

Sermons without borders: On the sermon-writing work of Transylvanian Bishop András Illyés

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Abstract: The work of the Transylvanian bishop and author András Illyés (1639–1712) is unique in the early Hungarian literature in two respects: first, because of the completeness of the material he published, and second, because of his work as a translator and compiler. A further feature of Illyés's use of sources is that, with the exception of his second thematic collection, he drew increasingly on the works of Pietro Rota, and did so in an increasingly conscious and structured way. Illyés's collection of sermons thus contains one hundred and twenty-seven sermons in Hungarian for which Pietro Rota was the source.

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The work of the Transylvanian bishop and author András Illyés (1639–1712) is unique in the early Hungarian literature in two respects: first, because of the completeness of the material he published, and second, because of his work as a translator and compiler. His collections of sermons (Illyés 1691, 1692a, 1692b, 1696a, 1696b) cover the whole ecclesiastical year, both in terms of Sunday and feast day sermons. This is significant because, of the great Hungarian Catholic sermon writers of the period, Peter Pázmány (1570–1637) did not publish his sermons on saints, with a few exceptions (cf. Pázmány 1636), and the sermons of György Káldi (1573–1634) (Káldi 1631a, 1631b) cover only the first half of the ecclesiastical year, both for Sunday sermons and sermons on saints. In light of this, Illyés may have felt justified that a new collection was needed to fill the gaps. But despite this, it is not reasonable to regard Illyés as a more prolific author than either Káldi or Pázmány, for many of his sermons were

compiled from the works of his great Jesuit predecessors – and his sermons are also much shorter than those of his two predecessors. This is most clearly demonstrated by the passages Illyés created by cutting up the sermons of one or other of them: the texts on the days of St. Philip and St. James, taken from George Káldi, and the passages from Pázmány's second Good Friday sermon are good examples. András Illyés¹ published ten collections of sermons entitled *Abbreviated Sermons* ("Megrövidítettet ige") at the end of the 17th century in Hungarian and Latin – although they vary greatly in content and structure: among them are two feast-day (Illyés 1692a), one thematic (Illyés 1692b) and two Sunday (Illyés 1692a, 1692b) volumes.

Use of sources in András Illyés's volumes

The order in which the volumes appear draws attention to András Illyés's use of sources in an unusual way. However, before discussing it in detail, it should be noted that research in recent years has demonstrated that the content of these volumes can hardly be regarded as Illyés's own authorship: at present, about 98% of the texts can be verified as having been included in an earlier publication. In the course of my work, I have examined the text of three hundred and sixty-two sermons in András Illyés's five volumes. I found adapted source texts for seventy of the seventy-four sermons in the first volume, eighty-two of the ninety in the second volume, fifty-three of the fifty-four in the third volume, seventy-one of the seventy-five in the fourth volume, and sixty-nine of the sixty-nine in the last volume. This essentially means that of the three hundred and sixty-two of András Illyés's sermons, I have identified source material in three hundred and forty-six, in the form of either verbatim quotes or of mirror translations. This is essentially 96% coverage. This amount of adaptation thus covers essentially (almost) the whole of Illyés's preaching oeuvre. These figures are particularly significant in light of the fact that these texts have also been published in Latin translation, so that essentially all the above data on texts should be doubled. Such an extent of source usage in Hungarian Catholic printed texts has not yet been verified to date.

¹ For recent sources on András Illyés's life work, see the following works: Gábor (2017, 2022), Mihalik (2018), Szilágyi (2014), Tasi (2014).

During his studies in Rome, Illyés took notes on the works of several Italian authors, and many of the texts copied at that time were adapted in his later works in translation – in his biographies and sermons. It is important to highlight their role because it makes it clear that the Italian influence in his works is much more considerable than the Hungarian one. At the same time, it is important to mention the Hungarian Jesuit influence on Illyés's texts: there is a significant amount of textual borrowing from György Káldi and Péter Pázmány.

Thus, András Illyés's sermon-writing oeuvre is to a considerable extent a mirror translation, or (in the case of Hungarian sources) a literal, unmarked adaptation. If we take another look at the volumes from this perspective, we can observe a fascinating process.

