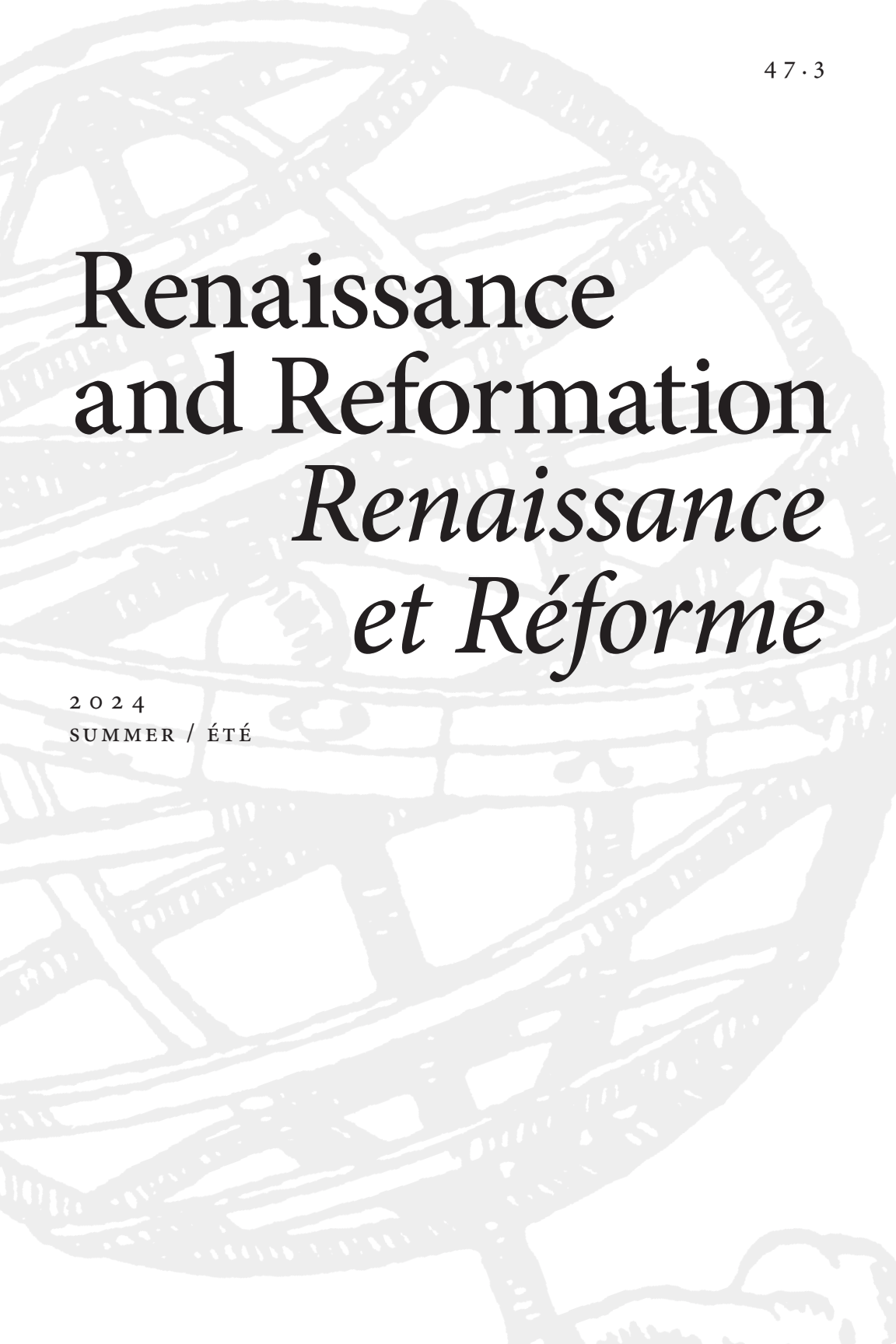




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Manuscript Sources and Medial Transfer in the Research of Early Modern Disputations: From Administration to Exchange of Knowledge*

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The scholarship of early modern disputations has concentrated on printed theses, since they are one of the most common types of prints in the era. Although preserved minutes transcribing what was said while these theses were discussed are rare, this article argues that it is worth giving due consideration to such manuscript sources when it comes to researching this very topic. Endeavouring to investigate Catholic and Protestant examples from Central Europe between 1580 and 1660, I explore four areas where handwritten documents, such as university records and student notebooks, have the potential to nuance our understanding of different traditions pertaining to disputation. In comparison to the printed disputations typical for Protestant Europe, manuscripts with Catholic and Jesuit provenance reveal a different function of scholarly debates, which were less focused on the individual performance of the respondent and served more as a method of recapitulation in everyday education. Protestant examples, on the other hand, demonstrate that disputations played a distinguished role in the exchange of scientific knowledge and expertise. During the process of professors and students conveying information from their homeland to university centres and back, disputations changed medium from print to manuscript, and vice versa.

La recherche sur la disputatio dans les premiers temps modernes s'est concentrée jusqu'ici sur les thèses imprimées, celles-ci comptant parmi les types d'imprimés les plus courants de l'époque. Bien qu'il nous soit resté peu de procès-verbaux rapportant les discussions autour de ces thèses, le présent article affirme qu'il convient de prêter une juste attention à ces sources manuscrites dans la recherche sur la disputatio. Sur la base d'exemples catholiques et protestants en Europe centrale de 1580 à 1660, l'auteur explore quatre domaines où des documents manuscrits, tels des archives d'universités et des carnets d'étudiants, peuvent nuancer notre conception de différentes traditions relatives à la disputatio. Contrairement aux disputations imprimées typiques de l'Europe protestante, les manuscrits de provenance catholique et juive révèlent que les débats savants ne mettaient pas l'accent sur la performance du répondant, constituant avant tout une méthode de récapitulation pour l'instruction quotidienne. Les exemples protestants montrent en revanche que les disputations jouaient un rôle éminent dans l'échange des connaissances et compétences scientifiques. Enfin, à mesure que professeurs et étudiants transmettaient de l'information entre leur patrie et les centres universitaires, les disputations changeaient de médium, passant de l'imprimé au manuscrit et vice-versa.

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Introduction

In the scholarship about disputation practices in early modern universities, manuscripts are a rather underrated source as compared to the overwhelming presence of printed materials. Since short prints constituted the primary medium of extant early modern disputations, there has been a dearth of studies devoted to manuscript sources—mirrored perhaps in the fact that from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, only a small number of disputations have survived exclusively in manuscripts.

With the financial background of the respondents being precarious, printing disputations was not universally compulsory, but students had to hand in the theses they were going to defend in some form before the event itself (i.e., the disputation held as an exercise or a graduation act).¹ Sometimes, handwritten disputations recorded the different phases of the debate, including the preparation of the arguments of both the defendants and the opponents, sometimes even including improvised reasonings proposed during the debate.²

Most disputation scholars agree that, in contrast to these rare witnesses of scholarly and didactic dialogues, printed disputations reveal hardly anything about the way in which the debates actually unfolded. In the Middle Ages, handwritten records played a major part in the conduct of the disputations, especially in comparison to the early modern practice. Medieval disputations would often take place over several days, wherein the taking of notes and the writing of a protocol (*reportatio*) were indispensable—especially on the first day when respondents and opponents presented their arguments. On the next day, during the *determinatio magistralis*, the teacher chairing the disputation based his response to the objections after having revised and organized these same notes.³ An early modern printed disputation, on the other hand, is a dialogue that confronts opposing arguments, and it is a rather monological list of the

1. Laurence Brockliss points out, for instance, that it was only in 1773 that the University of Montpellier made the printing of disputations mandatory. Prior to that, students had supposedly disputed their theses from handwritten notes (Brockliss, “Printed Theses,” 192–94).

2. That was the case of the disputations delivered at the private *collegium* (a series of disputations) on physiology at Leiden in 1604. Ulrich Schlegelmilch found that the owner of the manuscripts had used them later to register and thematically organize their observations made during their subsequent medical practice (Schlegelmilch, “Andreas Hildebrands”).

3. Chang, “From Oral Disputation”; Weijers, *In Search*, 123–33, 136–37, 209–15; Boer, “Disputation,” 222–32.

theses that the respondent was required to defend. Disputations were generally printed in advance of their oral delivery and served as an invitation to the audience.⁴

In order to discuss the performative aspects of early modern disputations, historians have made recourse to iconographic materials and ego-documents while neglecting to consider the printed summaries. Unfortunately, the iconography provides no depiction of a disputation scene where the participants are shown taking notes, even if they do hold their copies of the printed or handwritten theses in their hands.⁵ The literature of advice on disputations (*ars disputandi*) focuses on logic and argumentation, as well as on the ethical aspects of the debate (i.e., the comportment of the participants and their obligation to refrain from intellectual presumption), rather than on prescribing how the arguments must be recorded.⁶ We rarely see remarks concerning the relationship between the participants and the medium of the disputations, such as admonitions against reading as opposed to reciting the arguments from memory.⁷ Handwritten entries recovered in printed disputations prove that respondents and opponents used printed copies to write down their arguments and counter-arguments during the preparation for the debate.⁸ On the other hand, we know almost nothing about the existence of handwritten records

4. However, the existence of written theses does not necessarily imply that the disputation took place. The notorious 900 theses of Pico della Mirandola were never publicly debated. See Grendler, *Universities*, 152–57.

5. In the iconography of disputations, the event is, in its idealistic form, often placed within a religious context. When it comes to the depiction of promotion acts, the emphasis is laid on the solemnity and the ritual aspect of the event (Smolka, “Disputations- und Promotionsszenen”). Academic disputations are sometimes depicted in *alba amicorum* (*Stammbüchern*). See Füssel, “Die Praxis.” On *Thesenblätter* (thesis sheets), see Appuhn-Radtke, “Formen,” 73–74.

6. Examples of the genre *ars disputandi* include Heider and Jacobi, *Theses de ratione disputandi*; Geulincx, “Tractatus de officio disputantium;” Festing, *Meditatio academica*; Heine, *Methodus disputandi*. See Angelelli, “Techniques”; Felipe, “Ways of Disputing.”

7. For example, the methodological introduction (“Proscenia: De ratione disputandi, pro tyronibus”) of one volume of collected philosophical disputations warns students in the following terms: “Tum domi concepta, non pueriliter ex charta, sed memoriter, libere et decenti cum actione proponat” (What has been conceived at home should be presented, not by childishly reading from the paper, but by reciting from memory, freely, and with decent execution). Butel, *Enchiridion philosophicum*, 4r. All translations are my own.

8. Saskia Limbach presents examples of handwritten entries in *Thesenblätter* (Limbach, “Nachrichtendrucker”), yet it seems equally plausible that disputation booklets may have included similar marginalia.

taken during the performance, although there are a few printed disputations that might have been published on the basis of handwritten records.⁹

Nevertheless, printed disputations do not do justice to the vividness of the discussions that must have unfolded. They never contain the arguments presented by the opponents, and sometimes concise theses are left with no arguments supporting the defended position whatsoever; this was particularly the case before the emergence of more voluminous dissertations in the eighteenth century.¹⁰ The question arises, therefore, whether the disputations preserved in manuscripts are any different in this respect.

The functions of documenting disputations in manuscripts or copying them from prints to handwritten documents have yet to be scrutinized. Concentrated on students from Central Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, this article makes some preliminary steps towards investigating the role of handwriting in the transmission of disputations. To this end, I distinguish four different functions: (1) disputations recorded in university administration; (2) notes about disputations taken by students in personal notebooks to commemorate their studies; (3) disputations copied for practising and imitating; and (4) disputations extracted for information exchange and knowledge transfer.

Manuscript sources on disputations in administration

Since the university administration exercised authority over disputations, the theses to be defended by students or professors had to be handed in prior to the events themselves. In the case of promotions, or perhaps in the case of disputations held for the purpose of practising, it was important to keep track of the development of the students. For either of these reasons, some information about disputations must have been entered into the university records. This section will reveal how specific the data provided in university documents are in relation to disputations. Such an inquiry may prove useful because sometimes these documents were catalogued as “minutes,” which can be misleading, since

9. Based on the work of Brockliss (*French Higher Education*, 497–98), Friedenthal, Marti, and Seidel point to the example of Broussonet’s *Variae positiones circa respirationem, quas publicis subijciebat disputationibus*, where the title page uses the past tense in relation to the date of the disputation instead of the usual future tense (Friedenthal, Marti, and Seidel, “Introduction,” 4n).

