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Literary Spoils of War in Uppsala in Practice – Controversial Theology

Abstract. Religious conflicts did not only take place on battlefields in the 17th century, but in far wider contexts. We see them also in propaganda, poetry, sermons and academic discourse. When the literary spoils of war were taken by the Swedish from Catholic libraries in Poland to the Lutheran Uppsala University, many books were not highly valued. These Catholic books ended up stored separately from the ‘sound and pure’ volumes found in the first library building in Uppsala. In this article, it is shown how these Catholic books did at times prove useful, at least in the field of polemical theology. In fact, teaching at the university took an increasingly anti-Catholic direction after the arrival of the collections from Braniewo and Frombork to Uppsala, with the main confessional enemy apparently being Robert Bellarmine.

Keywords: Theological polemics, Robert Bellarmine (Roberto Bellarmino), Literary Spoils of War, Uppsala University, Academic dissertations.

The many wars in Europe during the 17th century usually involved religion, and the Thirty Years’ War was generally a war between Protestant and Catholic forces, although collaboration sometimes crossed confessional borders. Protestant Sweden was, for instance, in alliance with Catholic France. The wars between Poland and Sweden at the time, however, in principle had other causes. When the Catholic Polish King Sigismund was dethroned in Sweden and lost royal power in 1599, he and his heirs continued to fight to reclaim the Swedish crown until the peace treaty of Oliwa in 1660 finally put an end to the wars. Nevertheless, confessional differences between the two countries were significant as well, and sharpened the conflict. War with Poland also meant fighting against the Catholics and the Counter-Reformation, and from this perspective libraries were of considerable importance.

Taking literary spoils of war from Catholic institutions was a deliberate policy of the Swedish army in the 17th century, aimed at weakening

the intellectual armory of its opponents¹. The fierce religious conflicts between Catholics and Protestants were carried not only on the battlefield, but in many spheres of life, including academic discourse. In Latin literature from Sweden at the time – both in literary and scholarly texts – the Pope was generally referred to as the Antichrist, and the Catholic Church as the Babylonian Harlot. The Jesuits were described as especially cunning and evil². When Catholic libraries were looted as war booty and their contents sent to Sweden, the looted books eventually found their way to the Uppsala University Library. This institution was founded in 1620, but only possessed a small collection and badly needed to expand it. When the library of the Jesuit College of Riga was confiscated in 1621 it was thus sent to Uppsala. The same happened with the library of the Jesuit College of Braniewo in 1627, the chapter library of Frombork the same year, and the library of the prince bishop of Würzburg Julius Echter von Mespelbrunn (1545–1617) in the 1630s, among others³. However, these acquisitions also had problematic aspects.

The main task of Uppsala University in this confessionalized era, when theological discussions also had political implications, was to educate clergymen for the Swedish Lutheran Church and loyal state officials⁴, and now books previously owned and often written by the archenemies were arriving there in great numbers. It is clear that the need for new books at a Lutheran university library would not be satisfied by works from large Jesuit College libraries. As spoils of war, the library collections taken were in theory real trophies that represented an important increase in the cultural capital for a poor state and young university⁵. The reality, however, proved to be quite different. A poem written by the Uppsala professor of poetry and music Jonas Columbus (1586–1663) at the end of the 1620s encapsulates the problem. In celebrating the victory at Braniewo and the looted Jesuit College library, he notes in one part of the poem that the number of books at Uppsala had been doubled, but

¹ O. Walde, *Storhetstidens litterära krigsbyten*, vol. 1, Uppsala 1916, pp. 344–346.

² H. Helander, *Neo-Latin Literature in Sweden in the Period 1620–1720: Stylistics, Vocabulary and Characteristic Ideas*, Uppsala 2004, pp. 321–336.

³ O. Walde, *op. cit.*, pp. 43–137.

⁴ Cf. E. Sellberg, *Kyrkan och den tidigmoderna staten. En konflikt om Aristoteles, utbildning och makt*, Stockholm 2010, pp. 370–371. An example from the time is the statement in Laurentius Olai Wallius's program *Decretum super vexationes humanitatis fere omnis expertes*, dated 11 August 1633 at Uppsala: *subolem ... literis et virtute erudiendam committunt, ut post parentis sui obitum Dei cultor existat, et patriae servitor*.