The main sources of the first two volumes, published in 1691 and 1692 respectively, are very mixed. The first is (mainly) György Káldi's work, on thirty-nine occasions (Káldi 1631a, 1631b), Giuseppe Mansi's² on fourteen (Mansi 1658), Péter Pázmány's on twelve (Pázmány 1623, 1636), Pietro Rota's³ on five (Rota 1661), and in four cases Philippe d' Outreman (1644) may have been the source of Illyés's text.

The main sources in the second volume is Giuseppe Mansi on forty-nine occasions, György Káldi on sixteen, and Péter Pázmány on fifteen. In addition, the volume contains a sermon which can be verified to have been included in an earlier volume by another author. (Since Illyés typically made extensive use of a single source, as the above figures show, it is worth being cautious in cases where only one sermon by a single author is included in his collection. Nevertheless, these cases also prove that a sermon in question is not the result of Illyés's authorship.)

The main sources for the third (thematic) volume are Peter Pázmány on thirty-four occasions, György Káldi on nine, and Pietro Rota on seven. And here too there are some sources from whose authors, as far as we know, Illyés took texts only occasionally.

² Giuseppe Mansi (1607–1694)

³ Pietro Rota (1599?–1667) OFM Cap. See "P. Pietro Rota da Martinengo della Provincia di Brescia" (1884), "Pietro da Martinengo" (1937).

Of the Sunday volumes, the first adapts the works of Pietro Rota and Thomas Stapleton, forty-nine times and twenty-seven times, respectively, and the last contains only sermons translated from the works of Pietro Rota.

In other words, we can see that the range of sources and the use of texts changes over time: in the first two volumes, which are in Hungarian, Illyés worked with sources by several authors. In the first, by Hungarians (Káldi and Pázmány), in the second, he relied more on the works of Giuseppe Mansi. In the third, the Hungarian authors also play the main role, while in the Sunday collections the works of Pietro Rota are clearly the source of the mirror translations (or verbatim, unmarked adaptations). This chronological development may of course have been influenced by the ecclesiastical order of the year, but it is clear that Illyés worked with different sources in the Sunday volumes. On closer examination, however, it is also noticeable that his textual procedure has changed.

Pietro Rota's works in the Illyés volumes

Of all Italian authors, Pietro Rota may have had the greatest influence on Illyés, in so far as he drew inspiration for most of his works (more than a hundred sermons) from Rota's volume *Giardino Fiorito Di Varii Concetti Scritturali, E Morali* (Rota 1661) – in fact, his last collection is based exclusively on Rota's work. In the course of the adaptations, Illyés occasionally changed the order of the source texts but remained basically faithful to his sources. A good example is his second sermon on the second Sunday after Easter, written for a similar occasion:⁴

⁴ English translation: "In the Acts of the Apostles it is said that Peter the Vicar of Christ, Peter the Wonderworker, had great power in miracles, to send the sick away to the streets, *ut veniente Petro, saltem umbra illius obumbraret quemquam illorum, et liberarentur ab infirmitatibus suis*. That Peter came, even his shadow overshadowed some of them, and they were delivered from their diseases. The shadow of Peter was therefore a shadow, and must have been present, because it is the present body that casts the shadow, and not the one that is absent. Peter therefore, being present for the instruction of the Prelates, did healing."

András Illyés (1696a: 502–503)	Pietro Rota (1661: 38)
“Az Apostoli Cselekedetekben erössittetik, hogy olly nagy volt a’ Christus Vicariusának Sz. Peternek hatalma a’ csudatételekben, hogy a’ betegeket utszákra kitennék, <i>ut veniente Petro, saltem umbra illius obumbraret quemquam illorum, et liberarentur ab infirmitatibus suis.</i> Hogy eljövén Péter, akár csak az árnyéka árnyékozná azoknak valamelyikét, és megszabadíttatnának az ő betegségekből. A’ Péter árnyéka azért meggyógyította vala, tehát jelen kellett lenni, mivel a’ jelenvalo test önti ki az árnyékot, és nem a távulvalo. Péter azért a’ Prélátusoknak oktatására jelenlétén gyógyít vala.”	“Del Vicario dello dello stesso Signore Pietro Santo si dice ne gl’atti Apostolici, che cosi marauigliosa era la potestà sua nel sar miracoli, che poneuano gl’in nelle piazze, acciò di là passando egli, & ingombrandoli con la sola sua ombra li risanasse: <i>Vt veniente Petro, saltem umbra illius obumbraret quemquam illorum, et liberarentur ab infirmitatibus suis.</i> Sanaua dunque l’ombra di Pietro & oue il corpo si troua presente diffonde la sua ombra, & apporta la sanità, ma non già se li troua distante, e lontano. Hor Pietro dunque essendo Prelato della Chiesa con la sua ombra dona la sanità per dimostrare, che all’ hora solamente quando si troua presente alle sue pecore, e popolo, vale per giourali, & apportarli le salute, e non mai trouandosi absente.”