10. On the rise of the dissertation as an academic publication independent of the act of disputing, see Chang, “From Oral Disputation,” 154–59.

contrary to what the term suggests, they do not necessarily include the exact text of the debates as delivered and recorded during a disputation.

The University Archive of Vienna holds several relevant documents from the sixteenth century. Disputations were recorded by different organizational units in Vienna. One of them was the Rectorate, which kept a register about examinations in arts and philosophy from 1550 to 1622.¹¹ In addition to a detailed regulation for disputations, the register has preserved the names of the examinees and the topics of the debates. For each student, the registered disputations must have been part of an important milestone, if not a *pro gradu* examination, because each candidate was to defend theses in several subject matters, such as ethics, physics, rhetoric, dialectic, and grammar. In addition, some had to deliver disputations on natural philosophy or a second physical matter, on mathematics, and metaphysics as well. Regarding the content of these debates, this document is parsimonious: for each disputation, it only provides the main *quaestio*, and sometimes also gives the exact *positio* that the student had been assigned to defend.

A register kept at the Vienna Faculty of Arts between 1568 and 1612 is even more taciturn about these details. With rare exceptions, no data about the subject matter is provided.¹² On the other hand, the date, the exact hours, and the names of the participants have been duly noted. In some respect, this document is even more interesting than the previous one. Each record of the manuscript gives the names of the chairs (*praesides*) and the respondents (generally, there were four of them for each disputation). To describe what happened during these events, the document uses a remarkable set of terminology. Instead of emphasizing the role of the respondents, it attributes the primary agency to the *praeses* of the disputation. Each time, it was the *praeses* who *publice disputavit* (publicly disputed or had the theses publicly disputed),¹³ while the other four participants fulfilled the role of *respondentes*, or they resumed (*resumpserunt*). Some chairs are designated as baccalaureates of arts, and a few of them fulfilled

11. Vienna, University Archive (VUA), MS R 71.2.

12. One of the few exceptions is VUA, MS Ph 23, 138v, where it reads “de syllogismis.”

13. Sometimes “publice disputavit” is replaced by the expression “disputatione praesidis officium sustinuit” (fulfilled the task of the chair during the disputation). VUA, MS Ph 23, 126r. This synonymous phrasing may indicate that this section of the record item is indeed reserved for the name of the *praeses*.

the role of respondent for the earning of a master's degree.¹⁴ In addition to chairs and respondents, there could have been a third kind of participant: some disputations concluded with closing remarks made by a person other than the chair (*peroravit*). For one single instance, the document presents an enigmatic case: in 1598, there was a baccalaureate who not only led the disputation but also fulfilled the role of the lone respondent. It is probable that the term *publice disputavit* refers to his role of respondent by exception instead of the role of *praeses*, yet this would imply that the scribe did not indicate the name of the chair, which would be highly unusual in the light of the manuscript and printed sources of disputations.¹⁵

This intriguing division of tasks opens a somewhat different perspective for research on debate practices in comparison to the Protestant tradition of printed disputations, wherein the delivery of the theses was considered overwhelmingly as being the performance of the respondent. Although the content of the printed disputation was authored by the *praeses*, the capacities of the student were subject to evaluation during the defence of these theses. In the case of the Vienna Faculty of Philosophy, almost nothing is known about the content of the disputations, but at least the presented document reveals the identity of the participants who interacted in a complex, yet less explored setup.

This practice reflects a Catholic tradition that took hold in 1551, when the Jesuits were first invited to the University of Vienna. Indeed, the Faculty of Arts would fall more and more under the influence of the Society of Jesus as the century progressed. What is more, the Faculty of Philosophy would find itself subsumed by the order in 1617.¹⁶ As we shall see, a few names among the professors and students involved in these disputations can be tied to Jesuit colleges. The pedagogy of the Society laid a particular emphasis on the greatest

14. See VUA, MS Ph 23, 62r: "Magister Johanes [*sic*] Tecnon repetiit pro gradu magisterii" (Master Johannes resumed for the title of magister).

15. VUA, MS Ph 23, 166r: "Die 19 Aprilis [1598] Christophorus Shaffer Olomu[censis] Moravus artium Baccalaureus publice disputavit et solus resumpsit" (The Moravian Christopher Seffer from Olomouc, Bachelor of Arts, delivered a public disputation and he resumed it all by himself.)

16. In 1558, Ferdinand I gave two of the three professorships to the Jesuits at the Faculty of Theology. In 1617, the Faculty of Philosophy was transferred to the Jesuits, and in 1623 the Faculty of Theology was taken over by the Society entirely. The Catholicization of the university gained momentum on 2 July 1581 when Emperor Rudolf II tied promotion to a public confession of the Catholic faith on the part of the candidate. See Meister, *Geschichte des Doktorates*, 21–23; Hörmann, "Die ersten Inhaber," 8. On the Austrian province of the Jesuit order, see also Heiss, "Die Bedeutung"; Drobesh and Tropper, *Die Jesuiten*.

possible variety in scholarly exercises so that the process of knowledge transfer did not end in mere frontal lecturing.¹⁷ The duty to hold regular disputations in philosophy and in theology, prescribed by the *Ratio Studiorum* and other documents of the order, was respected in the Jesuit colleges, and whenever there was some obstacle to implement the same, the issue was addressed in visitation reports.¹⁸ Although the Jesuit leadership pressed home its will in this matter, it is reasonable to think that there were considerable differences between the local institutions regarding the regularity and the quality of the disputations. The next section offers insight into Jesuit practices by discussing documents that are richer in detail when it comes to the contents of these exercises.

Handwritten documents for personal studies and memorabilia

My next example on the disputations recorded in handwriting are the notebooks of two students from the Kingdom of Hungary, Simon and Márton Bánovszky. Between 1588 and 1589, they studied philosophy at the Jesuit college of Olomouc under the supervision of Professor Johann Grassler (1562–1608), a Jesuit from Bavaria.¹⁹ It is very likely that Simon and Márton Bánovszky were brothers, but only Simon (?–1634) is known to church history: in 1592, he was appointed rector of the school of the town of Nagyszombat (Trnava, Slovakia), which served, due to the Ottoman occupation, as the seat of the archbishop of Esztergom, head of the Catholic Church in Hungary. He became canon of Bratislava (1593) and of Esztergom (1601). In his last will, he donated his house to the chapter, and his manuscripts must have passed into its possession at this time; from where they would subsequently pass to the diocese.²⁰ In Olomouc, the Bánovszky brothers assimilated the usual curriculum of Aristotelian logic, physics, and metaphysics; they did not take notes for themselves but hired a fellow student, named Christophorus Seffer Tartarus, as a scribe who copied four volumes from the transcript of the lectures.²¹ As his names suggests, Seffer

17. For the Jesuits, this diversity of didactical methods, comprising the disputation among others, is subsumed into the term of *modus Parisiensis*. See Codina, “Modus Parisiensis.”

18. In 1579 from Paris and in 1583 from Vienna, visitors reported that disputations at Jesuit colleges were hardly ever held. Lukács, *Monumenta paedagogica*, 4:433, 7:445.

19. Lukács, *Catalogi personarum*, 678.

20. Kollányi, *Esztergomi kanonokok*, 204.

21. Esztergom Archdiocesan Library (EAL), MS II. 227a, 227b, 227c, 227d.

was from the region vaguely designated as “Tartaria,” from which the college of Olomouc received three other students in 1589. An archival record succinctly notes that after his schooling, Seffer served as schoolmaster in the Kingdom of Hungary.²² Perhaps it is not too bold to assume that he accompanied the Bánovszkys back to Nagyszombat. In addition, an above-mentioned document of Vienna reveals that he disputed in Vienna as a baccalaureate in 1598: he was the one who—in a way that remains difficult to imagine—played the role of both respondent and *praeses* at the same time.²³

The four volumes by Seffer’s hand preserved two series of disputations delivered as exercises: one in logic, and another on physics.²⁴ At that time, Jesuits did not have their own textbook for the entire curriculum. For instance, the notebooks reveal that the professor of Olomouc used the *Commentaria in Isagogen Porphyrii, et in omnes libros Aristotelis de dialectica*, also known as the *Leuven Commentaries*, for logic, a sixteenth-century textbook about Porphyry’s *Isagoge* and Aristotle’s *Organon*, a rather conservative work that nevertheless made some concessions to humanist dialecticians, such as Rudolph Agricola.²⁵ The textbook, first published in 1535, was utilized by Jesuits probably because they had good contacts with Leuven—where, for instance, Robert Bellarmine studied theology and Diego Ledesma accomplished his novitiate²⁶—and its presence can be attested in Jesuit college libraries.²⁷

22. Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu (ARSI), Collegia, 1477/26/18b (“Catalogus Alumnorum S. D. N. de quibus non constat quo pervenerint aut quid egerint post discessum ex Seminario”), 53v: “Simon Thaltius Tartarus venit 9. Apr. 1589. discessit 25. Nov. 1591. / Jacobus Durandus Tartarus venit 9. April. 1589. discessit 25. Nov. 1591. / Sylvester Stephan Tartarus. venit 19. Jun. 1589. discessit 5. Jun. 1590” (The Tartar Simon Thaltius arrived on 9 April 1589 and left on 25 November 1591. The Tartar Jacobus Durandus arrived on 9 April 1589 and left on 25 November 1591. The Tartar Sylvester Stephan arrived on 19 June 1589 and left on 5 June 1590). There is no similar data about Christophorus Seffer’s entry and exit. For the record about his further career in Hungary, see ARSI, Collegia, 1477/26/18 (“Catalogus Alumnorum S. D. N. qui hactenus prodierunt e seminario, et de quibus constat, quid absolutis studiis egerint, ab initio seminarii usque ad annum 1602”), 50r (no. 71): “Christophorus [sic] Seffer Tartarus, absoluta Philosophia egit ludimagistrum in Hungaria, nihil aliud constat” (The Tartar Christopher Seffer, having graduated in philosophy, worked as schoolmaster in Hungary; nothing else is known about him).

23. VUA, MS Ph 23, 166r.

24. EAL, MS II. 227a, 507r–521v, 227c, unnumbered folios.

25. Papy, “Reception.”

26. Grendler, *Jesuits*, 403–7.

27. For example, in the college of Munich. See Stannifex et al., *Commentaria*. The ownership entry can be read on the front flyleaf of the volume: “Liber Collegii Societatis IESV Monachii Catalogo inscriptus.

The scribe hired by the Bánovszkys recorded not only the name of the respondent of each disputation but also the names of the opponents; generally, there were four of them for each disputation. The manuscript attests that the two brothers were assigned to argue against each other five times in total, and strikingly, they never acted as opponents at the same time (see Tables 1 and 2). The position of the dating and the names indicates that this information was inserted on the remaining place of the page at a later time. The transcription of the theses was thus not based on actual records, but on a professor's carefully elaborated plan, whereas the respondents and the opponents were designated later.

The choice to keep track of their disputations in a manuscript can be in part explained by the fact that very few disputations were printed in Olomouc during this period. From the sixteenth century, the catalogue of old prints of the National Library of the Czech Republic only indicates the printing of one collection of disputations, and with no individual dissertation.²⁸ Circulating the theses to defend in printed form was originally a practice of the German Lutheran world, and it was adopted only gradually by Catholic institutions.²⁹ Another element of the explanation resides in the fact that presumably neither of these disputations served as a graduation exam (*disputatio pro gradu*). For example, the manuscript designates increasingly more participants as baccalaureates, and by 19 March 1589, each time the title is being awarded.³⁰ However, it appears that their elevation had no connection to the disputations recorded in the manuscript. And so, the main function of these debates must have been to exercise (*exercitii causa*), which explains their minor prestige.

Anno 1595" (Book of the Munich College of the Society of Jesus, recorded in the catalog in 1595). The same edition features in the inventories of Trnava College in the Kingdom of Hungary, begun in 1632 and completed in 1690. See Farkas, *Magyarországi jezsuita könyvtárak*, 126, 266. On the use of the *Leuven Commentaries* in Jesuit lecture notes, see Förköli, "Inside Jesuit Classrooms."

