Idololatria Vilnensis: The Confessional Debates of Jesuits and Protestants on Sacred Images in the 16th Century Lithuania

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Abstract. Despite the abundance of theological treatises in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the late 16th century, only five of the eighty-six known titles deal with the use of sacred images and reveal the opposing sides of Catholics and Protestants in such confessional debates. The Protestant perspective is represented by Andrzej Wolan's 1583 treatise 'An Attack on the Idolatry of the Loyolites of Vilnius', which relies primarily on theological arguments to criticise the Catholic practice of using sacred images. Wolan's critique, while rooted in theology, also touched on the Renaissance humanist perspective on aesthetics to question the sensual appeal of Catholic sacred art. In response, the Catholic theologian Andrzej Jurgiewicz defended the use of sacred images, emphasising their role as visual witnesses of Catholic tradition in a post-Tridentine aesthetic paradigm. This article analyses these theological and aesthetic arguments of Wolan and Jurgiewicz found in treatises representing Catholic and Protestant positions in the polemical debates on the use of sacred images in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the late 16th century.
Keywords: confessional debates, sacred images, Andrzej Jurgiewicz, Andrzej Wolan, early modern period.

Idololatria Vilnensis: Jėzuitų ir protestantų konfesiniai debatai apie sakralinius atvaizdus XVI a. Lietuvoje

Santrauka. Nors XVI a. pabaigoje Lietuvos Didžiojoje Kunigaikštystėje buvo išleista gausybė teologinių traktatų įvairiais konfesiniais klausimais, tik penki iš aštuoniasdešimt šešių žinomų veikalų skirti sakralinių atvaizdų naudojimo katalikų praktikoje kritikai ir iliustratyviai atskleidžia katalikų ir protestantų priešpriešą šiuo klausimu. Protestantų poziciją perteikiama Andriejaus Volano 1583 m. traktate „Vilniaus lojolininkų stabmeldystės atmetimas", kuriame daugiausia teologiniais argumentais kritikuojamas sakralinių atvaizdų naudojimas katalikų praktikoje. Nors Volano kritika iš esmės buvo teologinė, jis taip pat rėmėsi humanistine Renesanso estetikos patirtimi, kvestionuodamas juslinę katalikiško sakralinio meno orientaciją. Atsakydamas į tai katalikų teologas Andriejus Jurgevičius (Andrzej Jurgiewicz) gynė šventųjų atvaizdų naudojimą, pabrėždamas jų, kaip vizualių katalikiškosios tradicijos liudytojų, vaidmenį potridentinėje estetinėje pasaulėžiūroje. Šiame straipsnyje analizuojami Volano ir Jurgevičiaus teologiniai ir estetiniai argumentai, aptinkami traktatuose, atspindinčiuose katalikų ir protestantų pozicijas konfesinėje polemikoje dėl sakralinių atvaizdų naudojimo Abiejų Tautų Respublikoje XVI a. pabaigoje.
Reikšminiai žodžiai: konfesinė polemika, sakraliniai atvaizdai, Volanas, Jurgevičius, naujieji laikai.