⁵ P. Sjökvist, *On the Order of the Books in the First Uppsala University Library Building*, "Journal of Jesuit Studies" 2019, 6, pp. 315–326.

also that the “scabby” and “infected” Catholic books from Braniewo were stored separately from the sound and pure Lutheran ones in the splendid new library building at Uppsala, which contained books of great value:

Hic ubi nubiferas alte est educta sub auras
ingentis precii libros quae continet aedes,
et duplex ample librorum conficitur grex.
Dividuus paries omnes qui ponitur inter
foetibus a sanis scabiosa peculia nobis
plurima quae data sunt abs te Brunsberga repellit⁶.

Most of the books with Catholic content taken as spoils were placed on the lower floor of the new library building, which served as more of a storage room, where the shelving and order of the books from Braniewo was maintained in the sections dealing with theology, while the more relevant and useful books for the library were separated from the looted collections and placed on the upper floor, which was considered the real library⁷. Books from the booty considered useful and relevant included the Ancient classics, works by the Church Fathers, and books by Protestant authors like Luther, Chytraeus and Melancthon. As previously mentioned, most books by Catholic authors were generally kept on the lower floor, but those few considered useful and relevant for the university were also moved to the upper floor. The university’s constitution from 1626 explicitly stated that pure doctrine and theology must not be distorted by any metaphysical and scholastic argumentation⁸, so we should not be misled to consider this as a sign of tolerance, as has been done in some previous research⁹. Therefore, when we

⁶ “Here, where a building has been raised high under the cloud-bearing skies, which contains books of great value, and the herd of books in abundance is made twofold. A dividing wall that is placed between them all keeps the scabby cattle, which has been given by you, o Braunsberg, in great number, away from our sound offspring”. Manuscript at Linköping Diocese Library, W 28. Apograph at Uppsala University Library (UUB), R 383.

⁷ Cf. C. Annerstedt, *Upsala universitetsbiblioteks historia intill år 1702*, Stockholm 1894, pp. 11–12.

⁸ „Noverint vero theologiae professores, hac constitutione sibi severe esse prohibitum, ne metaphysicarum et scholasticarum disputationum, unde pontificiae tenebrae et abominationes olim exortae sunt, commistione doctrinam suam, scripta adeoque theologiam ipsam deformant”. Cited from *Upsala universitets historia. Bihang I. Handlingar 1477–1654*, ed. C. Annerstedt, Uppsala 1877, pp. 276.

⁹ For instance in G. Hornwall, *Upsala universitetsbiblioteks äldsta uppställnings- och klassifikationssystem*, “Nordisk tidskrift för bok- och biblioteksväsen” 1969, 56, p. 187.

find the metaphysical treatises of the Spanish Jesuit Francisco Suarez (1548–1617) on the upper floor, this happened *in spite of* his Catholic confession and the subject matter involved; it shows rather how important his treatment of the matter was also in a Lutheran context, particularly for a branch of Protestant theology that has been labelled “Lutheran scholasticism”¹⁰. His readers in Sweden were thus sometimes also accused of being crypto-Catholics. The books featuring Catholic content that were moved to the upper floor were, however, often of the kind that could be used in order to refute Catholic ideas. One of the four professors of theology at Uppsala was also responsible for dogmatics and polemics. Sweden’s confessional enemies should not simply be moved to the basement and silenced, but addressed and beaten with arguments, logic and syllogisms, according to a controversial theology that had always existed within different branches of Christianity, but which reached new levels when Robert Bellarmine (1542–1621) held the chair in controversial theology at the Jesuit Collegium Romanum in Rome between 1576 and 1587. When the Jesuit College libraries from Riga and Braniewo were sent to Uppsala, several works by Bellarmine arrived there as well, including copies of his huge work *Disputationes de controversiis Christianae fidei, adversus huius temporis haereticos*¹¹. These had been published in Ingolstadt between 1586–1593 as the foremost Catholic defense against the Protestant confessions thus far. They had an enormous impact and dissemination, and accordingly, were also taken to Uppsala with the looted libraries’ collections. These works were part of the booty taken from the Jesuit College of Riga in 1621¹², from Braniewo in 1626, and later from Poznan in the 1650s. The Braniewo and Poznan copies are still to be found at Uppsala¹³, while the copies from Riga must have been discarded or sold at some point¹⁴.

