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The Book Collection of the Loitz Family in the Elbląg Library: Current State of Research, Overview of the Collection, and a Supplement to the List of Prints

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The Elbląg (Ger. Elbing) Library, the successor to the historic Library of Elbląg Gymnasium, preserves a collection of books that may be linked to the Loitzes, a family of Szczecin (Ger. Stettin) and Gdańsk (Ger. Danzig) merchant bankers. The collection and the state of its preservation have been the subject of research in the past, both as the focus of research interest in and of themselves and as a topic on the margins of broader considerations about early modern bourgeois book collections and the history of the Elbląg Library.¹ Conservation work carried out in the library, and its cataloguing, have made it possible to supplement the previous findings. Instrumental in this was analysis of an inventory preserved in the State Archive in Gdańsk, drawn up after the death of Simon II Loitz, in which his book collection, inter alia, was very carefully detailed.² In this paper, I summarize the state of research on the Loitz legacy preserved in the collections of the Elbląg Library, profile the most interesting of the volumes, and extend the list of prints hitherto known to include newly found items from the collection of this family.

¹ Jerzy Sekulski, *Biblioteka Gimnazjum Elbląskiego (1601–1781)*, PhD dissertation, University of Gdańsk Archives, Gdańsk–Elbląg 1981; *idem*, *Książka w Elblągu do roku 1772*, Gdańsk 1990; *idem*, *Biblioteka Gimnazjum Elbląskiego w XVII–XVIII wieku* [in:] *Biblioteka Elbląska 1601–2001. Materiały z sesji naukowej zorganizowanej z okazji 400-lecia Biblioteki Elbląskiej, Elbląg 23 XI 2001 r.*, red. W. Długokęcki, Elbląg 2001; Krystyna Podlaszewska, *Prywatne biblioteki mieszczan elbląskich w XVI i w pierwszej połowie XVII wieku*, “Studia o Bibliotekach i Zbiorach Polskich” 1993, nr 5, pp. 47–69; Renata Filipkowska, *Stefan i Szymon Loitzowie w świetle swojego księgozbioru*, MA thesis, Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń 1990.

² Archiwum Państwowe w Gdańsku [hereinafter: Inventory], 300, 4/28, pp. 501–521.

The gymnasium itself was founded in 1535 by the rector Mylius, earlier efforts having been in vain. The library was only founded in 1601. It was endowed with collections of importance for both teaching and learning, via various channels. In addition to purchases financed from students' fees, the library's holdings were augmented by donations of books from citizens including local bibliophiles such as Heinrich Loitz, Andreas Neander, Johann Jacob Martini, and Johann Daniel Hoffman, who donated their entire book collections to the Elbląg gymnasium in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; thanks to financial donations, most often bequests; and in the form of books endowed by members of municipal authorities, burghers, merchants, wealthy citizens, visitors, and the City Council itself.³

In the second half of the seventeenth century, the Elbląg gymnasium library received a donation of nearly 400 works from Heinrich Loitz (son of Stephan, d. 1679). Around 1660, he donated to his alma mater a rich collection of works on theology and the subjects known collectively today as the humanities – the core of the family collection. The Loitzes' collection also included books on geometry, mathematics, nature, logic, philosophy, history, astronomy and law. The donation did not consist of all the books that had been collected by three generations of the family; the remaining works were probably sold or kept by the donor himself.⁴ According to the inventory drawn up when the book collection was made over to Heinrich in 1624, it numbered 760 items, among which were also typically utilitarian books, such as family account ledgers, and volumes described as “Ein buch von beschreibenen und umbechreibenen Papieren in Rechts”, “Ein geschriebenen Buch, so intituliret wird, das newe gruine Zinsbuch, Ein altes schuldbuch”, or “Ein schuldbuch des Simon Litzen geschrieben”.⁵ The entire inventory is quite lengthy, and one of its larger parts is the list of the books left by Simon II Loitz. The section dedicated to this book collection numbers 21 pages. The books are organized according to their format (folio, quarto, octavo, duodecimo) (fig. 1).

