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**Brief Biography:**

I am a research fellow at Ján Stanislav Institute of Slavonic Studies, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava where my work focuses on the Neo-Latin literature of Slovakia. After obtaining my MA degrees in history (2001) and Latin philology (2005) from Comenius University, Bratislava, I received a PhD from the Slovak Academy of Sciences for my doctoral dissertation dealing with the polemical writings of Martinus Szent-Ivany SJ in 2010. Among my recent publications most pertinent to the scope of the Scientiae conference is a critical commented edition of Szent-Ivany's cosmological dissertation *De mundi systemate* (1689), published in 2011. I attended the Scientiae 2013 conference at Warwick University where I gave a paper on the connection of cosmology with human and natural history in the thought of the mentioned Jesuit.

**Paper Title:**

The scientific method in Martinus Szent-Ivany's *De scientiis in genere* and its application to polemical theology (1705)

**Paper Abstract:**

Martinus Szent-Ivany SJ (1633-1705), who in his day acquired renown beyond the frontiers of his homeland mainly as a controversialist, is now best known in Hungary and Slovakia, two successor states of the Hungarian Kingdom, as the author of a three- volume miscellany consisting of forty dissertations, twenty collections of observations, thirty ephemeridae and the same number of chronological synopses. This oeuvre, published under the title *Curiosiora et selectiora variarum scientiarum miscellanea* by the Jesuit university press in Trnava (Tyrnavia, Nagyszombat, Tyrnau) between 1689 a 1709, contains not just a simple collection of data pertaining to various fields of human knowledge but, most important, it reflects a certain system of handling it. This system is explicitly described in the dissertation entitled *De scientiis in genere*, included in the third volume of *Miscellanea*, in which Szent-Ivany combines several existing conceptions of universal knowledge and proposes a very plain and extremely short method of acquiring scientific data. The main source of his inspiration, besides *Ars Magna Sciendi* (1669) of Athanasius Kircher, was probably Sebastián Izquierdo's *Pharus Scientiarum*(1659), although he makes reference to some other important names in the field as well. Szent- Ivany's method consists of six parts or sources (*fontes*): 1) acquisition of data through observation, 2) deduction of axioms or principles, 3) analogy, 4) synthesis and analysis, 5) *Ars Magna Kircheri-Lulliana* and 6) combinatorics. Szent-Ivany placed a very strong accent on observation, without doubt following the authority of Francis Bacon whom he admired greatly. His method is absolutely practically oriented, there is no place for unnecessary theoretical speculation which he contemptuously referred to as '*metaphysicationes*'. Like A. Kircher or C. Knittel, Szent-Ivany demonstrated the use of his method by applying it to various disciplines. Very interesting in this respect is the connection of scientific method and polemical theology, as it represents a synthesis of two characteristic features of the Late Baroque period, namely rationalism and religious fervour. In his polemical writings Szent-Ivany emphasised repeatedly that polemical discussion should proceed by means of mathematical method (*more mathematico*) in order to attain its goal effectively. I will show in my paper how he applied the six sources of his method in his polemical works.