¹⁰ Cf. E. Sellberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 70–71.

¹¹ The title of Bellarmine’s book is in translation: “Disputations on the controversies of the Christian confession, against the heretics of this time”.

¹² This can be seen in the inventory made by Johannes Botvidi in 1622, extant at UUB, U 271, 16. A digitized version is available online in the digital repository Alvin (www.alvin-portal.org).

¹³ UUB, Obr. 68: 502–510. Cf. J. Trypućko, *The Catalogue of the Book Collection of the Jesuit College in Braniewo Held in the University Library in Uppsala = Katalog księgozbioru Kolegium Jezuitów w Braniewie zachowanego w Bibliotece Uniwersyteckiej w Uppsali*, eds. M. Spandowski and S. Szyller, Uppsala–Warsaw 2007, vol. 2, pp. 70–71.

¹⁴ The circumstance that several Jesuit College libraries taken as spoils of war, with similar titles in their collections, ended up at Uppsala University Library, resulted there in a considerable number of duplicates. Several of these were sold at duplicate

It is indeed striking to note that the arrival at Uppsala of the Jesuit College libraries from Riga and Braniewo immediately affected the direction of dogmatic and polemic teaching at the university. The ability to learn how the confessional enemies thought and argued was suddenly very much improved. The professor of theology this mainly concerned was the infamous Laurentius Olai Wallius (1588–1638), who is generally best known today for having been the enemy of more or less all the other professors at the university. In a series of more than 30 dissertations defended with Wallius as the praeses in the first half of the 1620s, the *loci theologici* of the Lutheran dogmatist Matthias Hafenreffer were discussed. From 1628 and onwards, however, after the arrival of the books from Riga and Braniewo and the completion of the new library building, the subjects of dissertations defended under Wallius's presidency concerned the errors of Catholic doctrine, the Pope and the Jesuits¹⁵. The arrival of books by Robert Bellarmine triggered within a few years a considerable focus on him. After a series of dissertations on the Pope of Rome as the Antichrist and on the deceitfulness of the Jesuits between 1628 and 1630, attention was turned towards Bellarmine in 1635. In at least eight dissertations defended by different respondents with Wallius as the praeses – he was most probably also the author¹⁶ – different aspects of the ideas of Bellarmine were attacked and refuted¹⁷. This illustrious and celebrated Jesuit theologian obviously personified erroneous Catholic doctrines for Lutheran Uppsala at the time, and he appears to have been the main dogmatist enemy. We see this explicitly stated in several congratulatory poems that Wallius himself wrote to respondents and attached to dissertations

auctions in the 18th- and 19th-centuries. See further P. Sjökvist, *Litterära krigsbyttens öden i Sverige* ('Destinies of Literary War Booty in Sweden'), forthcoming in "Bibliis".

¹⁵ *Disputatio de Antichristo magno, qui est Romanus pontifex...*, Uppsala 1628; *Disputatio de aequivocatione Jesuitica...*, Uppsala 1629; *Disputatio prima, de nominali definitione antichristi magni, qui est papa Romanus...*, Uppsala 1629; *Disputatio prior, de aequivocis Jesuitarum juramentis...*, Uppsala 1630; *Disputatio prior [-posterior] de aequivocatione Jesuitica in specie...*, Uppsala 1630.