In the first collection of sermons by András Illyés – for the feast days – we find five sermons, for three occasions, whose source is a sermon by Pietro Rota:

András Illyés	Pietro Rota
1. The Ascension of Christ III.	The Ascension of Christ III.
2. Trinity Sunday II.	Trinity Sunday II.
3. Sunday III.	Trinity Sunday I. Trinity Sunday III.
4. Lord’s Day II.	2nd Sunday after Pentecost II.
5. Lord’s Day III.	2nd Sunday after Pentecost V.

Knowing that Illyés’s collection of sermons for these occasions contains three sermons each, it is clear that his use of sources is mixed in this respect. In

the second collection of Illyés's sermons, also for feast days, there is no known text from a Rota source. In the third – thematic – collection, Illyés adapted Rota's sermons also for three occasions:

András Illyés	Pietro Rota
1. Sermon on marriage I.	2nd Sunday after Epiphany III.
2. Sermon on marriage II.	2nd Sunday after Epiphany IV.
3. Sermon on marriage III.	2nd Sunday after Epiphany V.
4. On the love of our enemies II.	21st Sunday after Pentecost V.
5. On the love of our enemies III.	21st Sunday after Pentecost VI.
6. On the Consecration of the Church I.	24th Sunday after Pentecost V.
7. On the Consecration of the Church II.	24th Sunday after Pentecost VI.

The Sunday collections present an even more unified picture: they consist mainly of Rota adaptations – in such a way that the first part consists essentially of adaptations of Rota and Stapleton – in such a way that the Easter sermons are taken from Stapleton's work.

András Illyés	Pietro Rota
1. 1st Sunday of Advent I.	1st Sunday of Advent I. 1st Sunday of Advent II.
2. 1st Sunday of Advent II.	1st Sunday of Advent III.
3. 1st Sunday of Advent III.	1st Sunday of Advent IV.
4. 2nd Sunday of Advent I.	2nd Sunday of Advent II.
5. 2nd Sunday of Advent II.	2nd Sunday of Advent I. 2nd Sunday of Advent II.
6. 2nd Sunday of Advent III.	2nd Sunday of Advent IV.
7. 3rd Sunday of Advent I.	3rd Sunday of Advent I.
8. 3rd Sunday of Advent II.	3rd Sunday of Advent II.
9. 3rd Sunday of Advent III.	3rd Sunday of Advent III.
10. 4th Sunday of Advent I.	4th Sunday of Advent I.
11. 4th Sunday of Advent II.	4th Sunday of Advent II.
12. 4th Sunday of Advent III.	4th Sunday of Advent V.
13. 1st Sunday after Christmas I.	1st Sunday after Christmas I. 2nd Sunday of Advent I.

