Renewed catholic dogmas elaborated by the Tridentinum have proved powerful enough for the Hungarian clergy to effectively enter the lists with protestantism from the pulpit. Dogmas making disputed questions unequivocal unified the sermons' theological trains of thought.

In the age of enlightenment, however, there was a ceasure of the uniform appearance of catholic speakers. The already mentioned spreading theological novelties – often originating from catholic priests – affected the speakers in different degrees, and they also approached reform-catholic views in dissimilar ways. Some of them put on the armament of theological rigour, and stressing the most conservative views like the threat of damnation, they tried to preclude that their followers would even at the lowest degree harmonize with the new tendencies. They emphasised that it is only the privilege of catholic baptised people to get salvation, and made the most minute adherence to the Church's education the only path leading to salvation. They did not urge the believers to read the Holy Scripture by themselves. Others held more open, more moderate views, and there were only few of them who proved to be overtly compliant in certain respects in connection with the modern views. Thus, there were contradictory views to be found within the clergy.

The so-called "didactic speeches" became prevalent that would instruct the believers surveying a theological question thoroughly and from every respect, often on the basis of catechism. The main goal of the speeches is the description of catholic dogmas and the dispute against protestantism became more and more oscular in the majority of speeches. The main disaster of the occurrent polemy is not believers interpreting certain questions of faith in different ways, but disbelief attacking religion in its totality, from the outside.

This is the time when the view to find the bonds connecting them with other religions start to get spreading in the sermons. They look for what is acceptable from those and can serve as examples for the believers, but they also wish to protect catholic dogmas and morality from every incompatible view. Therefore it frequently occurs that they take examples from pagan or oriental religions for the heroic practice of a virtue. At the same time, they strictly criticise their aberrations, their religious conceptions extraneous to christianity. This dichotomy is also noticeable with respect to non-christian world-religions and non-catholic christian denominations. Eastern christianity (ortodoxy) is convicted by them for their schismatism and certain theological and liturgical discrepancies of theirs, at the same time they use them as examples to defend the real presence of Christ in the eucharist in debates with protestants. They often discuss the dogmatic and disciplinary discrepancies of protestants and catholics when touching upon the issue of sanctuaries and other theological questions, but in case of necessity they also allude to protestant theologians concerning revelation, the dubious nature of Christ's figure of being a God and a human being in one body, and other corporate topics. When the topics of the afterlife and the existence of God are attacked, they refer to the islams, the Jews and even pagan religions. The believers and members of other religions disposing of high morals are often presented as icons for the "cold" christians. In the authors' polemies with the diverse theories of the era, defence and attack inevitably brings the ones being in accordance closer to each other, concerning certain topics. I call this phenomenon "pastoral ecumenism" that does not search unison with other religions for theological deliberations and the spirit of tolerance but rather due to the necessary measures of precaution on the side of the pastors.

#### IV. The candidate's publications related to the topic

*Vajda Sámuel élete és irodalmi munkássága*, Pannonhalma, 1997.

*Árkon kívül hegymesterkedem I-II* = Pannonhalmi Szemle 1996, IV/2, 57-70; IV/3, 68-83.

*Vajda Sámuel, a kései barokk próza elfeledett mestere* = Tihanyi Kalendárium, szerk. KORZENSZKY Richárd 1998, 49-57.

*Egy ismeretlen Apor* = Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények, 2005, 4-6, 494-503.

*Sombori József egyházi beszédei, avagy a katolikus prédikáció útkeresése a felvilágosodás korában* = Egyháztörténeti Szemle, 2008, 1, 3-24.

*Szószerék és világosság = Prima manus, Tanulmányok a felvilágosodás korának magyar irodalmából*, szerk. KESZEG Anna és VADERNA Gábor, Ráció Kiadó, 2008, 61-73.

*Napóleon a magyar katolikus prédikációban* = „Franciák Magyarországon, 1809”, I, szerk. BANA József, KATONA Csaba, Győr Megyei Jogú Város Levéltára, Magyar Országos Levéltár, Mediawave Közalapítvány, Budapest-Győr, 2010, 75-88.

*A magyar katolikus prédikáció helyzete a felvilágosodás korában*, Centenáriumi évkönyv 1910-2010, Győri Hittudományi Főiskola, Győr, 2010.