¹⁶ The phenomenon that the praeses wrote the dissertations to be defended was quite common at the time, and we know that Wallius did so in previous cases. See, for instance, the first words of *Disputatio prima, de nominali definitione Antichristi magni...*, Uppsala 1629: *Certis et gravibus de causis proposui mihi necessario, et in aliquot disputationes, ad praesertim discipulorum meorum captum instituendas, sese diffundendo...* On the question of authorship in early modern dissertations, see P. Sjökvist, *The Music Theory of Harald Vallerius. Three Dissertations from 17-th Century Sweden*, Uppsala 2012, pp. 22–25.

¹⁷ *Disputatio secunda, de Papistica religione deserenda...*, Uppsala 1635; *Disputatio prima [-tertia], Roberti Bellarmini libro 1 [-3] de verbo Dei, opposita...*, Uppsala 1635 [-1636]; *Miaephoniae Papisticae disputatio prima [-quarta]...*, Uppsala 1637.

directed against Bellarmine. In one, for instance, Wallius singles out the character of this Jesuit scholar by the principle of *nomen est omen*, saying that the name says something fundamental about the person:

Fortis es Andrea si nomen vertis in omen,
ut Bellarmini vertere Papa solet.
Insunt BELLA modo huic nec, at ARMA MINAEQUE, Jacobus
Gretserus doctum quem super omne locat¹⁸.

Just as the Pope usually interpreted Bellarmine's name as 'wars' (*bella*), 'arms' (*arma*) and 'threats' (*minae*), Wallius claims, the respondent should understand his first name as representing manly courage, since Andreas is derived from the Greek word for man, ἀνήρ. In a congratulatory poem in one dissertation we similarly read:

Laudibus in coelum Papistae tollere norunt
Bellarminum, nos quando ferire volunt:
Ille, Lutherani, stat formidabilis orco,
Certamen, dicunt, quando subire velit¹⁹.

Here Wallius explicitly singles out Bellarmine as the main enemy among the Papists, although he represents the teachings of the devil for the Lutherans. In a later congratulatory poem attached to a dissertation, Wallius writes:

Bellarmine, minae nomen tibi forte dedere,
Nomine nos veluti Papa minatur eo.
Hic Bellarminus scripsit quia contra Lutherum
Inque libris papae triste secutus iter:
Bellarmini papa putat metuendos
Libros, hos neque nos contra referre pedem²⁰.

¹⁸ "You are brave, Andreas, if you turn the name into an omen, just as the Pope usually turns Bellarmine's. Not only wars are in his name, but arms and threats, whom Jacob Gretser ranks as the most learned man of all". *Disputatio secunda, de Papistica religione deserenda...*, Uppsala 1635, p. [20].

¹⁹ "The papists know how to exalt Bellarmine to heaven with praise, when he wants to strike at us. He is standing fearful in hell, when he wants to start a fight, the Lutherans say". *Disputatio prima, Roberti Bellarmini libro 1 de verbo Dei, opposita...*, Uppsala 1635, p. [20].

²⁰ "O Bellarmine, by chance threats have given you your name, just like the Pope threatens us with this name, since this Bellarmine has written against Luther, and

Once again, Wallius mentions the fact that *minae* ('threats') are contained in Bellarmine's name, but here it is stressed that this occurred only by chance, and that it merely reflects what the Catholics believe, while Lutherans do not fear him.

Some books by this great opponent were considered so useful and relevant in Lutheran Uppsala that they were selected and located on the upper floor of the library, among the useful and relevant books. We find there, for instance, the first tome of his *Disputationes de controversiis*, a book on *De verbo Dei*²¹, his explanations of the psalms²², and a German translation of his judgment on the Book of Concord: *Iudicium de libro, quem Lutherani vocant concordiae*²³. Most books by him, however, remained on the lower floor, where there was a special shelf marker for controversial Catholic theologians (*Controvertistae Catholici*)²⁴. The professor of dogmatics and polemics at Uppsala had good reason to go to this section on occasion.

In the above-mentioned dissertations we can also see quite clearly that the works of Bellarmine, as well as those of other Catholic theologians, that had been brought to Uppsala with the literary spoils of war were indeed used in practice. One titled *De papistica religione deserenda* (Fig. 1), defended in 1635, was meant as a short and concise refutation of Bellarmine's ideas, and, according to its title, there were explicit references to works by three Catholic theologians. Besides one reference to Bellarmine's *Disputationes de controversiis*, there is one to Alfonso de Castro's *Adversus omnes haereses* (which had come to Uppsala both with the Riga and with the Braniewo collections²⁵, and was now located on both the lower and upper floors²⁶), and one to Leonhard Lessius's *Consultatio, quae fides et religio capessenda*.