The beginnings of this library are associated with the figure of Simon I Loitz, a merchant from Szczecin, who, together with his brother Michael II, moved to Gdańsk to establish a branch of the family's company there in 1528. His two sons remained in Royal Prussia – Simon II was the chief lawyer of the city of Gdańsk, while Stephan I became the secretary of Elbląg city council. Both brothers, like their father, were bibliophiles, and built on the book collections they inherited from their father. In 1617, after Stephan's death, Simon II, who lived

³ Podlaszewska, *Prywatne biblioteki...*, pp. 48–49; Sekulski, *Biblioteka Gimnazjum...*, pp. 65–66; Marian Pawlak, *Biblioteki profesorów gimnazjum elbląskiego w XVI–XVIII wieku*, “Między Nami Bibliotekarzami” 2002, nr 3, pp. 3–6; Iwona Imańska, *Biblioteki mieszczan elbląskich w XVIII wieku*, “Acta Universitatis Nicolai Copernici” 1993, t. 28, pp. 156–157.

⁴ Sekulski, *Biblioteka Gimnazjum...*, p. 26.

⁵ Inventory, pp. 501–521.



Fig. 1. Inventory of Simon Loitz library, Archiwum Państwowe w Gdańsku, cat. no. 300, 4/28, photo: Aleksandra Girsztowt

in Gdańsk, took possession of his brother's collection. In 1624, in turn, Stephan's son Heinrich inherited the books that had hitherto been in his uncle's hands.⁶

The entire Loitz family collection as recorded in the inventory does not evince any clear fields of interest. Among the 250 titles listed, and the 118 that have survived to this day, there are works from the field broadly classified as theology. Among the extant books are the polemical works of Piotr Skarga,⁷ whom Stefan Loitz knew personally (fig. 2);⁸ works by Stanisław Grodzicki,⁹ Martin Luther,¹⁰ Philip Melanchthon,¹¹ and John Calvin;¹² and numerous biblical commentaries, both Protestant¹³ and Catholic.¹⁴ Only one of the Bibles collected by the Loitz family, a volume published in Venice in 1474, was included in the donation.¹⁵ The overall range of theological literature it encompassed was wide, and covered patrology,¹⁶ dogmatics, and ecclesiastics. There are also two hagiographic volumes in this collection: *The Golden Legend of Jacob de Voragine* (Dresdae / Lipsiae 1479, ref. Inc. 35) and a life of St Paul the Apostle. The literature on the Lutheran confession was most widely represented; there was also a lesser amount of works on the Calvinist, Arian, and Catholic denominations.

In addition to theological literature, the preserved collection of the Loitz family also includes works from the humanities, among them the very popular *Courtier* by Bernardo Castiglione,¹⁷ much translated and frequently adapted to reflect local conditions, and works by Giovanni Pontano.¹⁸

The Loitzes also collected literature connected with history, though to a lesser extent. They set particular store by the history of the lands in which they lived, holding works on the history of Prussia, including *Kurtze und warhafftige*

⁶ Jerzy Lassota, *Zarys dziejów Biblioteki Elbląskiej (1601–1945)*, "Rocznik Elbląski" 1961, t. 1, pp. 105–106; Filipkowska, *Stefan i Szymon...*, pp. 19–22; Friedrich Schwarz, *Loitz Michael* [in:] *Altpreußische Biographie*, Bd. 1, Hg. Christian Krollmann, Marburg 1974, p. 406; Sekulski, *Biblioteka Gimnazjum...*, p. 26.

⁷ Piotr Skarga, *Zawstydzienie Arianow, y wzywanie do pokuty y wiary chrześciańskiej*, Kraków 1604, ref. SD.XVII.79.

⁸ Sekulski, *Książka...*, p. 33; Podlaszewska, *Prywatne biblioteki...*, p. 51.

⁹ Stanisław Grodzicki, *Societatis Iesv. Concio De Probandis Spiritibus*, Cracoviae 1607, ref. SD.XVI.13.

¹⁰ Martin Luther, *Kurtze und gründliche Erklerung...*, Bremen 1592, ref. SD.XVI.224.

¹¹ E.g. Philip Melanchthon, *Liber de anima*, Vitebergae 1558, ref. SD.XVI.919.