14. Sunday after Christmas II.	Sunday after Christmas II.
15. Sunday after Christmas III.	Sunday after Christmas IV.
16. 1st Sunday after Epiphany I.	1st Sunday after Epiphany II.
17. 1st Sunday after Epiphany II.	1st Sunday after Epiphany VII.
18. 1st Sunday after Epiphany III.	1st Sunday after Epiphany IX.
19. 2nd Sunday after Epiphany I.	2nd Sunday after Epiphany I.
20. 2nd Sunday after Epiphany II.	2nd Sunday after Epiphany II.
21. 3rd Sunday after Epiphany I.	3rd Sunday after Epiphany I.
22. 3rd Sunday after Epiphany II.	3rd Sunday after Epiphany II.
23. 3rd Sunday after Epiphany III.	3rd Sunday after Epiphany V.
24. 4th Sunday after Epiphany I.	4th Sunday after Epiphany I.
25. 4th Sunday after Epiphany II.	4th Sunday after Epiphany II.
26. 4th Sunday after Epiphany III.	4th Sunday after Epiphany III.
27. 5th Sunday after Epiphany I.	5th Sunday after Epiphany II.
28. 5th Sunday after Epiphany II.	5th Sunday after Epiphany IV.
29. 5th Sunday after Epiphany III.	5th Sunday after Epiphany V.
30. 6th Sunday after Epiphany I.	6th Sunday after Epiphany I.
31. 6th Sunday after Epiphany II.	6th Sunday after Epiphany IV.
32. 6th Sunday after Epiphany III.	6th Sunday after Epiphany V.
33. 2nd Sunday after Easter II.	2nd Sunday after Easter II.
34. 2nd Sunday after Easter III.	2nd Sunday after Easter III.
35. 3rd Sunday after Easter I.	3rd Sunday after Easter II.
36. 3rd Sunday after Easter II.	3rd Sunday after Easter III.
37. 3rd Sunday after Easter III.	3rd Sunday after Easter IV.
38. 4th Sunday after Easter I.	4th Sunday after Easter I.
39. 4th Sunday after Easter II.	4th Sunday after Easter II.
40. 4th Sunday after Easter III.	4th Sunday after Easter III.
41. 5th Sunday after Easter I.	5th Sunday after Easter I.
42. 5th Sunday after Easter II.	5th Sunday after Easter II.
43. 5th Sunday after Easter III.	5th Sunday after Easter III.
44. Sunday after Maundy Thursday I.	Sunday after Maundy Thursday I.
45. Sunday after Maundy Thursday II.	Sunday after Maundy Thursday II.

And the sermons in the last Illyés volume were exclusively from the collection of Pietro Rota's works.

András Illyés	Pietro Rota
1. 2nd Sunday after Pentecost I.	2nd Sunday after Pentecost I.
2. 2nd Sunday after Pentecost II.	2nd Sunday after Pentecost II.
3. 2nd Sunday after Pentecost III.	2nd Sunday after Pentecost III.
4. 3rd Sunday after Pentecost I.	3rd Sunday after Pentecost I.
5. 3rd Sunday after Pentecost II.	3rd Sunday after Pentecost II.
6. 3rd Sunday after Pentecost III.	3rd Sunday after Pentecost III.
7. 4th Sunday after Pentecost I.	4th Sunday after Pentecost I.
8. 4th Sunday after Pentecost II.	4th Sunday after Pentecost II.
9. 4th Sunday after Pentecost III.	4th Sunday after Pentecost III.
10. 5th Sunday after Pentecost I.	5th Sunday after Pentecost I.
11. 5th Sunday after Pentecost II.	5th Sunday after Pentecost II.
12. 5th Sunday after Pentecost III.	5th Sunday after Pentecost III.
13. 6th Sunday after Pentecost I.	6th Sunday after Pentecost II.
14. 6th Sunday after Pentecost II.	6th Sunday after Pentecost IV.
15. 6th Sunday after Pentecost III.	6th Sunday after Pentecost
16. 7th Sunday after Pentecost I.	7th Sunday after Pentecost I.
17. 7th Sunday after Pentecost II.	7th Sunday after Pentecost III.
18. 7th Sunday after Pentecost III.	7th Sunday after Pentecost IV.
19. 8th Sunday after Pentecost I.	8th Sunday after Pentecost II.
20. 8th Sunday after Pentecost II.	8th Sunday after Pentecost IV.
21. 8th Sunday after Pentecost III.	8th Sunday after Pentecost VII.
22. 9th Sunday after Pentecost I.	9th Sunday after Pentecost IV.
23. 9th Sunday after Pentecost II.	9th Sunday after Pentecost VI.
24. 9th Sunday after Pentecost III.	9th Sunday after Pentecost VII.
25. 10th Sunday after Pentecost I.	10th Sunday after Pentecost II.
26. 10th Sunday after Pentecost II.	10th Sunday after Pentecost III.
27. 10th Sunday after Pentecost III.	10th Sunday after Pentecost IV.
28. 11th Sunday after Pentecost I.	11th Sunday after Pentecost I.
29. 11th Sunday after Pentecost II.	11th Sunday after Pentecost II.
30. 11th Sunday after Pentecost III.	11th Sunday after Pentecost IV.
31. 12th Sunday after Pentecost I.	12th Sunday after Pentecost I.
32. 12th Sunday after Pentecost II.	12th Sunday after Pentecost II.
33. 12th Sunday after Pentecost III.	12th Sunday after Pentecost IV.
34. 13th Sunday after Pentecost I.	13th Sunday after Pentecost II.
35. 13th Sunday after Pentecost II.	13th Sunday after Pentecost IV.