Three dissertations defended at the end of 1635 and in the first half of 1636 dealt with the first tome of Roberto Bellarmine's *Disputationes de controversiis*, which concerned the word of God. Notably, as was mentioned earlier, this was the only tome moved to the upper floor of the Uppsala library, according to the oldest extant library catalogues from

followed the sorrowful road of the pope in books. The pope thinks that the books of Bellarmine should be feared, and that they do not retreat when meeting us". *Disputatio tertia, Roberti Bellarmini libro 3 de verbo Dei, opposita...*, Uppsala 1636, p. [169].

²¹ UUB Bibl. Arkiv K3, p. 16.

²² UUB Bibl. Arkiv K3, p. 17.

²³ UUB Bibl. Arkiv K3, p. 18.

²⁴ UUB Bibl. Arkiv K2, pp. 16–28.

²⁵ UUB Symbolik och polemik, fol. (72.17).

²⁶ UUB Bibl. Arkiv. K2, p. 17; and K3, p. 12.

1638–1641; it is of course tempting to assume that it had been moved there in connection to the writing of these dissertations. But, since Bellarmine's work was among the booty taken from both Riga and Braniewo, we cannot say for sure which copy was consulted during work on these dissertations. What we do know is that the Braniewo copy (Fig. 2) does not contain any traces of use. The Wallius dissertations contain a detailed refutation (167 pages in octavo format) of the three first chapters of Bellarmine's treatise concerning the word of God, viz. which the canonical and apochryphical books are, on Bibles written in different languages and on the interpretation of the Bible. The argumentation is carried out according to the traditional Lutheran view on the matter and by use of a syllogistic method.

In the latter half of 1637, however, some dissertations were defended with Wallius as the praeses on a topic that seems to have been especially offensive not only to him, but to reformed theologians in general. These had the title:

De miaeponia Papistica in genere, ad publice ostendendum falsam et impiam esse Papistarum sententiam, statuentium omnes eos homines jure esse interficiendos, qui se incorrigibiliter Papae religioni vel, quod minus est, voluntati opponunt, aut in omnibus non favent²⁷.

We can in the first pages of the work that it is a direct response to a famous and quite brutal passage in Bellarmine's *Disputationes de controversiis*, found at the end of Chapter 21 of Book 3 of *De laicis*, which concludes the author's previous argumentation and states that it is in fact a good thing for everyone, both for themselves and for others, if heretics are taken from this life, so that they can no longer cause any more danger and damnation:

Haereticis obstinatis beneficium est, quod de hac vita tollantur. Nam quo diutius vivunt, eo plures errores excogitant, plures pervertunt, et maiorem sibi damnationem acquirunt²⁸.

²⁷ "On the blood-thirst of the papists in general, in order to demonstrate that the view of the papists is false and impious, when they claim that all those men should rightly be killed, who are opposed to the Pope's religion or, even less, opposed to his will, or do not favour him in all respects".

²⁸ "For the heretics who persist it is a favour that they are taken away from this life. For the longer they live, the more errors they devise, they pervert more people, and accumulate more damnation for themselves". R. Bellarmine, *De controversiis Christianae fidei...*, vol. 1:5, Ingolstadt: Sartorius, 1587, p. 505.