Polemical writings on sacred images form an insignificant part of the confessional debates between Catholics and Protestants in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania at the end of the 16th century. Out of some eighty-six known titles by authors of divergent Christian denominations discussing various theological questions ranging from the Eucharist to the interpretation of the Bible in Vilnius, which began in 1574 and concluded around 1601, only five titles are dedicated to the question of the use of sacred images. We are certain of two Protestant treatises published in 1583. It was *An attack on the idolatry of the Loyolites of Vilnius, and also a reply to their new objections, now published for the first time* (*Idololatriae loiolitarum Vilnensium oppugnatio itemque ad nova illorum obiecta responsio, nunc primum in lucem edita*) by a secretary to the Grand Duke of Lithuania and an eminent Calvinist theologian Andrzej Wolan (Volanus, 1583) and a work that is known only from other sources (Jurgiewicz, 1586, p. 21) by a Protestant pastor Stanisław Sudrowski (Sudrovius, 1583; Ambrasaitė, 2012, p. 12). Three years later, in 1586, we find three Catholic responses that were circulated in print. They were Andrzej Jurgiewicz's[1] (Ališauskas et al., 2009, no. 287) theology thesis *On the pious use of sacred images in the Holy Church since the time of the Apostles, on the sacrilege of the new iconoclasts in exterminating them, because of the utter insult of Christ, inhumanity, and also on the veneration and invocation of the Saints* (*De pio et in Sancta Ecclesia iam inde ab Apostolis receptissimo sacrarum imaginum usu, deque sacrilega novorum iconoclastarum, in exterminandis illis, per summam Christi contumeliam, immanitate, itemque De Sanctorum veneratione, et invocatione theses* [...]) (Jurgiewicz, 1586) and two missing or yet undiscovered works by Jurgiewicz's teacher, a professor of theology Emmanuel de Vega, SJ, *On the veneration and invocation of the Saints, against Wolan* (*De cultu et invocatione sanctorum, contra librum Volani de idolatria Jesuitarum*) (Vega, 1579) and *On the pious use of sacred images* (*De pio sacrarum imaginum usu*) (Vega, 1586b). Thus, only two titles have survived to the present day and will be examined in this paper. The fortunate coincidence is that they represent both Catholic and Protestant perspectives, which are important for understanding the context and main arguments of polemics on the use of sacred images in the 16th century Lithuania and its aesthetic paradigm.

In recent years some important publications have generally overviewed the Catholic-Protestant polemics (Niedźwiedź, 2012; Kochanowicz, 2017) or publication of Latin books, including polemical writings (Narbutienė and Narbutas, 2002), and its influence on the culture (Wisner, 1975; Daugirdas, 2017) in 16th-century Lithuania. Other publications analysed the polemics between Skarga and Wolan (Chemperek, 2013) or its historical significance (Daugirdas, 2013), Wolan's polemics with Antitrinitarians (Petuchovaitė, 2012), and the historical background of the polemics on the use of sacred images between Wolan and Jurgiewicz (Ambrasaitė, 2012). A seminal study by Kęstutis Daugirdas pro-

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[1]   For the sake of consistency, all Polish and Lithuanian names in this paper, except in the bibliography and citations, are referred to as they appear in the *Post-Reformation Digital Library* database (www.prdl.org). Thus Andrzej Jurgiewicz (Andriejus Jurgevičius in Lithuanian or Andreas Iurgewicius in Latin), Andrzej Wolan (Andriejus Volanas in Lithuanian or Andreas Volanus in Latin), Stanisław Sudrowski (Stanislovas Sudrovijus in Lithuanian or Stanislas Sudrovius in Latin), and so on.

vides an overview of these polemics and analyses Wolan's theological arguments (2008). However, the Catholic-Protestant polemics in 16th-century Lithuania have never been analysed examining the aesthetic considerations behind these debates, their intellectual influences, and argumentative strategies. In other words, this paper seeks demonstrate how polemical arguments are constructed and what aesthetic considerations lay behind confessional debates on the use of sacred images in the 16th-century Lithuania, and how these debates reflected broader European religious and cultural shifts during the Catholic and Protestant Reformations.

1. Wolan on the Jesuit idolatry

The treatise *An attack on the idolatry of the Loyolites of Vilnius, and also a reply to their new objections, now published for the first time* (*Idololatriae loiolitarum Vilnensium oppugnatio itemque ad nova illorum obiecta responsio, nunc primum in lucem edita*) by Andrzej Wolan (Volanus, 1583) consists of three separate but ideologically linked works: the letter of dedication (header title *Dedicatoria epistola*), the treatise on the Jesuit idolatry (header title *Oppugnatio idololatriae*), which gives the name to the whole publication; and a text refuting concurrent arguments in the confessional conflict on the veneration of images *Eiusdem ad nova Loiolitarum obiecta responsio*, abbreviated in the header title as *Ad nova obiecta responsio Andreae Volani*[2]. It is evidently the first printed publication to shed light on an ongoing conflict between Protestants and Jesuits in Lithuania. This can be deduced from the title of the treatise, which suggests that there had been unspecified prior and subsequent objections (*itemque ad nova illorum obiecta*), and that it was edited and published for the very first time by Wolan (*nunc primum in lucem edita*). The same is said by the author in the dedication letter to the Grand Chancellor of Lithuania Mikołaj Radziwiłł (Mikalojus Radvila), a son of the prominent Calvinist nobleman Mikołaj Radziwiłł the Brown (Mikalojus Radvila Rudasis): 'And lest it should appear that we speak of it frivolously, we will give the following real and irrefutable argument on the subject, namely, the dispute we had some years ago with the Loyolites about the veneration of images'[3].