36. 13th Sunday after Pentecost III.	13th Sunday after Pentecost V.
37. 14th Sunday after Pentecost I.	14th Sunday after Pentecost II.
38. 14th Sunday after Pentecost II.	14th Sunday after Pentecost III.
39. 14th Sunday after Pentecost III.	14th Sunday after Pentecost IV.
40. 15th Sunday after Pentecost I.	15th Sunday after Pentecost II.
41. 15th Sunday after Pentecost II.	15th Sunday after Pentecost IV.
42. 15th Sunday after Pentecost III.	15th Sunday after Pentecost VI.
43. 16th Sunday after Pentecost I.	16th Sunday after Pentecost I.
44. 16th Sunday after Pentecost II.	16th Sunday after Pentecost II.
45. 16th Sunday after Pentecost III.	16th Sunday after Pentecost III.
46. 17th Sunday after Pentecost I.	17th Sunday after Pentecost II.
47. 17th Sunday after Pentecost II.	17th Sunday after Pentecost IV.
48. 17th Sunday after Pentecost III.	17th Sunday after Pentecost V.
49. 18th Sunday after Pentecost I.	18th Sunday after Pentecost IV.
50. 18th Sunday after Pentecost II.	18th Sunday after Pentecost VI.
51. 18th Sunday after Pentecost III.	18th Sunday after Pentecost VII.
52. 19th Sunday after Pentecost I.	19th Sunday after Pentecost IV.
53. 19th Sunday after Pentecost II.	19th Sunday after Pentecost V.
54. 19th Sunday after Pentecost III.	19th Sunday after Pentecost VI.
55. 20th Sunday after Pentecost I.	20th Sunday after Pentecost III.
56. 20th Sunday after Pentecost II.	20th Sunday after Pentecost IV.
57. 20th Sunday after Pentecost III.	20th Sunday after Pentecost VI.
58. 21st Sunday after Pentecost I.	21st Sunday after Pentecost I.
59. 21st Sunday after Pentecost II.	21st Sunday after Pentecost II.
60. 21st Sunday after Pentecost III.	21st Sunday after Pentecost III.
61. 22nd Sunday after Pentecost I.	22nd Sunday after Pentecost II.
62. 22nd Sunday after Pentecost II.	22nd Sunday after Pentecost IV.
63. 22nd Sunday after Pentecost III.	22nd Sunday after Pentecost V.
64. 23rd Sunday after Pentecost I.	23rd Sunday after Pentecost I.
65. 23rd Sunday after Pentecost II.	23rd Sunday after Pentecost IV.
66. 23rd Sunday after Pentecost III.	23rd Sunday after Pentecost V.
67. 24th Sunday after Pentecost I.	24th Sunday after Pentecost I.
68. 24th Sunday after Pentecost II.	24th Sunday after Pentecost II.
69. 24th Sunday after Pentecost III.	24th Sunday after Pentecost III.

Illyés's collection of sermons thus contains one hundred and twenty-seven sermons in Hungarian for which Pietro Rota was the source. Together with their Latin sources, two hundred and fifty-six Illyés sermons were based on Rota's works. (This number is more or less the same as the number of Mansi sources and about twice as large as the number of sermons taken from Pázmány and Káldi.)

A further feature of Illyés's use of sources is that, with the exception of his second thematic collection, he drew increasingly on the works of Pietro Rota, and did so in an increasingly conscious and structured way.

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