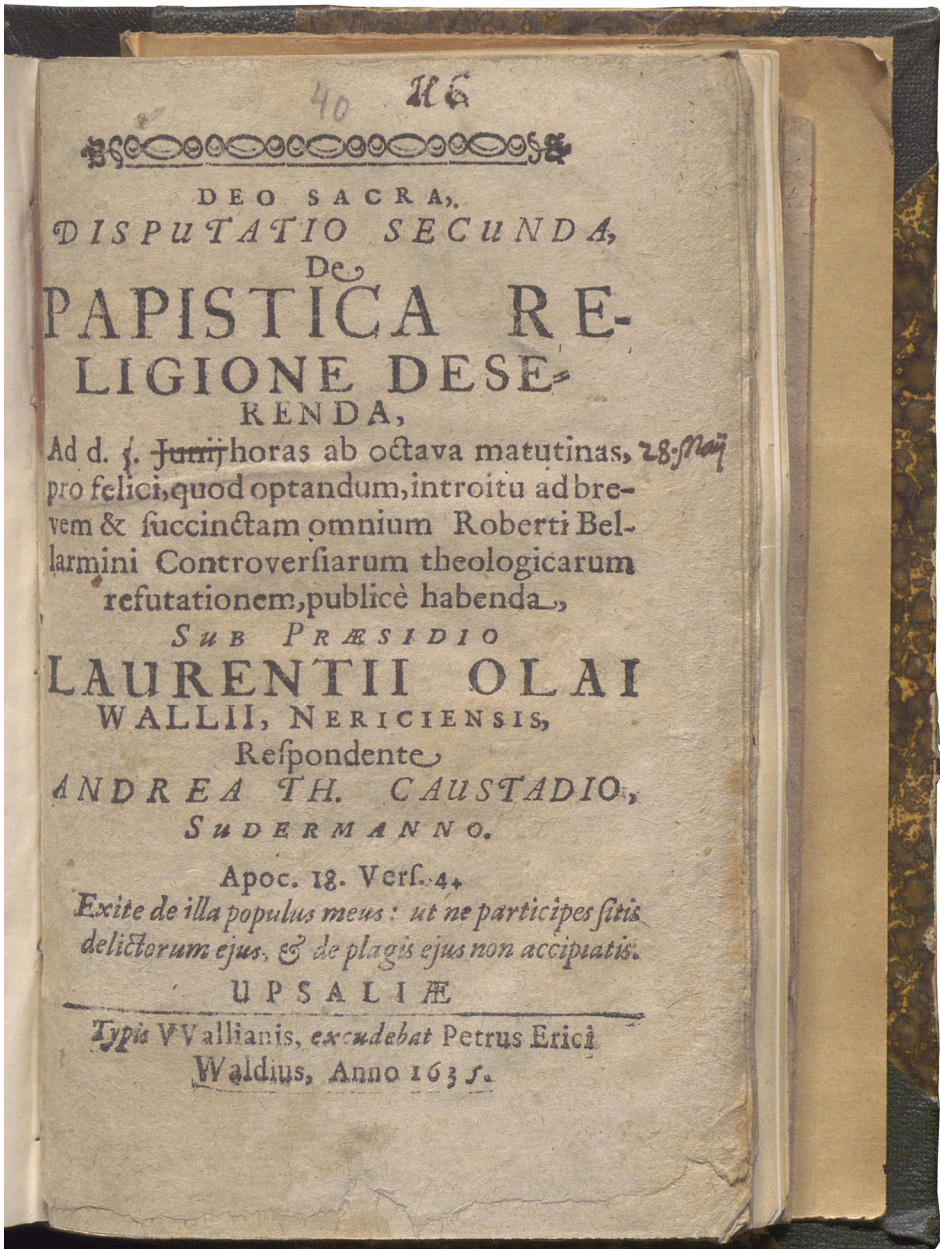


Figure 1. Title page of Wallius/Caustadius, *Disputatio secunda de Papistica religione deserenda...* (Uppsala: Wallius, Wald, 1635)