Wolan constructs his arguments based on various religious, theological, and cultural sources. Unquestionably, his main authority is the Bible, but he does not refer to it exclusively or extensively. In the *Oppugnatio idololatriae*, Wolan gives an example of Hieronymus and his Latin translation of the Bible (*Oppugn.*, pp. 2-3). Wolan does not simply refer to the authority of Hieronymus *Vulgate* as a defining text for both Protestants and Catholics (Gordon, 2022, pp. 22-24), but at first he provides a linguistic analysis of

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[2] These three works will henceforth be referred to as: *Dedic.Ep.* for *Dedicatoria epistola*, *Oppugn.* for *Oppugnatio idololatriae*, and *Responsio* for *Ad nova obiecta responsio*.

[3] *Dedic.Ep.*, p. [11]: *Ac ne id falso iactare videamur, en certum et infallibile eius rei exhibemus argumentum, in hac nimirum nostra, quam ante annos aliquot suscepimus de cultu imaginum cum Loiolitis concertatione* (And lest we seem to be throwing it out falsely, we present a certain and infallible proof of the matter, in this, of ours, which we undertook some years ago, concerning the concurrence of the worship of images with Loyolites) (all Latin translations are by the author of this paper, unless otherwise noted).

the Latin word *idolum*, writing that the worship of images cannot be justified at all by an examination of the meaning of the word *idolon* which is a diminutive form of the Greek word *eidos*, and thus it means the same thing as *formula* in Latin[4]. Such linguistic dispute focused on a distinction between types of words meaning images in Latin and types of worship was particularly typical for Reformations image debates across Europe (Davis, 2016, pp. 8-9). In the same paragraph, Wolan refers to Tertullian's *On the military garland* (*De corona militis*) and Desiderius Erasmus' *Paraphrases to the First Corinthians*. A bit further in the same argument, Wolan alludes to Lactantius (*Oppugn.*, p. 5) and his *The Divine Institutes* (*Divinae institutiones*) (*Oppugn.* pp. 9-10) as well as to Augustine (*Oppugn.*, p. 4, also later in pp. 10, 12-13) and his *On Faith and the Creed* (*De fide et symbolo*) (*Oppugn.*, p. 6) several times. Wolan analyses in detail the writings of pope Gregory the Great (Gregory I) against Serenus, the bishop of Marseilles, on the question of sacred images (*Oppugn.*, pp. 11-12) which was among the most popular sources for iconoclastic Protestants as well as Catholics (Davis, 2016, p. 9). Similar linguistic argument is provided in the third part of the publication, *Ad nova obiecta responsio*, where Wolan alludes to Herodotus explaining that in his writings there is no difference between *idolum* and *icona*, therefore the Jesuit argument that they venerate icons but not idols is false (*Responsio*, p. 8).

Later on, Wolan refers to Origen (*Responsio*, p. 10), Augustine (*Responsio*, pp. 16-19, 23, 39-41), Gregory the Great (*Responsio*, pp. 20-21), Desiderius Erasmus (*Responsio*, p. 38). There is no wonder that Wolan extensively refers to Augustine as Protestants all across Europe thought that his views were closer to theirs (Svensson and Van Drunen 2018, pp. 6-7); this can be seen in one of Wolan's earlier and more important polemical works on the Eucharist, where he says that the Jesuits interpret Augustine's writings rather freely (Volanus, 1579, pp. 753-54). Additionally, by quoting these sources and Erasmus himself, Wolan heavily relies on humanist biblical scholarship as represented by Erasmus (Eire, 2016, pp. 109-10).