¹² E.g. John Calvin, *In viginti prima Ezechielis prophetae capita praelectiones*, Genevae 1565, ref. SD.XVI.1122.

¹³ E.g. Johann Oecolampadius, *In Epistolam ad Hebraeos, Ioannis Oecolampadii, explanationes*, Argentorati 1534, ref. SD.XVI.1218.

¹⁴ E.g. Emmanuel Sa, *Notationes in totam scripturam sacram: Quibus omnia fera loca difficilia, breuissione explic antur*, Antverpaie 1598, ref. vol. 1: SD.XVI.2217.1, vol. 2: SD.XVI.2217.2.

¹⁵ Sekulski, *Biblioteka Gimnazjum...*, p. 98.

¹⁶ E.g. Ambrosius, *Omnia opera*, Basileae 1527, ref. SD.XVI. 2317. 1–3.

¹⁷ Bernardo Castiglione, *Le courtisan de messire Baltazar de Castillon nouvellement reveu et corrige*, Lyon 1588, ref. SD.XVI.1656.

¹⁸ Giovanni Pontano, *Opera: Urania, siue de Stellis libri quinq[ue]*, Venetiis 1505, ref. SD XVI.1653.



Fig. 2. Piotr Skarga, *Zawstydzienie Arianow, y wzywanię do pokuty y wiary chrześcijańskiej*, library of Simon Loitz in the Elbląg Library, photo: Elbląg Library

Beschreibung des Landes in Preussen: Item: Der alten heidenischen undeutschen Preussen sampt irer Religion, Göttern Bapsten und Pfaffen... by Caspar Hennenberger, published in Königsberg in 1584, which is currently owned by the University Library in Toruń. Their strong connection with Gdańsk is also reflected: they owned a large collection of ephemera, such as threnodies about the plague of 1561, wedding poems, and elegies.¹⁹ Few works on ancient history from the collection have been preserved (although among the family's holdings were the works of Josephus Flavius). The 1624 inventory also includes an impressive list of historical works; among the more interesting works it mentions which have not survived were Jan Herbut's *Polish Chronicle* and the *Chronica Sclavorum* by Helmold.²⁰

The Loitzes also paid attention to the study of classical languages, which was *de rigueur* for socializing in educated circles at that time. This is evidenced by the surviving editions of Latin and Greek textbooks, which focus particularly on grammar, syntax and rhetoric. Another interesting item is the Hebrew grammar textbook.²¹

Books on the exact and natural sciences likewise played a significant role in the collection. These were dominated by astronomical and astrological works, which were also considered scientific at that time. Among these are

¹⁹ Podlaszewska, *Prywatne biblioteki...*, p. 50.

²⁰ Inventory, pp. 507, 509.

²¹ Johann Habermann, *Grammatices Ebraicae Sanctae Lingvae, Vitebergae* 1570, ref. SD.XVI.1889.

works by the Arab astronomer Mashallah ibn Athari.²² Most valuable of all is the work by Georg Joachim Rheticus, the first published in print disseminating the heliocentric theory of Nicolaus Copernicus (who was a relative of the Loitz family²³); another important item is the Euclid.²⁴ The works by Vitruvius on architecture (fig. 3) were also to be found in this collection.²⁵



Fig. 3. Marcus Vitruvius, *Per Iocundum Solito Castigatior Factus Cum Figuris Tabula...*, library of Simon Loitz in the Elbląg Library, photo: Elbląg Library

In addition to works from the field of the natural sciences, the Loitz family also had a collection of medical books, including works by Otto von Brunfels,²⁶ Constantine the African, volumes presenting the achievements of Hippocrates and Galen in the field of medicine, and, first and foremost, the impressive work by Andreas Vesalius,²⁷ in the form of a convolute also comprising the work by Galen; this is kept today in the museum in Elbląg.

²² Messahalla, *De elementis et orbibus coelestibus, liber antiquus ac eruditus Messahalae laudatissimi inter arabes astrologi...*, Noribergae 1549, ref. SD.XVI.1578.

²³ Georg Johannes Rheticus, *Ad clarissimum virum D. Ioannem Schonerum, de libris revolutionum eruditissimi viri, & Mathematici excellentissimi, prerenidi D. Doctoris Nicolai Torunnai...*, Gedani 1540, ref. SD.XVI.478.