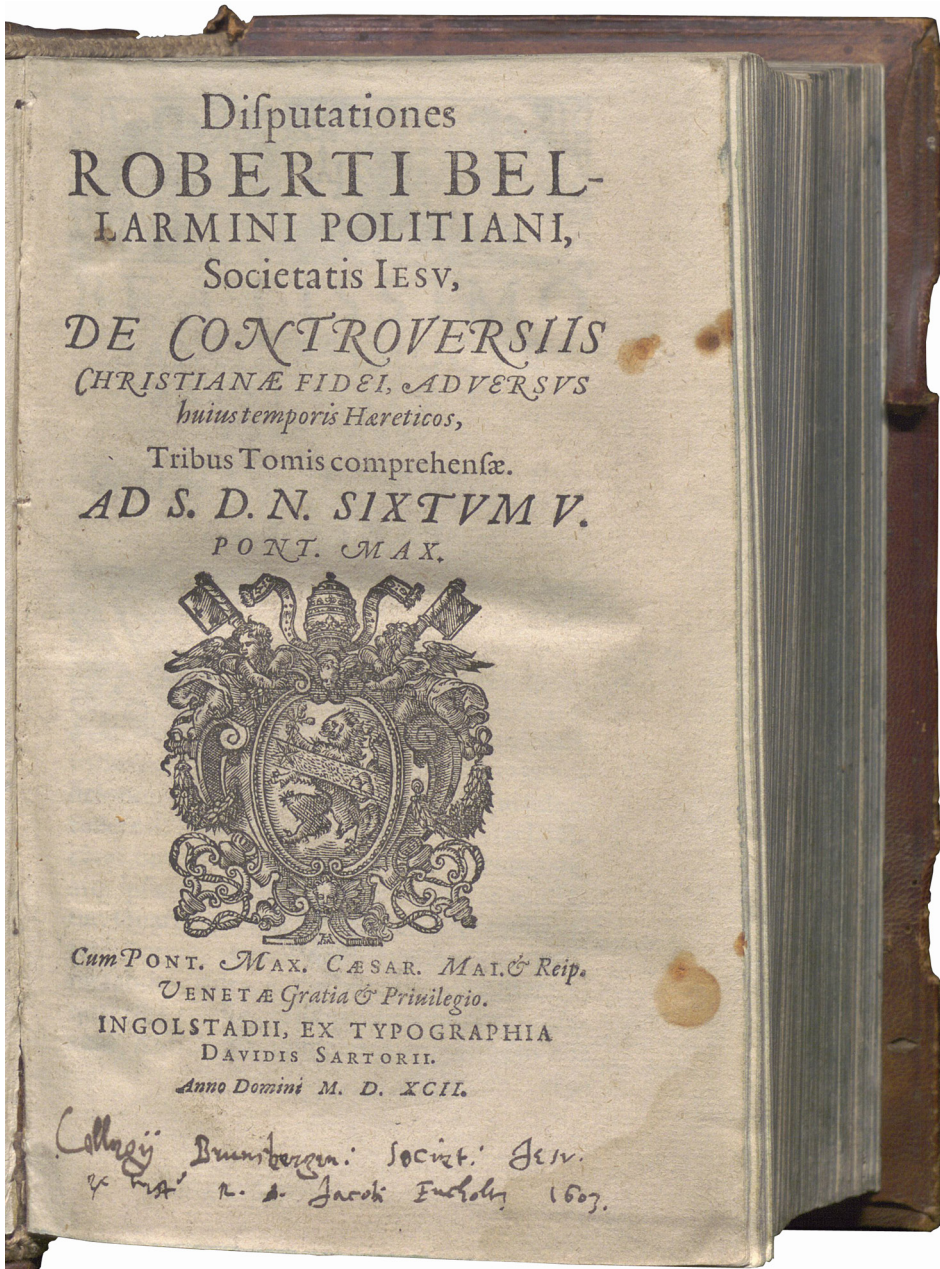


Figure 2. Title page of Robert Bellarmine's *Disputationes de controversiis Christianae fidei, adversus huius temporis haereticos* (Ingolstadt: Sartorius, 1592). This copy used to belong to the Jesuit College of Braniewo

In order to refute this idea, Wallius basically takes arguments from three different sources: the Bible, the Church fathers, and Lutheran authors, but there are also several references to Catholic authors who follow Bellarmine's line of thought and are used as proofs of erroneous ideas. The first dissertation ends with a statement of the author's obvious starting point, that his own Lutheran view is the correct one. This is supported by a quotation from Luther:

Man sol ja einen jeden gleuben lassen, was er wolle, gleubt er unrecht, so hat er gnug Straffe am ewigen Fewr in der Helle²⁹.