Wolan also refers to and quotes Johannes Aventinus' *Annals of Bavaria* (*Annalium Boiorum libri septem*) (1554) at least several times (*Responsio*, pp. 6, 14-17). It is not the only concurrent historical source that Wolan employs in his treatise. For example, when talking about the superstition of saints, and that this tradition was inherited from ancient pagans and conflates various Catholic patron saints with their possible Pagan counterparts (*Responsio*, pp. 23-27), he clearly refers to Heinrich Bullinger's *On the Origin of Error* (*De origine erroris, in divorum ac simulachrorum cultu*) (1529). When he is speaking about the previous Church councils and Christian history in general (*Responsio*, pp. 23-31), he is once more referring to Aventinus as stated by the author himself (*Responsio*, p. 31).

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[4]   *Oppugn.*, pp. 2-3: *Testantur autem eruditi quique viri et qui proprietatem linguae Graecae cognitam habent optime hanc vocem eidos formam significare, indeque per diminutionem deductum idolon vocabulum, idem esse, quod nos formulam dicimus. Ac proinde omnis forma sive formula idolum est, omnisque circa omne idolum servitus et famulatus: Idololatria nuncupatur* (And every learned man who knows the peculiarities of the Greek language testifies that this word best signifies the form of eidos, and that the term idolon, derived from it by diminution, is the same as what we call a formula. And therefore, every forma or formula is an idol, and everything that is worshipped and adored around every idol is called idolatry).

His other historical source is the Burchardus Urspergensis' chronicle (1540) which was reprinted in 1537 or 1540 with a preface by Philipp Melanchthon (Bauer, 2019, p. 116).

Wolan's strategy seems rather clear. He does not allude to any Evangelical authors, neither Luther nor Calvin, but he selects particular authors that have authority in the Catholic Church. For example, his brief linguistic analysis of the Latin word *idolum* is mainly based on Desiderius Erasmus' works that, as he himself puts it, was accepted and applauded by pope Leo X (*Oppugn.*, p. 3-4). It is difficult to define the exact target audience of Wolan's treatise but having in mind the level of literacy in the 16th century Lithuania (All̃šauskas, 2009, p. 123; Niedźwiedź, 2014, pp. 14-15; Ragauskienė, 2014, pp. 9-11) it was likely meant for the nobility, the clergy, and literate burghers. With the intended audience of his work in mind, it appears that Wolan set up his arguments in order to deconstruct the Catholic logic from the inside out and to demonstrate the pre-eminence of the Protestant Gospel-based reform. This seems apparent as Wolan is rather critical towards the Catholics regarding a plenitude of practices, especially, the ones related to the use of sacred images.

This can additionally be noted from the fact that Wolan quotes his Catholic opponents six times in extent in *Ad nova obiecta responsio*. All the quoted passages concern the use of sacred images and reflect the Catholic criticism towards Protestants on the use of sacred images, therefore, it can be asserted that these quotes are from some Catholic polemic work. However, it is difficult to presume the quoted author or the source since Wolan does not mention to whom he is referring neither directly in the text nor by noting it in the margins and these quotes do not correspond neither to Skarga, nor to Jurgiewicz, nor to any known books by Catholic authors. However, as the arguments of the quoted text are rather similar to other Jesuit treatises of concurrent times in other European countries, it can be assumed, that the cited text was probably written by a Jesuit scholar. E.g. in Francisco Suarez treaty *Defence of the Right and Apostolic Faith against the errors of the Anglican Sect* (*Defensio Fidei Catholicae et Apostolicae Adversus Anglicanae Sectae Errores*) (1613) we find similar ideas about the use of sacred images. These quotes on pages 12, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21-22 of *Ad nova obiecta responsio* can be easily discerned because they are printed in a different italic font. All the excerpts also reflect Catholic criticism towards Wolan and his arguments in the polemics on sacred images which Wolan himself then refutes.