²⁴ E.g. *Euclidis Magarensis Mathematici Clarissimi Elementorum geometricorum Libri XV*, Basiliae 1558, ref. SD.XVI.2271.

²⁵ Marcus Vitruvius, *Per Iocundum Solito Castigatior Factus Cum Figuris Tabula...*, Venetiis 1511, ref. SD.XVI.2301.

²⁶ Otto von Brunfels, *Theses seu communes loci totius rei Medicae*, Argentorati 1532, ref. SD.XVI.1041.

²⁷ Andreas Vesalius, *De corporis humani fabrica libri septem*, Basileae 1555, ref. SD.XVI.2434.

Another category well represented in the inventory drawn up in 1624, but almost completely absent from the transferred library of the Loitz family, was that of law books. While numerous codices of German, Polish and Roman law were listed in 1624,²⁸ these are completely absent from the library collection. The lack of preserved works from this field indicates that they were either kept by Heinrich Loitz for himself and his heirs, or sold on.²⁹

The works in the collections of the Loitz family often came from other libraries, as evidenced by earlier marks of provenance. Some of them were from the collection of Andreas Peltzer, a pharmacist practising first in Elbląg and then in Gdańsk. After his death, his library was dispersed, but the ownership mark with the characteristic sentence “*spes lenit curas*” (“hope eases pain”) (fig. 4) indicate this provenance. This collection includes one of the oldest surviving works from the Loitz collection: *Epiphania medicorum* by Ulrich Pinder from 1506.³⁰ This printed book is dedicated to the diagnosis of diseases based on examination of the physical characteristics of the urine, including a characteristic illustration showing the diagnostic circle (fig. 5) and additionally decorated with miniatures cut out of other manuscripts or incunabula (fig. 6). The medical books from the Peltzer collection feature many secondary notes, probably written by Pelzer himself. Among the volumes from this collection later incorporated into the Loitz library were also theological and philosophical works, such as Heinrich Bebel’s *Adagia germanica*.³¹

Some, though not many, of the books contain notes as to their price. Among these are the commentaries to Pliny, bought in 1595 for 22 groschen, and a poem about Orpheus for 20 groschen, for which the date of purchase could not be determined. Some of the books were certainly given to the Loitz family as gifts. The work of Joachim Hanff was given to Simon Loitz by the rector of Gdańsk Gymnasium, Johannes Martini, which is mentioned in the dedication (fig. 7).³²

Interestingly enough, works from the Loitz family library reached the gymnasium not only through the donation from Heinrich Loitz. On one of the pages of Johannes Bertachini’s work *Repertorium Clarissimi Viri...*, in addition

²⁸ Including *Constitutio Polonica de Anno 1620, Centuria una similium Juris Polon., Digestum novum pandectraum Juris Civilis*.

²⁹ In 1628, he entered the University of Königsberg as a minor – a person who, due to his young age, did not take the oath when enrolled at the University; Georg Erler, *Die Matrikel und die Promotionsverzeichnisse der Albertus-Universität zu Königsberg i. Pr. 1544–1829*, Bd. 1: *Die Immatrikulationen von 1544–1656*, Leipzig 1910, p. 309; Podlaszewska, *Prywatne biblioteki...*, p. 51.

³⁰ Ulrich Pinder, *Epiphania Medicorum. Speculum videndi urinas hominum. Clausis aperiendi portas pulssuum*, [s.l.] 1506, ref. SD.XVI.1735.

³¹ Heinrich Bebel, *Adagia Germanica*, [s.l.] 1514, ref. Icc. 14.

³² “*Ingenio v virtute praescancissimo viro domini Simoni Loitzen studii et observantia ego mittit*”; Joachim Hanff, *In P. Virgilia Maronis Priores Quatuor Libros Aeneidos. M. Joachimi Hanffii celeberrimae Scholae Lubecensis olim Rectoris solertissimi Praelectiones Grammaticam, Logicam, Rhetoricam & Poeticam textus analysin breviter monstrantes*, Dantisci 1611, ref. SD.XVII.70.