According to the author, the Lutherans thus claim that the heretics deserve commiseration since they usually err because of ignorance and not willingly. The seducers who promote false ideas must be punished, but not with death. This discussion, which lasts for 126 pages in the quarto format, argues primarily against Bellarmine, with occasional references to other Catholic authors. In the book *De rege et regis institutione* by the Spanish Jesuit Juan de Mariana (1536–1624), for instance, the idea that it is right for Catholic subjects to kill a heretical King has been noticed, and Wallius claims Bellarmine expresses the same idea in his *Disputationes de controversiis*. Later the author accounts for different allegedly real attempts by Catholics to murder sovereigns. Here he uses avertly anti-Jesuit books like the *Relegatio Jesuitarum* by the Lutheran author Andreas Lonner (1585–1621) in order to support his argument. Wallius ends the last dissertation in this series by stating that no subjects, but only God, who grants rulers their power, can check the fury of bad sovereigns.

It is well-known that the argumentation between Lutherans and Catholics was fierce from both parties in the conflict in the 16th and 17th centuries, and of course, the dissertations of Wallius are not exceptional from this perspective. What is interesting is that they are so closely linked to the arrival to Uppsala of items from the Riga and Braniewo libraries, and that the character of the teaching of polemic theology had changed so drastically by then. Also worth noticing is the fact that this shift happened before Sweden entered into the Thirty-Years-War in 1629, when confessional conflict spread even further. The arrival of these Jesuit College libraries thus had an instant impact on the teaching of polemic theology at the university, as shown in the dissertations discussed here,

²⁹ "One should let everyone believe what he wants. If he believes incorrectly, he will have punishment enough in the eternal fire in hell". M. Luther, *Von der Widder-tauffe an zween Pfarherrn, ein Brieff...*, Wittenberg: Lufft, 1528, fol. [2v].

although their arrival was not unproblematic, as the poem by Jonas Columbus demonstrated. There were indeed reasons to keep the books promoting pure Lutheran ideas separate from false Catholic ones. As I have shown above, however, even literature by the purest Catholic dogmatists was sometimes used at this library, but mostly to be attacked and refuted. To talk about the reception of such literary spoils of war from the perspective of cultural transfer, as has been sometimes suggested, would thus be misleading. Their presence at the library was suspicious and problematic, but all literature *could* nevertheless prove useful. A good thing for Lutheran Uppsala in this era of controversial theology was that there were now plenty of opportunities to learn the arguments of their confessional enemies.

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PETER SJÖKVIST

Literackie łupy wojenne w Uppsali w praktyce – teologia kontrowersyjna

Streszczenie. Konflikty religijne rozgrywały się nie tylko na polach bitew wieku XVII, ale też w znacznie szerszym kontekście. Dostrzegamy je w propagandzie, poezji, kazaniach czy dyskursie akademickim. Kiedy łupy wojenne z bibliotek katolickich w Polsce przywiezione przez wojska szwedzkie zostały przekazane luterzańskiemu Uniwersytetowi w Uppsali, wiele z książek uznano za mało wartościowe. Książki o proveniencji katolickiej zdecydowano się składować oddzielnie, z dala od „zdrowej i czystej” literatury myśli reformacji luterńskiej umieszczonej w pierwszym budynku Uniwersytetu. Artykuł przedstawia, w jaki sposób posiadane katolickie teksty okazywały się czasami użyteczne, przynajmniej na polu teologii polemicznej. W czasie gdy zbiory z Braniewa i Fromborka trafiły do Uppsali, nauczanie na Uniwersytecie

przyjmowało coraz bardziej antykatolicki kurs, w szczególności, jak się zdaje, wobec doktrynalnych przekonań reprezentowanych przez Roberta Bellarmina.

Słowa kluczowe: polemiki teologiczne, Robert Bellarmin (Roberto Bellarmino), literackie zdobycze wojenne, Uniwersytet w Uppsali, rozprawy naukowe.

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