28. The disputations *pro gradu* chaired by the Jesuit philosophy professor Laurentius Bruyckerius in 1597 can be regarded as a rare exception. See Bruyckerius and Eckstein, *Theses*. In 1568, the Jesuit Vojtěch Bouček published his disputation in theology as well, but since the defendant, already a professor of theology in Vienna, presented it at the diocesan synod convoked by the bishop of Olomouc, it cannot be considered as a scholarly exercise. See Bouček, *Assertiones theologicae*.

29. On the closest circle of Luther in Wittenberg as the origin of the printed disputation, see Chang, "From Oral Disputation," 146–49.

30. Márton Bánovszky's disputation "De causis." See EAL, MS II. 227c, unnumbered folios.

Table 1. Disputations on logic noted in the records of the Bánovszky brothers (Olomouc), EAL, MS II. 227a.³¹

Folio	Title	Respondent	Opponents	Date
507r–v	[Definition of logic]	Joannes Varus Scotus	Martinus Bachalius Silesius Casparus Leisentritius Moravus Christophorus Seffer Tartarus Gregorius Thurderus Silesius	23 January 1588
507v–508r	De obiecto logices	Laurentius Jonik Prutenus	Gosovinus Strichius Aquensis Joannes Radon Silesius Aegidius Cristellius Moravus Casparus Soldnerus Bohemus	30 January 1588
508r–508v	De forma logices	Wolfgangus Ernestus Fatschius Austriacus	Georgius Sibenhar Silesius Joannes Makovicz Silesius Michael Prantherus Tyrolensis David Piperus Bohemus	23 February 1588
508v–509v	Ex Porphyrio de universalibus	Martinus Bachalius Silesius	Joannes Varus Scotus Matthaeus Mustrosky Polonus Wolfgangus Ernestus Fatschius Austriacus Martinus Molitor Silesius	12 March 1588

31. Names have been normalized in the table, but their Latinized form, as well as the indication of origin, have been maintained.

Folio	Title	Respondent	Opponents	Date
509v–510r	De genere	Joannes Makoviczius Silesius	Gosovinus Strichius Aquensis Joannes Pannota Silesius Benedictus Heustmanus Silesius Christophorus Seffer Tartarus	19 March 1588
510r–511v	De specie	Joannes Radon Silesius	Casparus Leisentritius Moravus Sigismundus Clemens Prutenus. Martinus Banovszky Pannonius Valentinus Ravicz [?]	26 March 1588
511v–512r	De differentia	Aegidius Cristellius Moravus	Balthasar Neander Silesius Georgius Scipio Bohemus Casparus Boldnerus Silesius David Piperus Silesius	2 April 1588
512r–513r	De proprio et accidente	Gregorius Sniderus Silesius	Joannes Varus Scotus Laurentius Jonik Prutenus Simon Banovsky Pannonius Martinus Bachalius Silesius	9 April 1588
513r–514r	Ex prolegomenis in praedicamenta et antepraedicamentis eorundem	Joannes Radon Silesius	Jacobus Hermannus Suevus Michael Prantherus Tyrolensis Casparus Leisen [tritius] Olomucensis [=Casparus Leisentritius Moravus?]	30 April 1588

Folio	Title	Respondent	Opponents	Date
514r–v	De praedicamento substantiae	Georgius Sibenhar Silesius	Casparus Soldnerus Bohemus Aegidius Cristellius Moravus Benedictus Heustmanus Silesius Martinus Banovsky Pannonius	7 May 1588
515r–v	De praedicamento quantitatis	Casparus Leisentritius Moravus	Gosvinus Strichius Aquensis Joannes Radon Silesius Joannes Makoviczius Silesius Jacobus Zepssius Bavarus	21 May 1588
515v–516r	De praedicamento ad aliquid	Gosvinus Strichius Aquensis	Jacobus Mirecus Polonus Joannes Varus Scotus Martinus Bachalius Silesius Casparus Soldnerus Bohemus	4 June 1588
516r–v	De praedicamento qualitatibus	Casparus Soldnerus Bohemus	Balthasar Neander Silesius Wolphgangus Ernestus Fatschius Austriacus Simon Banovszky Pannonius Martinus Molitor Silesius	25 June 1588
517r–v	De reliquis sex praedicamentis	Jacobus Mirecus Polonus	Christophorus Seffer Tartarus Gregorius Sniderus Silesius Georgius Sibenhar Silesius Michael Prantherus Tyrolensis	9 July 1588

Folio	Title	Respondent	Opponents	Date
518r–v	Ex libro primo περὶ ἐμπνεύσεως Aristotelis	Martinus Molitor Silesius	David Piperus Bohemus Laurentius Jonik Prutenus Ranus [=] Joannes Radon Silesius? Joannes Pannota Silesius	23 July 1588
518v–519v	Ex libro secundo περὶ ἐμπνεύσεως	Joannes Pannota Silesius	Casparus Leisentritius Moravus Martinus Bachalius Silesius Georgius Scipio Bohemus Jacobus Zepssius Bavarus	6 August 1588
519v–520r	Ex libris Priorum [Analyticorum]	Simon Banovszky Pannonius	Aegidius Cristallius Moravus Casparus Soldnerus Bohemus Martinus Banowsky Pannonius Michaël Brandterus Tyrolensis	3 September 1588
520r	Conclusiones renovatione biennali anno 88. Physicis annexae ex libro posteriore	I–V Jacobus Mirecus Polonus	Matthaeus Illicinus Pannonius Joannes Radon Silesius Christophorus Seffer Tartatus Casparus Soldnerus Bohemus	19 November 1588
520v		Aliae anno M.D. L. XXXIX. ex ijsdem libris I–III	Joannes Makoviczius Silesius Jacobus Mirecus Polonus Michael Brandterus Tyrolensis David Piperus Bohemus	7 January 1589

Folio	Title	Respondent		Opponents	Date
520v		Aliae I–III	Christophorus Seffer Tartarus	Joannes Pannota Silesius Martinus Molitor Silesius Gregorius Snider Silesius Simon Banovsky Pannonius	14 January 1589
520v		Aliae I–III	Matthaeus Illicinus Pannonius	Martinus Banovsky Pannonius Balthasarus Neander Silesius Albertus Svanson Suecus Jacobus Hermannus Suevus	21 January 1589
520v–521r		Aliae I–III	Michaël Brandterus Tyrolensis (Philosophiae Baccalaureus)	Simon Banovsky Pannonius Christophorus Seffer Tartarus David Piperus Bohemus; Casparus Boldnerus Silesius	11 February 1589
521r		Aliae ex primo Post. cap. 2o et 14o. I–III	Albertus Svanson Suecus	Martinus Molitor Silesius Joannes Radon Silesius Joannes Makoviczius	18 February 1589

Folio	Title	Respondent		Opponents	Date
521r		Aliae ex trac- tato de scientia I–II	Martinus Banovszky Pannonius	Simon Banovsky Pannonius Casparus Soldnerus Bohemus Gregorius Sniderus Silesius Albertus Svanson Suecus	11 March 1589
521r		Aliae ex eodem I–II	Simon Banovsky Pannonius	Martinus Banovsky Pannonius Jacobus Hermannus Suevus David Piperus Bohemus Martinus Molitor Silesius	18 March 1589

Table 1 reveals that disputations on logic were held with an interval varying between one and three weeks from January to September 1588. Each disputation included approximately twelve theses to be defended. In November, the new academic year started, and the class began its discussions of physics. Nevertheless, the students still revised some doctrines of logic during the subsequent year dedicated to physics (see Table 2). This time, disputations went more rapidly, since each of the respondents, with a few exceptions, had to defend only two or three theses for recapitulation. As for physics, the procedure was similar: they discussed about a dozen theses per occasion, but there is no evidence to attest to the occurrence of short disputations for the purposes of revision from the subsequent academic year. In physics, they were more inclined to combine different topics within the same disputation, and when they ran out of doctrines in meteorology, for instance, they switched during the same disputation to a discussion of Aristotle's *De anima*, usually discussed in the third year dedicated to metaphysics (see Simon Bánovszky's disputation on 26 August in Table 2). This is why it is hard to imagine these exercises as serious scientific debates with parties having a real stake in the outcome. Although there were four opponents for each disputation, it is more likely that they were limited to the recapitulation of the most important doctrines discussed during a lecture. As we have seen, in Vienna the *praeses* had the main agency during the disputations. In Olomouc, the respondents did not bear much more responsibility for their assertions or their arguments: their task was reduced to the mere repetition of basic doctrines, although it must be taken into account in this appraisal that they were assigned to defend the theses against no less than four opponents.

Table 2. Disputations on physics noted in the records of the Bánovszky brothers (Olomouc), EAL, MS II. 227c.³²

Title	Respondent	Opponents	Date
Philosophia [Plato's distribution of philosophy into natural, moral, and rational philosophy] (I); Ex philosophia naturali (II–VI)	Jacobus Mirecus Polonus	Matthaeus Illicinus Pannonius Joannes Radon Silesius Christophorus Seffer Tartarus Casparus Soldnerus Bohemus	19 November 1588
Aliae (I–IX)	Gregorius Sniderus Silesius	Joannes Makoviczius Silesius Jacobus Mirecus Polonus Michael Brandterus Tyrolensis David Piperus Bohemus	7 January 1589
De materia prima (I–VII)	Christophorus Seffer Tartarus	Joannes Pannota Silesius Martinus Molitor Silesius Gregorius Sniderus Silesius Simon Banovsky Pannonius	14 January 1589
Aliae (I–XI)	Matthaeus Illicinus Pannonius	Martinus Banovsky Pannonius Balthasar Neander Silesius Albertus Svanson Suecus	21 January 1589
De forma (I–VI); De privatione (VII–X)	Michael Brandterus Tyrolensis	Simon Banovsky Pannonius Christophorus Seffer Tartarus David Piperus Bohemus Casparus Soldner Bohemus	11 February 1589

32. The folios are unnumbered in this manuscript.

Title	Respondent	Opponents	Date
De natura ex secundo Physicorum (I–VIII)	Albertus Svanson Suecus	Martinus Molitor Silesius Joannes Radon Silesius Michaël Brandterus Tyrolensis Joannes Makoviczius Silesius	25 February 1589
De causis (I–XIII)	Martinus Banovsky Pannonius	Simon Banovsky Pannonius Casparus Soldnerus Bohemus Gregorius Sniderus Silesius Alberto Svanson Suecus	11 [?] March 1589
De causis et effectis per se (I–V); De causis per accidentis (VI–VIII); De fato (IX–X); De monstris (XI–XII)	Simon Banovsky Pannonius	Martinus Banovsky Pannonius Jacobus Hermannus Suevus David Piperus Bohemus Martinus Molitor Silesius	18 March 1589
De motu (I–X); Aliae ex libris de caelo superioribus annexae (I–II)	Casparus Soldnerus Bohemus	Christophorus Sefferus Tartarus Michaël Brandterus Tyrolensis Joannes Makoviczius Silesius Casparus Boldnerus Silesius	13 April 1589
Aliae de motu (I–XIII); Aliae ex libris de caelo (III–VIII) [<i>sic</i>]	Joannes Makoviczius Silesius	Matthaeus Illicinus Pannonius Jacobus Hermannus Suevus Balthasar Neander Silesius Albertus Svanson Suecus	29 April 1589

Title	Respondent	Opponents	Date
De infinito (I–III); De loco (VIII–XI); Aliae ex libris de caelo (XII–XIII)	Martinus Molitor Silesius	Joannes Boldnerus Silesius Casparus Soldnerus Bohemus David Piperus Bohemus Martin Banovsky Pannonius	6 May 1589
Aliae ex libris de caelo (I–XII)	David Piperus Bohemus	Gregorius Sniderus Silesius Martinus Banovsky Pannonius Albertus Svanson Suecus Jacobus Hermannus Suevus	3 June 1589
Ex primo de ortu et interitu (I); De natura generationis (II–XII)	Joanne Radon Silesius	Balthasar Neander Silesius David Piperus Bohemus Martinus Molitor Silesius Simon Banovsky Pannonius	10 June 1589
De alteratione (I–X); De augmentatione (XI–XIII)	Gregorius Sniderus Silesius	Joannes Makoviczius Silesius Casparus Boldnerus Silesius Michael Brandterus Tyrolensis Casparus Soldnerus Bohemus	17 June 1589
De rarefactione (I–VIII); De actione et passione physica (IX–XII)	Christophorus Seffer Tartarus	Caspar Soldnerus Bohemus Simon Banovsky Pannonius Gregorius Sniderus Silesius Jacobus Hermannus Suevus	8 July 1589
De reactione (I–V); De mixtione (VI–X); Aliae ex libris meteorum his annexae (I–II)	Casparus Soldnerus Bohemus	Christophorus Sefferus Tartarus Martinus Banovsky Pannonius Michael Brandterus Tyrolensis	15 July 1589