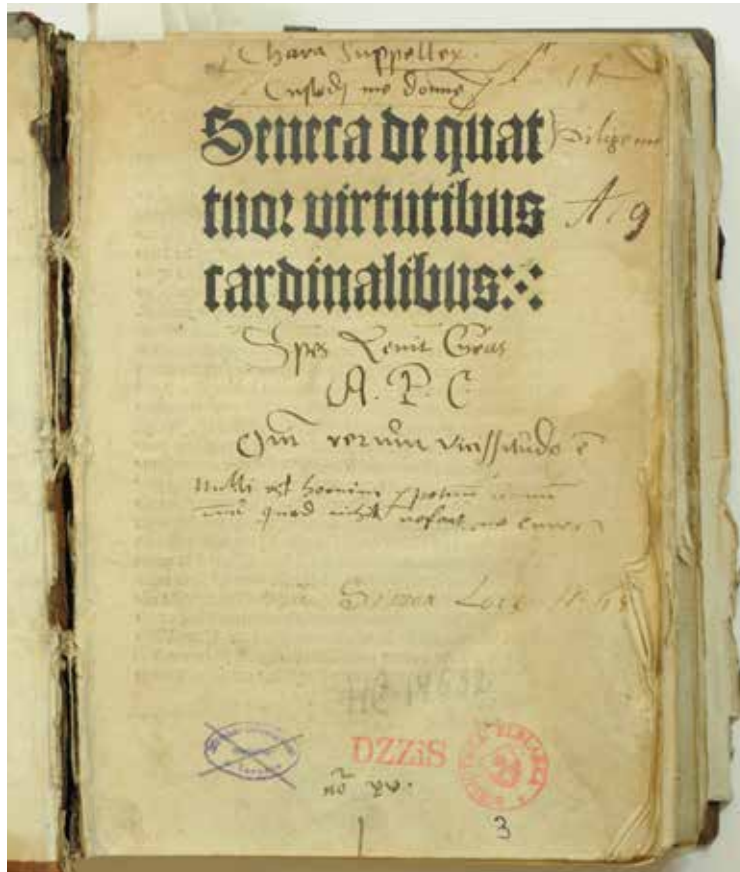


Fig. 4. Inscription “Spes lenit curas” indicating the provenance from the library of Andreas Peltzer, Inc. 6, Elbląg Library, photo: Elbląg Library

to Loitz’s signature there is also a dedication by Johann Wilhelm Woycke, written in 1736³³ (fig. 8). This indicates that the part of the book collection that was not transferred to the gymnasium’s library was later dispersed, possibly given to other people or sold.

The first attempt to analyse the preserved book collection which can be attributed to the Loitz family was made in 1990 by the aforementioned Renata Filipkowska. She was able to locate 242 items out of the over 400 that were donated to the library. Books from the holdings of the Loitz family were identified on the basis of ownership marks on the title pages of the works. None of the family members had their own bookplate, and the name of the owner was only mentioned on the title page, along with a number. These were most likely

³³ Johannes Bertachini, *Repertorium Clarissimi Viri, Ac Ivris Vtriusque Doctoris goalsberrimi Bertachini de Firmani*, Lugundi 1539, ref. SD.XVI.2385.1.



Fig. 6. Ulrich Pinder, *Epiphania medicorum*, 1506, library of Simon Loitz in the Elbląg Library, photo: Elbląg Library

bookplates, but there are characteristic numbers on the title pages which also feature on copies with proprietary marks, and furthermore, these titles do not appear in the inventory, which would support the theory that they belonged to Heinrich Loitz. In some cases, the signature has been damaged, and this characteristic number is the indication that the work comes from the Loitz collection. And so, thanks to the comparison with the preserved inventory from 1624, we could very likely add to the list of works forming part of the legacy works by Bartholomeus Kechermann, among others. On this basis, we can estimate



Fig. 7. Dedication by Johannes Martinus to Simon Loitz in: Joachim Hanff, *In P. Virgilia Maronis Priores Quatuor Libros Aeneidos*, library of Simon Loitz in the Elbląg Library, photo: Elbląg Library