In the first quote it is said that Protestants blame Catholics for worshipping images and calls them a delirious old woman who worships and adores images instead of God and gives to images the worship that belongs to God alone[5]. From the second excerpt we can grasp that

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[5] *Responsio*, p. 12: *Scribit, enim, adversarius. Nos, inquit, imagines Christi, tamquam Domini, et sanctorum eius, tamquam servorum et amicorum eius, ita in honore et veneratione habemus, ut nequaquam in illas cultum divinum transferamus, Nam cum soli Deo adoratio et cultus sit tribuendus, Nulla, inquit, in Ecclesia Catholica, tam delira anus est, quae imaginem pro Deo adoret, et colat, et cultum Deo soli debitum, imagini impendat* (For the adversary writes. We, he says, hold the images of Christ and of the Lord, and of his saints, as of his servants and friends, in such honour and veneration that we give them divine worship, whereas worship and adoration are to be given to God alone. The Catholic Church is such a delirious old woman, he says, that she worships and adores an image of God, and gives to images the worship that belongs to God alone).

the polemics on sacred images at the time of Wolan's treatise was mostly concerned with theological problems of the difference between adoration and veneration[6]. The third quote reveals the importance of St Augustine's writings to both, Catholic and Protestant tradition, but that their interpretation of his writings substantially differs[7]. The fourth excerpt is again based on the interpretation of St Augustine's theological works, especially, his writings on the use of images in the Christian churches[8]. The fifth reference is about the interpretation of Gregory the Great's ideas on the use and role of images in churches, which reveals that even this position had completely opposite explanations in the Protestant and the Catholic theological tradition (Dyrness, 2019, pp. 8-9)[9]. Finally, the sixth quote reflects the Catholic position on the sacred images and that through them and various miracles connected with the sacred images, pictures make it possible to recognise the virtue and power of Christ[10].

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[6] *Responsio*, p. 17: *Sed adversarius cavillo hunc quoque locum eludere tentat, per picturam quidvis aliud quam imagines Sanctorum Augustinum intellexisse asseres, eo quod pictura latius pateat, quam ut ad solas imagines restringi possit. Deinde quod adorationem, inquit, reprehendit, non autem venerationem, quae sine magna inscitiae nota confundi nequeunt* (But the adversary also tries to evade this point with a sneer, claiming that by the image he meant something different from what St Augustine understood it to mean, on the grounds that representation is broader than it can be confined to images alone. Then he says that he is not criticising veneration, but worship, which cannot be confused without a great deal of ignorance).

[7] *Responsio*, p. 18: *Verum enimvero adversarius Augustinum multa praeclara testimonia libro 22. cap. 8.* De Civitate Dei *citare, scribit, de veneratione Martyrum, et miraculis ad memoriam eorum factis, ut inde eliciat, pari honoris gradu imagines esse prosequendas, quem honorem et sepulchris eorum exhibitum fesse apparet* (In fact, the adversary writes that in chapter 8 of book 22 of St Augustine's *City of God*, he gives many excellent testimonies about the worship of the martyrs and the miracles performed in their memory, in order to infer from them that images should be followed with the same degree of honour as their tombs seem to be shown).

[8] *Responsio*, p. 19: *Magnum autem maliciae simul et impudentiae suae, vel in hoc adversarius exhibet documentum, quod cum divus Augustinus nephas esse statuat in templo Christiano collocare simulachrum Deo patri in forma humana, id iste sic interpretatur, ut si imago haec non ad exprimendam Dei naturam, sed ad distinctionem personarum adhibeatur, non nephas esse talem imaginem in templo statuere iudicet* (And in this way the adversary reveals the great evidence of his malice and impertinence, for although the divine Augustine decides that it is wrong to place in the Christian temple a simulacrum of God the Father in human form, he interprets this as if this image does not express the essence of God, but only helps men to distinguish, and that it is not wrong to place such images in the temple).

[9] *Responsio*, p. 20: *Quod ad Gregorium attinet, qui Serenum Massiliae Episcopum reprehendit ob imagines fractas, eodem argumento adversarius reprehendendos omnes iudicat, qui imagines deiiciunt, aut confringunt, dum confrigendes negat Gregorius, sed revocandos saltem ab idololatria eorum animos, qui imagines adorandas putant: frangi enim, inquit, Gregorius, non debuit, quod non adorandum in Ecclesiis, sed ad instruendum solum modo mentes fuit nestientium collocatum* (With regard to Gregory, who criticises Serenus, Bishop of Marseilles, for having broken images, the adversary judges by the same argument that all those who throw down or break images are to be condemned, whereas Gregory refutes the breaking of them, but dissuades from idolatry the minds of those who think that images are to be worshipped. Gregory says that they should not be broken, because they are not placed in churches to be worshipped, but only to instruct the minds of the ignorant).