Title	Respondent	Opponents	Date
Ex secundo libro de ortu et interitu. De elementis in generale (I–V); De qualitatibus alternantibus elementorum (VI–XI); Aliae ex primo meteorum (III [<i>sic</i>])	Michaël Brandterus Tyrolensis	Simon Banovsky Pannonius David Piperus Bohemus Casparus Soldnerus Bohemus	29 July 1589
De actione elementorum (I–VII); De qualitatibus motivis mutuaa [?] elementorum (VIII–XI); Aliae ex primo meteorum (XII–XIII)	David Piperus Bohemus	Albertus Svanson Suecus Martinus Molitor Silesius Martinus Banovsky Pannonius	12 August 1589
De singulis elementis (I–X); Ex primo libro meteorum. De cometa (VI–VII [<i>sic</i>])	Albertus Svanson Suecus	Michaël Brandterus Tyrolensis Jacobus Hermannus Suevus Casparus Boldnerus Silesius	19 August 1589
Alia de nubibus (I–III); Ex primo de anima superioribus annexae (III–XI)	Simon Banovsky Pannonius	Joannes Makoviczius Silesius Martinus Molitor Silesius Gregorius Sniderus Silesius	26 August 1589
Aliae animasticae ex secundo de anima libro (I–X)	Martinus Molitor Silesius	Christophorus Seffer Tartarus Martinus Banovszky Pannonius Michaël Brandterus Tyrolensis Casparus Boldnerus Silesius	2 September 1589
Aliae [de anima] (I–X)	Joannes Makoviczius Silesius	Gregorius Sniderus Silesius Casparus Soldnerus Bohemus Albertus Svanson Suecus Simon Banovsky Pannonius	16 September 1589

Instead of a deep analysis, a professor would be satisfied with the revision of basic axioms. On 18 March 1589, Simon Bánovszky hastily discussed four minor topics in one single disputation: “De causis et effectis per se” (On the causes and effects by themselves; 5 theses); “De causis per accidens” (On the causes by accident; 3 theses); “De fato” (On fate; 2 theses); “De monstis” (On monsters; 2 theses), all related to the section of Aristotle’s *Physics* on accidents, fate, and chance. However, if the disputations appear to be somewhat superficial, the schedule of the students must have been extremely dense. For example, the same Simon Bánovszky had been assigned to defend certain theses on science theory (within logic) the same day (see again Table 1).

Generally, the disputations avoided controversial topics. Nevertheless, the manuscript attests to the fact that sometimes they deviated from the original plan. On 3 September 1588, Simon Bánovszky had to discuss Aristotle’s *Prior Analytics* by arguing for the usual distribution of a syllogism into three parts, such as two premises and one conclusion.³³ Interestingly, the scribe subsequently inserted a minority opinion in smaller letters, discussing the possibility of syllogisms composed of four propositions. According to this remark, or contention, some believed it to be possible to multiply the number of components in a syllogism (i.e., if the middle term is divided into two affirmations).³⁴ The *Leuven Commentaries* include a similar observation, illustrated with diagrams, which probably inspired this remark during the disputation. The procedure of multiplication can be easily demonstrated on the example of the categorical syllogism: “Omne corpus est substantia, propositio. Omne vivens est corpus, propositio. Omne animal est vivens, propositio. Omnis homo est animal, propositio. Omnis igitur homo est substantia, conclusio.”³⁵ But the same way a middle

33. EAL, MS II. 227a, 519v: “Necesse omnem syllogismum constare tribus terminis et duabus adminis praemissis, quarum altera singularis esse potest nisi sit syllogismus scientificus” (Every syllogism necessarily consists of three terms, and it has at least two premises, one of which can be a single one if it is not a scientific syllogism).

34. EAL, MS II. 227a, 519v: “Et licet aliqui quartam acceptent figuram, nos tamen tribus solum contenti, illam ut nullam habentem propriam vim illativam, sed omnem a prima mutuante simpliciter reiiciendam esse censemus” (And although some accept the existence of a fourth term, we are satisfied with having only three of them, and we hold that [this fourth term] does not have any conclusive force by itself, but since it borrows everything from the first [term], it must be simply rejected).

35. Stannifex et al., *Commentaria*, 223. “Each body is a substance. Each living being is a body, each animated being is a living being. Each human is an animated being. Each human is therefore a substance.”

term can be divided into two propositions, every syllogism, even if it includes four or more assertions, can be reduced to three main terms by contracting the middle terms into one single minor premise. In other words, these complex syllogisms can be interpreted as a series of simple syllogisms.

Another slightly controversial topic can be detected in the first disputation in logic, defended on 23 January 1588 by Joannes Varus of Scotland. The participants considered whether the discipline should be called logic or dialectic, and they concluded that either term can be used:

Licet variae acceptiones fuerint tum nominis dialectices tum logices apud antiquos, nos tamen toti disciplinae quae dirigit operationes intellectus utrumque accomodamus et eandem utriusque significationem esse asserimus.

Dialecticam a διαλέγομαι, ut significat disserere, quod per operationes intellectus fieri solet descendere, Logicam vero a λόγος ut mentem quatenus per illam diriguntur operationes intellectus et per consequens ipsamet ratio.³⁶

In order to make this concession, it is possible that the students discussed the humanist preference for dialectic as a useful tool for rhetorical persuasion. The *Leuven Commentaries* used by their professor allows for this possibility. In the prefatory letter, the textbook of Stannifex and his colleagues emphasize the interdependence of dialectic and rhetoric as two main conditions of successful knowledge transfer and persuasion. According to them, the orator must rely not only on his stylistic skills but also on his dialectic prowess, because eloquence as the art of copiously speaking draws its power from two sources: the abundance of words (*verba*) and the abundance of facts (*res*), the latter being provided by dialectic.³⁷ This Ciceronian definition of the pairing

36. EAL, MS II. 227a, 507r. "Although the ancients had various meanings for the names of dialectics and logic, we all apply both to the discipline which direct the operations of the intellects, and we affirm that both have the same meaning. Dialectic derives from *dialogomai*, which means discussing what usually takes place through the operations of intellect, whereas logic comes from *logos*, which means reason, because the operations of the intellect and consequently reason itself are directed by it."

37. Stannifex et al., *Commentaria*, A4r: "Definitur autem a M. Tullio in Partitionibus oratoriis, Eloquentia copiose loquens sapientia, quae ex eodem hausta sit genere, quo ipsa Dialectica" (Even Cicero, in his *Dialogue Concerning Oratorical Partition*, defines eloquence as the art of copiously speaking, which comes from the same source as dialectic itself). See also, Stannifex et al., *Commentaria*, A4v: "Nullae

of dialectic-rhetoric, which would satisfy humanists like Rudolph Agricola and Erasmus, is followed by an introduction that seems to use the terms of logic and dialectic as synonyms. Without subordinating dialectic to logic as a subdiscipline that deals with probable propositions, the authors discuss several definitions, alternately using either term. They even give pride of place to the opinion of Agricola, who affirmed that “est [...] dialectica ars probabiliter de re qualibet proposita disserendi, prout uniuscuiusque natura capax esse poterit.”³⁸ Considering universally used Jesuit textbooks, such as Pedro da Fonseca’s, this humanist preference for dialectic as *modus disserendi* instead of logic as the science of the *ens rationalis* (a propaedeutic study for metaphysical problems) is not strange from the perspective of Jesuit practice, hence the permissive attitude towards the use of both terms.³⁹

The aesthetic layout of these manuscripts, featuring calligraphic title pages and headings highlighted in red ink, was presumably motivated by the above-mentioned fact that very few printed disputations were produced in Olomouc at the time when the Bánovszky brothers were studying there. However, it seems that the commemorative function of the manuscript harmonized with its practical value as a medium of knowledge, an aspect that is reinforced by the above-discussed pedantic addition on syllogistic, the abundant marginalia, the elaborated illustrations, and the presence of an index of matters for each volume.

The sentimental or representative function is perhaps even stronger in the case of Georg Puecher (?–1619), a student from Tyrol at the Jesuit College of Vienna and at the University of Vienna. Subsequently, he became the dean of the Faculty of Theology at the latter, yet somehow, probably through donation, his notebooks covering the complete course in philosophy entered the collection of the Diocesan Library of Győr in Hungary.⁴⁰ He was taught by Laurentius Coreth (1565–1601).⁴¹ In 1598, Puecher achieved the rank of bachelor, and in 1601 he

tamen disciplinae coniunctiores sunt inter se, quam Dialectica et Rhetorica” (No other disciplines are as closely linked as dialectic and rhetoric).

38. Stannifex et al., *Commentaria*, B1r. “Dialectic is the art of discussing any given subject with probability, according to the ability of each and everybody.”

39. On Fonseca’s humanist approach, see Casalini, “Pedro da Fonseca,” 33–36.

40. Győr Diocesan Library (GDL), MS XXXII.6.30, 6.39, 6.40.

41. Born in Trento, Italy, Coreth studied theology in Vienna in 1590–91. He served in Graz as professor of mathematics between 1592 and 1594. From 1595, he taught mathematics and philosophy in the

obtained first his licence, and then the title of master. Later, he consecutively served his university as the dean of the Faculty of Letters, the dean of the Faculty of Theology, and rector.⁴² His annotations are gathered in three volumes, which assemble not only lecture notes but other documents related to his studies as well. Some of them are printed, including a card produced especially to serve as an *ex libris* in each volume and to commemorate the milestones of Puecher's training.

Table 3. Disputations on logic noted in the records of Georg Puecher (Vienna), GDL, MS XXXII.6.30.

Page	Title	Respondents	Date
554	Assertiones de natura logices	Franchovitz Ungarus	17 February 1598
555	Assertiones de universalibus in communi	Martinus Münichius Austriacus	28 February 1598
556	Assertiones de universalibus in particulari	Nicolaus Bück Ungarus	9 March 1598
557	Assertiones de antepaedicamentis, paedicamentis in genere, et de substantia in particulari	Georgius Puecher Tyrolensis	4 May 1598
558	De novem paedicamentis accidentium et de postpaedicamentis	Vincentius Misenovizius Ungarus	25 May 1598
559	In libros Aristotelis de interpretatione	Hebezkius Ungarus	8 June 1598
561	In libros Priorum Analyticorum Aristotelis	Joannes Schirmer Austriacus	22 June 1598
562	In libros posteriorum Aristotelis	Wispecki Ungarus	20 July 1598
563	De demonstratione	Martinus Literati Transilvanus	31 August 1598

Vienna College of the order until his death. See Lukács, *Catalogi personarum*, 648.

42. See the historical database of the University of Vienna: <https://geschichte.univie.ac.at/en/persons/georg-puecher> (accessed 17 January 2024).

The volumes also include printed invitations, which can be unfolded from the binding, such as graduation acts (licence⁴³ and *magisterium*⁴⁴) and the thesis sheet (*Thesenblatt*) of his disputation held at his appointment as Professor of Greek.⁴⁵ The young teacher also preserved a sheet containing poems dedicated to his erudition by his fellow students, some of them creating a wordplay based on the similarity between the name Puecher and the word *Bücher* (books).⁴⁶ Although Puecher filled the major part of his notebook in

43. In GDL, MS XXXII.6.39: "D[ei] O[ptimi] M[aximi] A[uxilio] / Sub Reverendis- / simo et amplissimo / Domino antistite, domino / Melchior Kleselio, Dei et Apostolicae sedis / gratia episcopatus novae civitatis administratore [...] / Ingenui juvenes, artium / liberalium et philosophiae / baccalaurei / [...] In iisdem artibus ac studiis philoso- / phicis licentiate gradum assument [...] In Basilica D. Stephani die 5. Aprilis, hora 8. matutina. / Anno Domini M. DC. I. / Viennae Austriae, Typis / Francisci Kolbij, in Bursa Agni" (Under the auspices of the reverend and the most magnificent lord Melchior Klesl, by the grace of God and the Holy See administrator of the episcopate of the new city [...], the noble youngmen, Bachelors of Liberal Arts and Philosophy [...] obtained the rank of Licentiate in the same arts and philosophy [...] in the Dome of Saint Stephen on 5 April at 8 o'clock in the morning, in year 1601. Vienna of Austria, with the letters of Franz Kolb, under the skin of lamb).