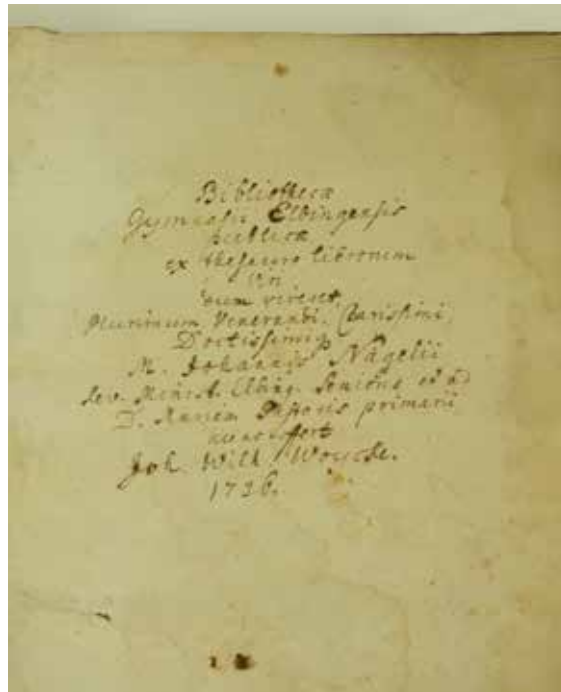


Fig. 8. Provenance mark of the Library of Elbląg Gymnasium (1736) in a book belonging previously to the Loitz Library, photo: Elbląg Library

that the actual holdings from the Loitz family legacy in the Elbląg Library were larger than previously suggested earlier by A. Merz (he counted 263 items).³⁴ So far, research into the collections has enabled the list prepared by Renata Filipkowska³⁵ to be supplemented with 24 items, the list of which constitutes an annex to this article.

The collection of the Loitz family, both the volumes listed in the posthumous inventory of Simon II from 1624 and those preserved in the Elbląg Library, are a reflection of the family's interests, as well as of the contemporary intellectual trends and the canon that an educated man must have known. The fact that more or less half of the family's collection was transferred to the gymnasium library in Elbląg is indicative of Heinrich Loitz's close relationship with the city and the role that he must have played in its life.

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Sekulski Jerzy, *Biblioteka Gimnazjum Elbląskiego w XVII–XVIII wieku* [in:] *Biblioteka Elbląska 1601–2001. Materiały z sesji naukowej zorganizowanej z okazji 400-lecia Biblioteki Elbląskiej, Elbląg 23 XI 2001 r.*, red. W. Długokęcki, Elbląg 2001.

Sekulski Jerzy, *Książka w Elblągu do roku 1772*, Gdańsk 1990.

³⁴ Podlaszewska, *Prywatne biblioteki...*, p. 50.

³⁵ Filipkowska, *Stefan i Szymon...*, pp. 71–132.

Księgozbiór rodziny Loitzów w Bibliotece Elbląskiej. Stan badań i uzupełnienie spisu druków

Artykuł poświęcony jest aktualnemu stanowi zachowania księgozbioru rodziny Loitzów przechowywanego w Bibliotece Elbląskiej. Podsumowuje stan badań nad nim i omawia wybrane tytuły z poszczególnych działów biblioteki. W aneksie zamieszczono listę 24 książek, które można przypisać do kolekcji Loitzów, a które wcześniej nie były znane w literaturze przedmiotu jako jej część.

Księgozbiór został przekazany w 1660 roku bibliotece Gimnazjum Elbląskiego i znacznie wzbogacił jej zasoby. Chociaż lista książek przekazanych bibliotece nie zachowała się, możemy ją w dużym stopniu odtworzyć dzięki inwentarzowi sporządzonemu w 1624 roku, kiedy to Heinrich Loitz przejął spadek po swoim wuju Simonie. Wymieniono w nim 760 dzieł zgromadzonych przez rodzinę.

Obecny stan zachowania został opracowany na podstawie wcześniejszych badań i analizy praw własności, które jednoznacznie określają pochodzenie druków, a także poprzez porównanie inwentarza z 1624 roku z obecnym księgozbiorem biblioteki i listą książek, które prawdopodobnie należą do rodziny Loitzów.