[10] *Responsio*, pp. 21-22. *Quod autem urgent exemplum statuae Aenea ab Haemoroissa Christo possitae, et miraculo herbae sanantis confirmatae, ut inde evincant, Christo eius modi honorem placuisse, id quidem exemplum nihil facit ad comprobandam statuarum aut imaginum venerationem, sed ad virtutem et potentiam Christi cognoscendam, ut ex mirraculis, quae tum in Ecclesia fiebant, caeca gentilium obstinatio coargueretur, et veritas doctrinae Evangelicae de Christo palam omnibus ostenderetur* (But what they insist on is the example of the statue of the Face of Christ in Aenea, which was confirmed by the miracle of the healing herb. They try to convince others that this means Christ is pleased with such honour. Therefore, this example never proves the worship of statues and images but makes it possible to recognise the virtue and power of Christ, because from these miracles, which then took place in the Church, the blind obstinacy of the pagans would be rebuked, and the truth of the Gospel doctrine of Christ would be openly shown to all).

As we can see, Wolan's polemics with Catholics on the question of the use of sacred images is mainly based on theological arguments that cover the Bible, writings of Church Fathers and Teachers, as well as various historical sources. As most humanist Protestants, he expertly employs the linguistic narrative to ground his arguments and to refute the Catholic position on the matter as illogical, self-contradictory, and wrong in general. Yet, even though Wolan's arguments seem almost plainly theological, they also reveal some features of aesthetic evaluation that has to be discussed.

2. Wolan's aesthetic paradigm

The confessional debates on the use of sacred images were purely theological and not based on aesthetic value for the Protestants. Wolan's attitude to this question is also based mainly on the issue of transubstantiation. In the first book of *Defensio verae, orthodoxae, veterisque in ecclesia sententiae*, Wolan says that worship towards God cannot be translated to his creations of any kind (Volanus, 1579, p. 994) and that images of any kind should be thrown out of churches as impious and abominable idols[11] because it is not possible to worship the archetype through its image[12]. Nonetheless, some aesthetic categories can be discerned in Wolan's writings that reflect the concurrent aesthetic paradigm, that was not radically new but was based on the works of the Church Fathers and Teachers on the educational and didactic usefulness of images (Tenace, 2016, p. 43), which required a re-evaluation of the *status quo* (Outram Evennett, 1968, p. 32; Nagel, 2003, p. 345; Palmer, 2020, pp. 110-12).

Since the Second Council of Nicaea, sacred images had been regarded both as works of art and sacred objects (Fogliadini, 2015, pp. 182-88; Mitalaitė, 2017, pp. 238-44). In other words, the image was perceived by theologians at once a work of art, because it conveys a visual likeness that allows the object depicted to be recognised and identified, and a sacred object, because through the relation of likeness it becomes a kind of representation through which worship is directed to the archetype and not to the image itself (Krausmüller, 2018, p. 433; Parry, 2021, p. 430). A similar distinction was drawn at the Second Council of Nicaea between the veneration (τιμητικὴ προσκυνήση, *timētikē proskunēsē*) and true adoration (ἀληθινὴ λατρεία, *alēthinē latreia*). This concept of veneration defined the theological idea that the devotion of the faithful to sacred images or objects is not directed to the objects themselves, as this would be idolatry, but that the images act as

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[11] *Responsio*, p. 6: [*e*]*t si nullus Dei metus ac mandati eius reverentia vos tangit, Principis huiusce vestri, Iovis Romani authoritas commoveat, ut haec idola e templis vestris quam primum eliminetis. Nisi enim hoc a vobis factum fuerit, nullam unquam excusationem invenire poteritis, quin manifestae impietatis, et execrandae idololatriae vos propugnatores merito semper accusare possimus* (And if you are not moved by any fear of God or reverence for His commandment, let the authority of your ruler, Jupiter of Rome, encourage you to throw those idols out of your temples as soon as possible. If you do not do so, you will never be able to find an excuse: we will always be able to accuse you, with reason, of being advocates of manifest impiety and abominable idolatry).