44. In GDL, MS XXXII.6.39: "D[ei] O[ptimi] M[aximi] A[uxilio] / Sub admodum re- / verendo, nobili, nec / non excellenti viro, Domino / Vito Schiesser, artium et philosophiae docto- / re, cathedralis ecclesiae D. Stephani Protomartyris Viennae canoni- / co [...] / Ingenui juvenes, artium / liberalium et Philosophiae / Licentiat. [...] In iisdem artibus ac studiis philoso- / phicis magisterii et doctoratus gradu / insigniti, profiteri incipient. / In aula universitatis superiori die 14. Aprilis, hora 8. matutina. / Anno Domini M. DC. I. / Viennae Austriae, typis / Francisci Kolbij, in Bursa Agni" (With the assistance of the best and the greatest God. Under the auspices of the most reverend, noble, and excellent man, Lord Vito Schiesser, Doctor of Arts and Philosophy, canon of the Dome of Saint Stephen Protomartyr of Vienna [...] noble youngmen, Licenced in Liberal Arts and Philosophy [...], awarded with the title of Master and Doctor in the same arts and in philosophy, begin to profess. In the upper aula of the university on 14 April, at 8 o'clock in the morning, in year 1601. Vienna of Austria, with the letters of Franz Kolb, under the skin of lamb).

45. In GDL, MS XXXII.6.40: "Admodum re- / verendo in / Christo et amplissimo Domino, / domino Paulo Schönebmer celeberrimi mona- / sterii ad S. Crucem in Austria abbati dignissimo [...] / theses subsequentes ex philosophiae font- / tibus [...] dedicat. [...] M. Georgius Puecher Graecae linguae professor ibidem ordinarius. / Disputabuntur in aula universitatis superiori / hora VII. matutina, IIII. Maij. / Viennae Austriae, / excudebat Leonhardus Formica, M. DCII" (To the most reverend in Christ and the most magnificent lord, Paul Schönebmer, the worthiest abbot of the Saint Cross Monastery in Austria [...], the subsequent theses drawn from the source of philosophy [...] are dedicated [...] by Master Georg Puecher, ordinary Professor of Greek. They will be discussed in the upper aula of the university at 7 o'clock on 4 May. Vienna of Austria, published by Leonhard Formica in 1602).

46. In GDL, MS XXXII.6.40: "Carmen. / In solennem actum / insignis, eruditione et omni vir- / tutis genere perpoliti juvenis Georgii Puecher / ex Tyliach Tyrolensis, cum sub admodum reverendo,

1601, he must have continued to cherish it, for he later used it to take notes of a curious meteorological phenomenon he had observed in 1610 in Vienna. It was a double halo, one surrounding the sun, the other touching it with its periphery, probably identifiable as an upper tangent arc.⁴⁷

While the scribe of the Bánovszky brothers used red to highlight titles, Puecher who took equal care to embellish his manuscripts, wrote titles and important marginalia in green ink. When he recorded the theses disputed by his fellow students on logic, he used a very similar method as that of the Bánovszkys, summarizing the disputed assertions and subsequently adding the names of the respondents (see Table 3). However, disputations took place much more rarely, about once a month. Some of the participants were from Hungary and Transylvania, which is probably part of the reason why Puecher later donated the notebooks to a Hungarian Catholic community. Each student summarized a given book of the *Organon*, with the exception of the section on universals and predicaments, which was discussed both in general and in particular terms by no less than four students.⁴⁸ Although the aims and the methods of the disputations were similar to those that took place in Olomouc, they were visibly more superficial.

Handwritten disputations from regulation to practising

In some cases, printed disputations were copied in manuscripts so they could serve as materials for practising, either at an institutional or an individual level. This use of handwritten disputations can be assumed to have been very likely

nobili, nec non excellenti viro Domino / Vito Schiesser, art[ium] et philosophiae doctore, cathedralis ecclesiae D. Stephani Viennae Ca- / nonico et philosophicae facultatis pro tempore decano spectabili, ultima honoris / laurea in philosophico studio 14. Aprilis, eximij honoris / causa scripserunt. / [...] Viennae Austriae / excudebat Leonhardus Formica in domo in- / clytae Facultatis artium archigymnasij Viennensis. Anno 1601” (Ode. Written for the solemn act of the Tyrolian Georg Puecher of Tiliach, excellent youngman perfect with erudition and all kinds of virtues, having obtained the ultimate laurel of honour in the studies of philosophy on 14 April under the auspices of the most reverend, noble and excellent man, Lord Vitus Schiesser, Doctor of Arts and Philosophy, canon of the Saint Stephen Dome in Vienna, and at the time the respectable dean of the Faculty of Philosophy, written by distinguished men. [...] In Vienna of Austria, published by Leonhard Formica in the noble house of the Faculty of Arts in the Archigymnasium of Vienna, in year 1601).

47. GDL, MS XXXII.6.40, 263.

48. GDL, MS XXXII.6.30, 554–64.

with regard to those manuscripts that contained regulations on how disputations had to be delivered. Above, we have seen that universities and professors occasionally issued prescriptive texts on the logical form of arguments and the ethical behaviour of the opponents. The record book of disputations, kept by the rectorate of Vienna, has preserved such regulations, which were binding from the very beginning of the period covered by the document (i.e., the year 1550). Beyond the duties of opponents and chairs, these rules prescribed the exact materials from which the debated theses could be drawn.⁴⁹ Such sources are valuable for historians of universities for they describe practices that would otherwise remain unknown. For disputations on grammar, the Vienna regulations recommended Philip Melanchthon's textbook, and for dialectic, the book of Johannes Caesarius (1468–1550), who was himself a correspondent of Melanchthon.⁵⁰ This source sheds light on the warm welcome these rather heterodox authors were granted in Vienna before the Jesuits could fully exert their influence on the university. On the other hand, the contents of the manuscripts were addressed to the organizers of disputations rather than students eager to learn how to argue with efficacy. For them, the description of the disputations was insufficient on account of its administrative purpose. Even though several hands added *nota bene* marks and marginalia, which implies that the document drew the attention of some of its readers who intended to use it as a source of erudition or arguments, the additions rather concerned personal matters or important events of the university as opposed to the actual subject matter of the disputations.⁵¹

Under the scope of the present inquiry, the documents of Protestant provenance exceed the needs that could be labelled as bureaucratic in a much more visible way. The Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt in Halle has preserved an intriguing handwritten volume that contains important documents related to Hungarian Lutheran orthodoxy.⁵² The main part is a copy of a series of disputations chaired by Albert Grawer (1575–1617). Born in Mesekow bei Perleberg (Brandenburg), Grawer graduated as a student of Aegidius Hunnius in Wittenberg. Following the recommendation of Hunnius,

49. VUA, MS R 71.2, 1v–4r.

50. VUA, MS R 71.2, 3r.

51. A few examples: VUA, MS R 71.2, 20v, 22r, 31r, 32v, 35v.

52. Halle, Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt (HUL), MS Ung. 18.

the Hungarian magnate Gergely Horváth Stansith (1558–97), a known defender of Lutheran orthodoxy against the advances of Calvinism, invited Grawer to his estates of Nagyőr (Strážky, Slovakia) to be head of the school he had founded there. In the Kingdom of Hungary, Grawer took part in several debates on communion theology. On Horváth's death, he accepted the invitation of the Council of Kassa (Košice, Slovakia) to become the rector of the town school. Shortly after, the nearby fortification of Eger was captured by the Ottomans, and in 1596, Grawer returned to Wittenberg. After his return to Saxony, he not only continued his polemics on Christological questions against Calvinists, but he was also engaged in controversies against Antitrinitarians. He obtained the title of doctor in theology at the University of Jena, where he would remain as a teacher for many years. He died as the superintendent of Weimar.⁵³

In 1613, Grawer published a treatise entitled *Examen praecipuarum sophisticationum*, naming as targets, among others, two heterodox theologians who had been active in Transylvania in the previous century: Ferenc Dávid (c. 1520–79) and Giorgio Biandrata (1515–88). The disputations reproduced in the above-mentioned manuscript had similar goals. Originally, they were printed in 1614 in a volume entitled *Centuria I. Illustrium quaestionum theologicarum*, a book directed against Conrad Vorstius (1569–1622), a Remonstrant theologian of Leiden (and the successor of Arminius) whose works on Christology and Trinitology had brought him under the suspicion of Socian Antitrinitarianism.⁵⁴ Grawer's book contains ten voluminous disputations (20–60 pages each), which address various aspects of the Holy Trinity. The disputations were regrouped according to their topics, and sometimes the same question was discussed in two sessions. To the attributes of God, two disputations were dedicated (the respondents were Jakob Brandt and Johannes Krauser); to the notion of Trinity, two (Andreas Pulcius and Heinrich Krauchenberger); to the person of Christ, one (Johannes Leon); to the mission of Christ, one (Adam Kochler); to the Holy Spirit, one (Samuel Gualther); to the creation of good and evil angels, one (Justus Geilfusius); and to the first cause and the nature of evil, two (Heinrich Renner and Samuel Schwanengel). Opportunely, the copy of the last disputation was dated by the scribe, Georgius Michaelides, thanks

53. For Grawer's biography, see Heppe, "Grawer, Albert," 617. For the debates on communion theology he was involved in, see Sebök, *Humanist*.

54. On the controversies around Vorstius, see Spijker, "Heidelberger Gutachten."

to whom we know that he finished copying the disputations on 3 April 1664 in the school of Liptószentmiklós (Liptovský Mikuláš, Slovakia).⁵⁵ In addition to the full text of the book, the manuscript contains an extra disputation that was originally chaired by Johannes Musaeus in Jena in 1640, and which addressed the teachings of Luis de Molina SJ on divine will.⁵⁶ It was signed by the scribe on 8 June 1669 in Kassa, the same city where Grawer had been governor of the Protestant school decades earlier.⁵⁷

Compared to the original release of the prints, the manuscript was written very late. This source might be the first evidence that Hungarian Lutherans retained a posthumous interest in Grawer's activity. His disputations presumably proved very useful for the endorsement of Lutheran orthodoxy because not only did they broach the Christological divide with Calvinists, but they also touched upon the proximity of the flourishing Unitarian community in Transylvania.⁵⁸ Interestingly enough, the inside of the end cover of the manuscript contains a short document listing twenty-seven rules for debates.⁵⁹ Attempts at identifying its direct source have yielded little, although it appears to have been composed for the needs of the owner's coterie. Certain rules aim to regulate arguments on a general level—that is, by defining the criteria of their logical validity (e.g., no argumentations should be drawn from extraordinary to ordinary)⁶⁰ or the

55. HUL, MS Ung. 18, 118r: "Soli Deo Gloria! Finitum scribendo per me Georgium Michaelidem [Cassai] Zdanensem Anno 1664. die 3. Aprilis in schola Nicopolitana" (Glory to God alone! Transcription finished by me, Georg Michaelides of Felsőzsadány [Horná Žďaňa] on 3 April 1664 in the school of Liptószentmiklós).

56. Several blank leaves separate Grawer's disputations from this one. HUL, MS Ung. 18, 128r–132v: "Cum Deo! Excerpta quaedam ex Disputatione de voluntate Dei antecedente et consequente Molinaeo opposita, Autore Johanne Musaeo S. S. Theologiae D. et in Acad. Jenensi professore publico" (With God! A few excerpts from a disputation on God's antecedent and subsequent will as opposed to Molina, written by Johannes Musaeus, Doctor of the Sacred Theology and Public Professor at the University of Jena). For the original print, see Musaeus and Albertus, *Disputatio philosophica*.

57. HUL, MS Ung. 18, 132v: "Deo sint gratiae! Cassoviae Anno 1669. 8 Junii" (Thanks be to God. In Kassa, on 8 June 1669).

58. For a recent summary of Unitarianism in early modern Transylvania, see Wien, Brandt, and Balogh, *Radikale Reformation*.

59. HUL, MS Ung. 18, 133r: "De modo argumentandi. / Modus refutandi in genere continetur his regulis" (On the way of argumenting. The way of refutation in general is included in these rules).