Appendix

The appendix lists the titles from the Loitz book collection as verified by comparison of the present-day catalogue with the preserved inventory and by identification of ownership marks or characteristic numbers in the books. The list follows the order of the inventory. It is currently a work in progress.

- Agricola Rudolf, *Rodolphi Agricolae Phrisij de Inventione dialectica libri tres, cum scholijs Joannis Matthaei Phrissemij*, Luteciae 1529, ref. SD.XVI.1845.
- Alciato Andrea, *Omnia Andreae Alciati emblemata; Cum commentariis, quibus emblematum detecta origine, dubia omnia, et obscura illustrantur*, Parisiis 1602, ref. SD.XVII.1364.
- Calvin Jean, *Institutio christianae religionis nunc vere demum suo titulo respondens*, Argentorati 1543, ref. SD.XVI, 2346.
- Chandieu Antoine de, *Opera Theologica*, Genevae 1598, ref. SD.XVI.2450.
- Clavasio Angelus de, *Summa Angelica de casibus conscientie cum quibusda[m] nouis et oportunis additio[n]ibus*, Hagenau 1505, ref. SD.XVI.2362.
- Clichtove Josse, *Elucidatorium ecclesiasticum / ad officium ecclesiae pertinentia planius exponens: & quatuor libros complectens*, Parisiis 1516, ref. SD.XVI.2140.
- Columella Lucius Iunius Moderatus, *Ivnii Moderati Colvmellae De Re Rvstica Libri XII*, Parisiis 1543, ref. SD.XVI.1367.
- Forster Valentin Wilhelm, *Interpres sive de interpretatione iuris, libri duo*, Wittebergae 1613, ref. SD.XVII.1385.
- Gretser Jakob, *Apologeticus adversus librum, qui introductio in artem Jesuiticam inscribitur, nuper à Gabriele Lermaeo Calvinista editum*, Inglostadii 1600, ref. SD.XVI.2005.

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- Hasenmüller Elias, *Triumphus papalis super successionem ementitam, et consensum dissentientem pontificiorum, et Iesuitarum*, Francofurti 1605, ref. SD.XVII.1412.
- Keckermann Bartholomeus, *Systema Logicae: Tribus Libris Adornatum, Pleniore Praeceptorum Methodo, & Commentariis scriptis ad Praeceptorum illustrationem & collationem cum doctrina Aristoteles, atq[ue] aliorum, tum veterum, tum recentium Logicorum Sententiis ac Disputationibus*, Hanoviae 1606, ref. SD.XVII.57
- Ovidius Naso Publius, *De Arte Amandi, oft De Conste der Minnen*, T'Hantwerpen 1576, ref. SD.XVI.1779.
- Palladius Peter, *Cramer Daniel, sagoge Ad Libros Propheticos & Apostolicos...*, Stetini 1605, ref. SD.XVII.801.
- Peurbach Georg von, *Tabulae Eclipsium*, Viennae Austriae 1514, ref. SD.XVI.2172.
- Ryff Walther Hermann, *Frawen Rosengarten: Von vilfaltigen sorglichen Zufällen und gebrechen der Mütter und Kinder, So inen vor, inn, unnd nach der Geburt begegnen mögenn. Dabei auch aller Bericht der Pflege unnd Wartung, Frawen, Jungfrawen, und Kindern dienlich und von nöten*, Franckfurt am Mayn 1545, ref. SD.XVI.2367.
- Socinus Faustus, Pucci Francisco, *De statu primi hominis ante lapsum Disputatio: Quam Faustus Socinus Senensis per scripta habuit cum Francisco Puccio Florentino, anno 1578; In qua habetur Responsio, ad Defensionem Francisci Puccii suorum argumentorum, De immortalitate hominis & omnium rerum ante lapsum*, Racoviae 1610, ref. SD.XVII.439.
- Strigel Victorinus, *Libri Samuelis, Regum, et Paralipomenon, ad Ebraicam veritatem recogniti, et brevibus commentariis explicati*, Lipsiae 1569, ref. SD.XVI.2312.
- Terentius Afer Publius, *P. Terentij aphri comicorum elegantissimi Comedie: A Guidone Juvenale viro perquam litterato familiariter explanate*, Lugduni 1509, ref. SD.XVI.1582.
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