60. HUL, MS Ung. 18, 133r: "Inconsequens est argumentationis genus ab extraordinario ad ordinarium" (The type of argumentation concluding from extraordinary to ordinary is inconsequent).

morality of their use (e.g., the rejection of *ad hominem* argumentations).⁶¹ Others more specifically concern religious controversy, defining as they do the priority of the Scripture over other authorities,⁶² the argumentative force of the reference to ecclesiastical practice,⁶³ and the rules of distinction between figurative and literal speech in exegetical questions.⁶⁴ In addition to the immediate practical value of the disputations in a religious controversy, the presence of this last item suggests that the manuscript served as a tool both of regulation and practice at the Lutheran School of Kassa.

The connection between this city and the manuscript explains why the manuscript has survived in the collection of Georg Michaelides, better known as Georg Michael Cassai (1640–1725). Cassai was a professor of Hungarian origin who worked at the University of Wittenberg. His interest in the curriculum of Upper Hungarian schools emerges from his education, since he graduated from the secondary schools in Kassa and in Eperjes (Prešov, Slovakia). In 1672, he enrolled at the University of Wrocław, and later, in 1675, at Wittenberg. As a student of theology, he was prevented from returning home on account of the anti-Protestant persecutions that were common in the 1670s and 1680s. He decided to stay in Wittenberg, where he taught philosophy. In 1724, he funded a scholarship to help students from Hungary enrol at the University of Wittenberg, and in his last will, he left his library to the Hungarian student association (*Natio Hungarica*), from where the collection was incorporated into the university library of Halle-Wittenberg (Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt).⁶⁵

61. HUL, MS Ung. 18, 133r: “A persona ad rem et doctrinam N[on] V[ale]t argumentatio” (An argumentation concluding from the person to the subject matter or the doctrine is invalid).

62. HUL, MS Ung. 18, 133r: “A conciliorum aut patrum autoritate argumentari contra Scripturam, adeoque ad stabiliendum aliquem errorem est inconsequens” (Arguing with the authority of councils and fathers against the Scripture, especially to support some error, is inconsequent).

63. HUL, MS Ung. 18, 133r: “E diuturna hujus vel illius Ecclesiae praxi male concluditur praxis Ecclesiae simpliciter” (It is not right to conclude from a long-standing practice of this or that church to the practice of the Church in general).

64. HUL, MS Ung. 18, 133r: “Ex figurato male concluditur proprium, seu ab allegoria et hyperbolica loquendi formula ad proprium N[on] V[alide] C[on]cluditur” (It is not a valid argument to conclude from figurative speech to the proper sense, or from an allegory and a hyperbolic phrasing to the proper sense).

65. Fitz, “Georg Michaelis Cassai”; Bucsay, *Régi magyar könyvek*; Pálffy, *Bibliographische Seltenheiten*; G. Klement, “Külföldön tanuló”; Gábor, “Die Bibliothek.” The catalogue of the printed books in the Hungarian library of Wittenberg was conscribed in 1755. For its modern edition, see Gábor and

His collection includes a miscellaneous manuscript containing disputations on dialectic chaired by him in 1702. It is remarkable to see that some of these copies contain information about their imprint, while others lack such details, suggesting that they had remained unpublished.⁶⁶ The manuscript presumably contains copies of documents prepared either for the printing shop or for approval by the university administration. Sometimes, the name of the respondent and the exact date were left blank, while the same disputation was signed by the supervisor responsible for the authorization. This person was Georg Friedrich Schröer (1663–1739), appointed as Professor of Logic and Metaphysic in 1694. In 1710, he graduated as Doctor of Theology, which he taught from 1712 as an ordinary professor.⁶⁷ Schröer's consent must have been all the more necessary as the disputations discussed a problem of logic, which was key to approaching a debate in theology. Here the polemic revolved around terminism, a position ascribed to pietists, according to which God has set a time limit for repentance from sin and for acceptance of grace to each individual. At the time, the adherents of this doctrine, such as Philipp Jakob Spener (1635–1705) of Berlin and Johann Georg Böse (1662–1700), deacon of Sorau, whose names are features in Cassai's manuscript as well, were harshly criticized by

Trojahn, *Bibliotheca Nationis Hungariae*. For the modern catalogue about the manuscripts of Cassai's collection, see Pálffy, *Katalog*.

66. Attempts to retrieve the disputation in the catalogues of printed books (VD18, the Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt of Halle, as well as Gábor and Trojahn, *Bibliotheca Nationis Hungariae*) have failed. These disputations were plausibly never printed.

67. HUL, MS Ung. 8, 158r: "[I[n] N[omine] I[esu?]] Problema prius dialecticum: Utrum contradictio celeberrimis duum viris imputata, aliquid in recessu habeat, nec ne? Quod, rectore magnificentissimo, serenissimo principe, ac domino D[omino] Friderico Augusto, principe regio, elect. Sax. herede, etc. etc. etc., praeses M. Georgius Michaelis Cassai, Hung. et respondens [left blank] publice, candide, iudicantium disquisitioni subijciunt, Die XXVII. Septembris. Anno Christi MDCCII. Academiae secundum [sic] Jubilaeo, In auditorio minori, horis antemeridianis usitatis. Wittenb. Literis Martini Schultz. Acad. Typ. [a different hand:] Legit G. F. Schroer, P. P. [per procuracionem?]" (In the name of Jesus. First problem of dialectic: Whether the contradiction attributed to two most distinguished men has something hidden underneath, or not? Which was publically and with the best intentions submitted to the judgment of the jury under the auspices of the Rector Magnificent, his Highness, the Prince and Lord Friedrich August, royal prince, heir of the Elector of Saxony, by the chair, Master Georg Michael Cassai of Hungary and the respondent [blank]. On 27 September 1702, in the second year of the jubilee of the Academy [?]. In the minor auditorium, in the usual morning hours. Wittenberg, with the letters of Martin Schultz, typographer of the university. Read by G. F. Schroer for supervision [?]). On the person who gave the approval, see Tschackert, "Schröer, Georg Friedrich," 551.

Wittenberg theologians who endorsed the orthodox Lutheran view that grace is available for everybody up until the moment of their death. On the behalf of the university, Böse's assertions were answered by Johann Georg Neumann (1661–1709), against whom the terministic position was defended by Spener's son-in-law, Adam Rechenberg (1642–1721), in Leipzig.⁶⁸ Summarizing his position, the manuscript states that he “*mediam quasi ingressus viam, tantum totaliter induratis terminum peremptorium esse positum perhibebat*,”⁶⁹ consequently not for everybody. As the first disputation explains, if the first of two assertions affirms universally what the second one denies on a particular level, the two sentences form an “*oppositio contradictoria*.”⁷⁰ The series of disputations is thus devoted to this notion.

The miscellany is concluded by a two-part section entitled “*Dissertationum theologicarum*” (“Volumen I” and “Volumen II”).⁷¹ It lists printed disputations in theology published between 1595 and 1713, many of which date to after 1630. Most items include the title, the name of the *praeses* and of the respondent, the year, and the place where the disputation took place. The majority of the students were from the Kingdom of Hungary, being of Hungarian, Slovakian, or German origin. While many of the disputations were held during their sojourn abroad, such as in Wittenberg, Halle, Rostock, Leipzig, Jena, Greifswald, Leiden, or Gdańsk, quite a few took place at Protestant secondary schools in the Kingdom of Hungary, or occasionally in Transylvania. The schools were to be found, among others, in Lőcse (Levoča), Kassa (Košice), Eperjes (Prešov), Besztercebánya (Banská Bystrica), Selmecebánya (Banská Štiavnica), Trencsén (Trenčín), Bártfa (Bardejov), and Breznóbánya (Brezno) in Slovakia, and Nagyvárad (Oradea) in Romania. Their texts were printed either locally or in the printing shop of a neighbouring town: in Kassa, Lőcse, or Bártfa, for instance. Either these prints were transported by students from Hungary to Wittenberg, where they entered Cassai's collection, or they were sent to Cassai

68. Gössner, *Der terministische Streit*.

69. HUL, MS. Ung. 8, 159r: “engaged with a middle way insofar as he supposed that the time limit exists only for those who are totally hardened in heart.”

70. HUL, MS Ung. 8, 159r: “*Iam pugna enunciationum quarum una universaliter affirmat, quod altera particulariter negat, apud logicos oppositio contradictoria appellatur*” (The clash between statements, the first of which affirms on a universal level what the other one denies on a particular level, is called an *oppositio contradictoria* by logicians).

71. HUL, MS Ung. 8, 223r–v.

by Hungarian professors at his request. In the future, a further investigation of his remaining correspondence will be necessary to determine this question. The division of the lists into two volumes suggest that the professor used them to assemble two *Sammelbände*. Volume 1 included forty-four disputations, whereas volume 2 contained thirty-six. With a single exception, each of them can be found in a catalogue of 1755 comprising the printed books of the Hungarian student association of Wittenberg (beyond theology, this inventory lists disputations held on different topics as well). Whereas the disputations appear in clusters within the handwritten catalogue, there are a number of irregularities that imply that Cassai's composite volumes may have been disassembled, or—less probable—there were other copies as well. Today, most of the copies once belonging to the items are missing in the Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt (see Table 4).

Table 4. Disputations held in the Kingdom of Hungary and Transylvania from Cassai's collection, HUL, MS Ung. 8.

Description of the disputation in the manuscript	Place of disputation	Identification number in RMNy ⁷²	Identification number in the catalogue of <i>Bibliotheca Nationis Hungariae</i> ⁷³
"De theologiae principio S. Scriptura S. praeside Casparo Schön. Resp. Georgio Buchholtz Schemnitz 1668" (fol. 223r, vol. I, no. 5)	Selmecbánya (Slovakia)	3462	–
"De unitate sensus litteralis cujuscunq[ue] dicti S[a]crae S[cripturae] praes. Joanne Fabricio Brisnobl. Rectore. Resp. Nicolao Zavodsky 1667" (fol. 223r, vol. I, no. 10)	Brezná (Slovakia)	3354	667
"De Deo, eiusque attributis. Praes. Casparo Schön. Resp. Andrea Lipko. Schemnitzii 1670" (fol. 223r, vol. I, no. 12)	Selmecbánya (Slovakia)	3680	739, 941
"De Sacro Sancta Trinitate. Praes. eodem. [Casparo Schön] Resp. Joh. Strompf. Schemnitz 1670" (fol. 223r, vol. I, no. 13)	Selmecbánya (Slovakia)	3681	740

72. RMNy stands for the Repertory of Old Hungarian Prints: Borsa et al., *Régi magyarországi nyomtatványok*.73. Gábor and Trojahn, *Bibliotheca Nationis Hungariae*.

Description of the disputation in the manuscript	Place of disputation	Identification number in RMNy ⁷²	Identification number in the catalogue of <i>Bibliotheca Nationis Hungariae</i> ⁷³
"De mysterio S. S. Trinitatis. Praes. Joanne Swartz [sic!]. Resp. Studiosis Th[eologiae]. Leutsch. 1672" (fol. 223r, vol. I, no. 14)	Lőcse (Slovakia)	3843	741
"De creatione. Praes. Jo. Heintzelio. Resp. Joh. [recte: Matthaeo] Keph[al]ide]. Novisol. 1665" (fol. 223r, vol. I, no. 18)	Besztercebánya (Slovakia)	3260	744
"De creatione, angelis et imagine Dei, atque provid[ential]. Praes. Joanne Simonide. Resp. studiosis Th[eologiae]. Brisnob. 1670" (fol. 223r, vol. I, no. 21.)	Breznóbánya (Slovakia)	3664	746
"De lege Dei. Praes. Joan. Hniliceno. Resp. Stephano Kóvitzky. Solnae 1663" (fol. 223r, vol. I, no. 23)	Zsolna (Žilina, Slovakia)	3133	748
"Collegium catechiticum de Evangelio, Symb[olo] Apost[olico] et Deo triuno. Praes. Joan. Simonide. Resp. Joanne Schnitzelio. Briz. 1669" (fol. 223r, vol. I, no. 24)	Breznóbánya (Slovakia)	3569	816
"De peccato in genere et in specie. Praes. Joh. Swartz. Resp. Joanne [recte: Stephano] Goebelio. Barthphae 1671" (fol. 223r, vol. I, no. 26)	Bártfa (Slovakia)	3701	749

Description of the disputation in the manuscript	Place of disputation	Identification number in RMNy ⁷²	Identification number in the catalogue of <i>Bibliotheca Nationis Hungariae</i> ⁷³
"De natura peccati orig[inalis]. Praes. Samuele Pomario. Eperjess. 1669" (fol. 223r, vol. I, no. 28)	Eperjes (Slovakia)	possibly 3517, 3518, 3519, or 3520 ⁷⁴	possibly 654, 655, or 656
"De duabus in Christo naturis earundem unione personali et communic[atione] idiomat[um]. Abrahami Christiani Rect. Bartph. 1609" (fol. 223r, vol. I, no. 32)	Bártfa (Slovakia)	975	752
"De universali Christi passione et satisfact[i]one. Matthiae [recte: Eliae] Kreuchel Rect. Schemnitz. 1663" (fol. 223r, vol. I, no. 39)	Selmecbánya (Slovakia)	3094	755
"De passione Christi. Joannis Kircheri p. t. Banensis Rect. 1637" (fol. 223r, vol. I, no. 40) ⁷⁵	Bán (Bánovce nad Bebravou, Slovakia)	1704	129
"De Salvatoris nostri gloriosa resurrectione. Praes. Daniele Remenio. R. Melchior Raphanide. Trenchinii. 1638 (fragment[um])" (fol. 223r, vol. I, no. 41)	Trencsén (Slovakia)	1753	756

74. The uncertainty is due to the fact that Pomarius chaired a whole series of disputations about the same topic starting in 1668 (from this year, see RMNy 3411, 3412, 3413, 3414). In 1669, the series was reprinted in the same volume together (RMNy 3520).

75. In fact, this item is a homily.

Description of the disputation in the manuscript	Place of disputation	Identification number in RMNy ⁷²	Identification number in the catalogue of <i>Bibliotheca Nationis Hungariae</i> ⁷³
“De triumphali Christi ascensione in coelum. Praes. Daniele Remenio, R. Martino Mihulec Trenchinii 1630 [recte: 1640]” (fol. 223r, vol. I, no. 42)	Trencsén (Slovakia)	1859	757
“De omnipraesentia carnis Christi in persona τοῦ λόγου. Praes. Andreas Chorvath. R. Georgius Melochowsky Cassov. 1650” (fol. 223v, vol. I, no. 43)	Kassa (Slovakia)	2306	758
“De majestate omnipraesentiae Christo homini communicata. Praes. Joh. Heinzelio. R. Michaële Paulovitz. Neosolii 1666” (fol. 223v, vol. I, no. 44)	Besztercebánya (Slovakia)	3293	759
“De natura fidei iustifica. Praes. Joan. Heinzelius. R. Joan. Murgasch. Neosol. 1667” (fol. 223v, vol. II, no. 12)	Besztercebánya (Slovakia)	3358	804
“De justificatione Matthiae Fabri Jesuita, opposita refutationi Joannis Graczae Rect. Neosol. 1649” (fol. 223v, vol. II, no. 14)	Besztercebánya (Slovakia)	2290	805
“De fide, spe et charitate divina. Praes. Isaacus Zabanius. Resp. Georgius Chorvat. Eper. 1668” (fol. 223v, vol. II, no. 15)	Eperjes (Slovakia)	3435	664

Description of the disputation in the manuscript	Place of disputation	Identification number in RMNy ⁷²	Identification number in the catalogue of <i>Bibliotheca Nationis Hungariae</i> ⁷³
"De perseverantia sanctorum secunda. Praes. Michael Toufaeus. Resp Stephanus Szekelyhidi. Varad. 1651 [recte: 1650?]" (fol. 223v, vol. II, no. 16)	Nagyvárad (Romania)	2356	806
"De perseverantia electorum intercis a per peccata lethalia. Praes. Andreas Horvath. R. Melcheor [sic] Gurini. [Bártfa, 1650]" (fol. 223v, vol. II, no. 17)	Kassa (Slovakia)	2307	807
"De vocatione ministrorum Ec[clesi]ae. Praes. Matthias Stürzerus. R. Michael Paulovitz. Neosol. 1668" (fol. 223v, vol. II, no. 25)	Besztercebánya (Slovakia)	3458	814
"Studium catecheticum, de Evangelio, Symbolo Apost[olico] et Deo Triuno. Praes. Joannes Simonides. R. Joan. Snitzellius. Briznae 1669" (fol. 223v, vol. II, no. 35) [Duplum: see vol. I, no. 24]	Brezinobánya (Slovakia)	3569	816
"Studium catecheticum biblicum, logicum. Praes. Joan. Simonides. R. Studiosi. Briznae 1669" (fol. 223v, vol. II, no. 36)	Brezinobánya (Slovakia)	3568	817

Why did Cassai collect these disputations? It is likely that the traumatizing events of persecution that first caused him to leave the Kingdom of Hungary led to him developing a personal interest in the history of Protestantism and the evolution of Lutheran schools in his homeland. It is also possible that he intended to assemble a collection of sources about these matters for the use of the Hungarian students who had arrived at Wittenberg. Although his *démarche* does not always seem systematic, the case of Mihály Toufaeus (1624–84), later known as Tofeus, does reveal the ambitious scope of this collection. Originally, the Calvinist Tofeus, issued a disputation in 1650 in Nagyvárad against the Arminians about the perseverance of saints. But instead of Calvinist dissidents, it drew the attention of the Lutheran András Horváth, who chaired a disputation at the Lutheran School of Kassa to refute Tofeus's position about election and grace. Tofeus would duly respond by organizing a second disputation on the matter in Nagyvárad. While the first publication of the debate is missing from Cassai's collection, he did purchase the Lutheran reply to Tofeus's second disputation.⁷⁶ Plausibly, Cassai intended to open a comprehensive perspective on religious polemics in Hungary by compiling these two *Sammelbände*. However, his collection has serious shortcomings in the case of János Gracza, whose disputation on justification by faith was but a part of a series of debates between the Jesuit Matthias Faber and the Protestants about an array of diverse subjects. Cassai could purchase only one booklet of many.⁷⁷

Cassai's collection resulted from continuous and intense communication between an academic centre and the secondary schools of a remote land. Students arriving at Wittenberg must have brought disputations with them; indeed, they must have also brought some of them home as proof of their achievements. Furthermore, these short prints did not always result from mere scholarly exercises. On the contrary, some of them took a position on controversial points of theology, and since they were published as pamphlets against

76. Toufaeus and Betskeházi, *Disputatio theologica* (RMNy 2355, missing from Cassai's list); Toufaeus and Székelyhidi, *Disputatio theologica* (RMNy 2356); Horváth and Gurinus, *Pia et placida dissertatio* (RMNy 2307).

77. Gracza, *Vindiciae sanae et catholicae doctrinae dissertatio VI. et VII.* (RMNy 2267); Faber, *Vindex vindiciarum* (RMNy 2279); Gracza, *Vindiciae sanae et catholicae doctrinae circa materiam sanctissimae iustificationis* (RMNy 2290); Horváth, *Disquisitio* (RMNy 2291). The last extant work of these polemics is partly directed against Calvinists, while the anti-Jesuit engagement remains present: Horváth, *Responsum* (RMNy 2440).

rival denominations, they often related to current polemics. By way of their conveyance to Wittenberg, they could facilitate the exchange of expertise.

Knowledge transfer and exchange between prints and manuscripts

Knowledge transfer via disputations sometimes occurred through a change of medium that worked in both directions: information migrated from handwritten materials to printed disputations, and printed disputations provided data for lecture notes.

The following considerations focus on the reception of printed disputations on natural philosophy defended by two Hungarian students at the Lutheran Gymnasium of Gdańsk under the supervision of Adrianus Pauli (1548–1611). The first of these was Márton Csombor of Szepsi (1595–c. 1622), the author of the first travelogue in Hungarian, entitled *Europica varietas* (1620), which is an account of his academic journey throughout Poland, the Czech lands, Silesia, Prussia, Denmark, the Low Countries, England, France, and the Holy Roman Empire.⁷⁸ In 1617, he disputed about metals, which resulted in a short book containing his own contributions about mining in Hungary, and which also included several popular beliefs related to mining, such as the existence of ghosts and other creatures that miners claim to have encountered.⁷⁹ The other student was Pál Simoni (?–after 1619) of Beszterce in Transylvania who studied in Gdańsk in 1617–19. He defended two disputations, one on meteorology and another about the geography of water sources and rivers.⁸⁰ Although his disputations took place after Csombor had left Gdańsk, they attest to a vivid correspondence with his fellow student: his considerations about water sources include a reference to an account of Csombor, who, on returning home, reported to Simoni that a source in the Kingdom of Hungary (at the gate of the city of Szikszó, the blood-soaked site of several battles between Christians and Ottomans) had miraculously turned red on 27 December 1618.⁸¹ Not only their

78. For its critical edition including an introductory study, see Szepsi Csombor, *Szepsi Csombor Márton*, 115–291; for a selection in English, see Szepsi Csombor, *Europica varietas*.

79. Pauli and Szepsi Csombor, *Disputatio physica*.

80. Pauli and Simoni, *Σὺν Θεῷ Meteorologia generalis*; Pauli and Simoni, *Disputatio philosophica*.

81. Pauli and Simoni, *Disputatio philosophica*, B4v: “An ex causis naturalibus fontes interdum sanguinem profundere possint? Occasionem huic quaest[ioni] dederunt literae diversissimae: hominum, partim litteratorum, partim etiam aliorum ἀξιολόγων, ex *Ungaria* non ita pridem huc Dantiscum missae,

beliefs in supernatural phenomena signals historical-political implications of their interest in natural philosophy, but also their disputations prove that there was an intensive exchange of information between their foreign schools and their homelands, and they both acted as agents of this exchange.⁸²

Via their disputations, they became agents of knowledge transfer, and their printed documents were used as sources of information, as can be observed in a curious manuscript at the Lutheran School of Eperjes, which was the last Hungarian station of Csombor's journey before he left the Hungarian Kingdom for Gdańsk. It is a textbook about physics, dictated by a local professor named Samuel Dürner (1614–52), whose main source was Johann Sperling's (1603–58) *Synopsis physica*, an influential textbook that came out of Wittenberg. As the immediate successor of Daniel Sennert (1572–1637), Sperling dedicated his efforts to reconciling Aristotelian physics with atomism and the chymical principles, a syncretism also permeating Dürner's manuscript. The teacher of Eperjes even imitates the method for discussing this work by proposing

in quibus scribitur, Anno superiori 1618, 27 Decemb[ris] (quo die desiit ibidem apparere terribilis et portentosus ille *Cometa*) ante portam Civitatis Szikso, fontem, qui antea semper clara et limpida aqua fluxerat, merum et probatum sanguinem (verba sunt rectoris scholae Cassoviensis Dn. Martini Czombor, olim gymnasii huius alumni et studiosi solertissimi) profudisse, ad quem visendum maxima non tantum Ungarorum, sed et Turcarum, Sclavorum, Croatorum, Valachorum, Austriacorum etc. multitudo confluit, qui omnes et singuli huius tam portentosi spectaculi testes oculati fuerunt (emphasis in original)" (Is it possible that sometimes springs naturally produce blood? This question arises from the most various letters sent from Hungary to Gdańsk not long ago by men of letters or by other trustworthy people. They report that in the year before, on 27 December 1618, the day when the apparition of that terrible and monstrous comet ceased there, the source, which was to be found in front of the gate of the town of Szikszó, and which before had always gushed out clear and bright water, had produced pure and verified blood [these are the words of Master Márton Csombor, the rector of the school in Kassa, once an alumnus and a most capable student of this school], and not only a huge mass of Hungarians, but also of Turks, Slavs, Croats, Romanians, Austrians, etc. gathered to admire this phenomenon, and they all became eyewitnesses of this so horrible spectacle).

82. Pál Simoni made his own personal contribution to his disputation, too, when he explained the unusually high frequency of meteorological phenomena in Transylvania with the high mountains and the richness of the soil emanating exhalations. Pauli and Simoni, *Σὺν Θεῷ Meteorologia generalis*, C2v: "Cur in Transylvania tam frequenter appareant omnis generis meteora?" (Why do all sorts of meteors appear in Transylvania so frequently?).

definitions and divisions for each term of physics, followed by questions that demonstrate theological applications for each doctrine of natural philosophy.⁸³

Sometimes Dürner deviated from his primary source by using other references. For instance, while discussing metals, he introduced etymological considerations derived from physics taught at the school of Gdańsk. After briefly explaining the formation of metals through chymical principles, Dürner acknowledges two possible etymologies for the word metal: one from the Greek verb μεταλλάν, meaning “research,” and another from Pliny the Elder who thought that the term *metalla* derived from the expression (ἄλλα) μετ’ ἄλλα, “one after another,” implying that a vein of a certain type of metal can be often discovered in the vicinity of some other kind of metal, such as copper next to lead. The two etymologies can be retraced to the *Systema physicum* (1612) of Bartholomaeus Keckermann (c. 1572–1609), the most influential pedagogue of Gdańsk, yet his choice of words and the order of the two explanations suggest that his immediate source is elsewhere. It is worth considering the introductory remarks in Csombor’s disputation about metals. While he and his *praeeses* certainly followed Keckermann’s textbook, it is not impossible that Dürner’s direct source was Csombor’s text. Given that no extant copy of the disputation is known from the historical territory of Hungary, this textual similarity, which is far from being conclusive, might be the only evidence suggesting that Csombor brought back a number of copies to his homeland (see Table 5).

83. College Library of the Transtibiscan Reformed Church District (CL), MS R 302. On the manuscript, see Förköli, “From Chemical Atomism.”

Table 5. Etymological explanations of *metalla* as referred to by Keckermann, Márton Csombor, and Dürner.

Keckermann, <i>Systema physicum</i>	Márton Csombor's disputation	Samuel Dürner's physics
Metalla dicta sunt secundum quosdam, quod post alia commoda humano generi subministrentur a communi matre, videlicet terra, ita ut praepositio <i>μετά</i> significet <i>post</i> . Et hac quidem etymologia vehementer comprobatur methodus nostra, quae etiam post alia, nempe post animalia et plantas tractat de metallis. Plinius lib. 33. cap. 6. putat metalla dicta esse quasi ἄλλα μετ' ἄλλα, <i>unum post aliud</i> , aut <i>unum cum alio</i> ; quia una vena effossa et absumpta, statim inveniatur alia. Denique sunt qui derivent ἀπὸ τοῦ μεταλλᾶν, a solerti investigatione; quia nempe oporteat metalla rimari in terrae penetralibus, et quia etiam natura eorum difficilis est pervestigatu, quam originationem appellat Fallopius tractatu De fossilibus cap. 10. ⁸⁴	Cum metalla nonnulli dicta velint a μεταλλᾶν quod est <i>inquirere</i> ; operae precium est, ut non solum in visceribus terrae diligenter inquirantur, sed et in Lyceo natura illorum pervestigetur. Scite interim et <i>Plinius l. 33. Nat. hist. c. 6.</i> metalla dicta esse putat quasi μετ' ἄλλα, hoc est, <i>juxta alia</i> , non eo tantum, quod, ubi una vena unius metalli inventa est, non procul ibidem inveniatur et altera alterius metalli: sed etiam, quod ubi unius metalli vena defecerit, ibidem alterius, sed plerumque vilioris metalli vena solet succedere et apparere. ⁸⁵	Metalla sunt corpora perfecte mixta ex coalitione sulphuris et argenti vivi producta in terrae cavernis. Ubi notandum circa definitum [<i>sic</i>] metalli dici a Graeco verbo μεταλλᾶν, quod significat inquirere, scrutari, eo quod multo labore metalla in subterraneis partibus quaerantur. Plinio metalla dicuntur quasi μετὰ ἄλλα eo quod vena metallaris non raro vicina sit, alii vel cum alia vel post aliam vel iuxta aliam. ⁸⁶

84. Keckermann, *Systema physicum*, 606. "Certain people say that metals are those things that are provided after other commodities for the human race by our common mother, the earth. Hence the preposition *μετά*, which means after. This etymology is firmly demonstrated by our textbook, which discusses metals after other things, such as animals and plants. Pliny, in book 33, chapter 6, claims that *metalla* sounds like ἄλλα μετ' ἄλλα, one after another or one with another, because as soon as a vein is excavated and exploited, another is immediately found. There are also others who derive it from ἀπὸ τοῦ μεταλλᾶν, i.e. skilful searching, because metals have to be searched for in the depths of the earth, and their nature is difficult to study. This etymology is supported by Fallopius in chapter 10 of his treatise about fossils."

85. Pauli and Szepsi Csombor, *Disputatio physica*, A2r. "Since many say that *metalla* comes from μεταλλᾶν, which means 'to investigate,' it's not only worth the effort that metals are carefully sought in the depths of the earth, but also that their nature is studied in the gymnasium. But also Pliny wisely claims in chapter 6 of book 33 in his *Natural History* that *metalla* sounds like μετ' ἄλλα, which means 'next to each other,' not only because where they find a vein of one metal, they find a vein of another metal nearby, but also because as soon as a vein of one metal runs out, usually, another vein of a different, but mostly less valuable metal appears in their stead at the same place."

86. CL, MS R 302, 212. "Metals are perfectly composed bodies formed in the depths of the earth by the union of sulphur and quicksilver. Speaking about the definition of metal, we must note that it is derived

Another topic where there could have been an exchange between the school of Eperjes and the Hungarian students of Gdańsk concerns the myth of the barnacle goose. According to medieval belief, popularized by the Scottish historian Hector Boece, this species had a peculiar way of procreating: they simply grew on trees in Scotland. While Márton Csombor used this belief to argue that transmutation is possible in nature and therefore making gold was also possible,⁸⁷ Sperling, the main source of the Eperjes textbook, rejected the veracity of Hector Boece's account.⁸⁸ As different as their opinions about such beliefs may have been, the manuscript of Eperjes shares this interest for natural curiosities. For instance, Pál Simoni's disputation about meteorology (in the "Corollaria" and the section dedicated to additional questions under the title "Problemata exegetica") and Dürner's textbook both address the potential role of the devil in creating lightning and thunder, as well as the physical and religious ways of avoiding them.⁸⁹

The affinity between the Gdańsk tradition and the Eperjes manuscript also works on a more methodological level. Keckermann's predilection for Mosaic physics (i.e., the preference for Scripture over non-Christian authorities in natural philosophy) was compatible with the *démarche* of Sperling and

from the Greek verb μεταλλᾶν, which means 'to inquire, to scrutinize,' because metals are sought in subterranean regions with painstaking work. Pliny says that *metalla* sounds like μετὰ ἄλλα, because metal veins are very often close together, that is with each other, after each other, or next to each other."

87. In fact, the disputation denies that barnacle geese grow on trees as fruits, yet it claims that they are born from the wood of the plant through putrefaction. Pauli and Szepsi Csombor, *Disputatio physica*, C2v.

88. Sperling, *Synopsis physica*, 238.

89. Pauli and Simoni, *Σὺν Θεῷ Meteorologia generalis*, B4r: "An meteora sint signa naturalia rerum futurarum" (Whether meteors are natural signs of future events); B4v: "An daemones et striges vere possint efficere meteora, ut ventos, pluvias, grandines, fulmina, tempestates" (Whether demons and witches can actually produce meteors, such as winds, rains, hailstorms, lightnings, and storms); C1r: "An ignes ambulones seu fatui sint spectra aut ludibria diaboli, an potius meteora naturalia" (Whether will-o'-the-wisp or foolish flames are ghosts or mockeries of the devil, or they are rather natural meteors); C2r: "An sub zona torrida generari possint meteora?" (Can meteors be born under the Torrid Zone?). Cf. CL, MS R 302, 160: "Cur Deus coelitus detonans fulgura et coruscationes igneas hominibus inmittit?" (Why does God thundering from the sky send lightnings and flashes upon men?); 197: "An diabolus excitare possit fulmina" (Whether the devil can incite lightning). Moreover, Dürner chaired a disputation about the natural and supernatural causes of two thunderstrikes that hit the temple of the German Lutherans of Eperjes in 1641 and 1643. See Dürner and Ketzer, *Exercitium scholasticum*.

Dürner, who, while denying the authority of the Bible in questions on nature, acknowledged that physics can help solve problems in Biblical exegesis—and Dürner did, indeed, fill his textbook with hermeneutical digressions.⁹⁰ In his turn, Adrianus Pauli distanced himself from Keckermann insofar as he turned to more eclectic theories of matter. Similarly, Sperling, he and his students would endeavour to harmonize Aristotle's views on matter with chymical principles: for example, Csombor made significant concessions to the possibility that metals stem from quicksilver.⁹¹ These similarities enhance the chance that the Gdańsk disputations of Hungarian students were subject to further discussions in some of the schools of their homeland.

Conclusion

The manuscripts discussed in this article have not necessarily brought us closer to discerning the performative aspect of disputations, or to seeing how arguments and counter-arguments were presented to each other in their orality. Having said that, this inquiry has allowed us to form a novel perception of early modern disputations. Indeed, although the disputations preserved in these handwritten sources were not minutes taken during the events, they may sometimes have recorded spontaneous elements, such as additional arguments or refutations.

For some students, like the Bánovszky brothers and Georg Puecher, it was important to possess an aesthetically designed manuscript, one that included lecture notes and details about the disputations they had witnessed or taken part in. In fact, such a manuscript would have commemorated their years of education. Despite the manuscripts' sentimental value, reflected in the quality of

90. On the notion of Mosaic physics, see Blair, "Mosaic Physics."

91. Pauli and Szepesi Csombor, *Disputatio physica*, C4r: "Quod si vera denique est chymicorum opinio de proxima metallorum causa, hydrargyro nimirum et mercurio, sententia nostra apprimè erit confirmata, ut pote, cum in Ungaria purissimum ac copiosissimum, communi negotiatorum et mercatorum consensu, hydrargyrum inveniatur" (If the chemists are right about the direct cause of metals, namely, artificial and natural sulphuric acid, our opinion is greatly strengthened, since in Hungary, according to the unanimous opinion of shopkeepers and merchants, there is a great abundance of very pure sulphuric acid). See also the "Corollarium" (Pauli and Szepesi Csombor, *Disputatio physica*, B1v): "An principia metallorum chymica recte explicata cum Aristotelicis conciliari possint? Affirmatur" (Can the chymical explanation for the genesis of metals be reconciled with Aristotelians? Affirmative). Keckermann's textbook discussed the chymical explanation only to reject it: Keckermann, *Systema physicum*, 608–9.

the execution, their contents unveil less of their owners' personalities or indeed of their individual achievements. In comparison with printed disputations, those preserved in manuscripts were more likely to have been accounts of everyday teaching practices rather than graduation events or celebratory occasions. In the Jesuit tradition, these handwritten accounts, as laconic as they may have been, belonged to a certain type of source, maybe the only one that can reveal how the Society of Jesus looked to use disputations as recapitulation exercises. These records specified the subject matter, sometimes the outline of the main theses, the date of the events, and the names of the participants, thus enabling us to reconstruct the circle of the students concerned. These details can help to assess the quality of the education offered at each institution. For instance, we can risk the assumption that teaching at the Olomouc College under the Jesuit order in a certain time period was more intensive in some respects than at the Vienna College of the order. Of course, to make this evaluation solid, further sources must be taken into account.

Recording in manuscripts the content of disputations could assist the users of these documents in achieving their own disputational proficiency. More important is that this medium change—from print to manuscript and vice versa—attests to the fact that university centres and the peripheries of Christian Europe maintained a vibrant relationship based on an exchange of knowledge and the migration of students. Certain sources of this inquiry reveal that disputation could have been a medium for the gathering of knowledge and the collecting of data and personal experiences by exploiting the network established by migrating students. In this respect, disputations were more than mere ritualized exercises, for they were invested in encyclopaedic goals.⁹² While this can be demonstrated on both printed and handwritten disputations, manuscripts, such as lecture notes and excerpts, can significantly contribute to research into communication in the republic of letters. The examples this article could provide for this type of knowledge transfer were taken from Protestant circles—while the Catholic disputations discussed in this article have turned out to be dominated by the subject matter presented during the lectures instead of debatable scientific questions—but whether this phenomenon is specific to

92. Rather than traditional disputations, where arguments were based on formal logic, disputations using the *loci communes* method, a topical classification of facts, opinions, data, and arguments, justified these encyclopaedic ambitions, implemented in disputations collected either in composite volumes or on the shelves of erudite libraries, as well as in thematical series of disputations (*collegia*) in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. See Marti, "Die Disputationsschriften."

Protestant Europe as an instance of intellectual and spiritual solidarity remains to be determined.

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