[12] *Responsio*, p. 7: *Sed imaginem tam Christi, quam sanctorum eius, ad adorandum in eis Archetypum proponi, id vero est, quod sine certo impietatis argumento, et crimine idolatriae fieri non posse ostendimus* (But we are clearly proving that the placing of images of Christ and his saints in order to worship the archetype is a thing that cannot be done without a clear mark of sinfulness and without the crime of idolatry).

mediators linking the piety and the saint depicted (Paparella, 2017, pp. 297-300; Daley, 2018, pp. 250-55). Wolan mocks this logic by saying that to conclude that images are to be worshipped because they were made by some people in the ancient church can only be logical to a fool[13]. He says that 'images were not appropriated according to the tradition of the Apostles, but because people wanted to soothe their feelings and preserve a certain memory of those they loved', and that there would be no reason to prohibit the use of images if human interest in them remained as such[14]. This is easily noticed in his clear allusion to the Gospel of John, when he says that Catholics should rely on the simplicity of Christian doctrine and that they should worship God, who is Spirit, in Spirit and in truth (*cf.* worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth (John 4:23)[15].

Wolan's criticism of the use of sacred images seems to be almost purely theological, but at the same time he raises a question of authentic representation which is linked with aesthetic evaluation. He does not think that tradition and longstanding practice are adequate arguments for the use of images in Christianity, but at the same time he does not negate that pictures could be made according to the facts of history, and he does not say that sculpture or painting are unacceptable arts *per se*[16]. Wolan even notes that it is acceptable to create images if they correspond to the historical facts. This approach, influenced by the Renaissance humanism and the paleo-Christian movement that emphasised the methodological approach of historicism (Herklotz, 1985, p. 49), was radically new for all Christians. It was thought that such historically accurate images, faithful to the biblical text, could be didactically beneficial. Within this context, Luther, founding on a Christian tradition, encouraged images that engaged reason about revelation and thought them as a sort of didactic proclamation (Cook, 1986, p. 39). He especially favoured woodcuts and engravings, which often accompanied his writings due to their didactic function (Martínez-Burgos García, 2016, p. 27). Luther was not the only reformer to

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[13] *Oppugn.*, p. 8: *Neque enim negamus a quibusdam in veteri Ecclesia silumachra Christi fuisse constituta: sed quis propterea imagines esse colendas, quia factae sunt, nisi demens colligat?* (We do not deny that some people erected statues of Christ in the ancient church, but who – except a fool – could conclude that images are to be worshipped because they were made?).

[14] *Oppugn.*, p. 11: *Inde vero aparet, non traditione Apostolica, sed dum affectibus suis homines indulgent, ad memoriam quandam eorum, quos amaverunt, imagines fuisse receptas. Intra quem finem sis e contineret humana curiositas, nullam sane videremus causam, cur usum imaginum omnino interdicendum esse putaremus* (It is clear, then, that the images were not appropriated according to the tradition of the apostles, but because people wanted to soothe their feelings and preserve a certain memory of those they loved. If human interest in the paintings remained within this framework, we would see no reason to prohibit their use at all).

[15] *Oppugn.*, p. 1: *Si enim in simplicitate doctrinae et religionis Christianae acquiescerent, Deum utique, qui est spiritus, in spiritu et veritate nobiscum adorarent, nec pro puppis istis suis, quas meretricio fuco oblinuunt, et adorandas in aris prostituunt, tanto labore desudarent* (For if they were to rely on the simplicity of Christian doctrine and religion, they would worship God, who is Spirit, in Spirit and in truth, with us, and would not sweat so much for the sake of the dolls which they smear with the paint of whoredom and set up to worship on the altars).

[16] *Oppugn.*, p. 1: *De hac quidem re nunquam tibi movebo litem, ut vel Christi, vel sanctorum ad historicam factorum commemorationem, imagines pingi posse pernegem. Se non hic controversiae inter nos status est, neque adeo imprudentem quenquam esse puto, ut artem sculptoriam aut pictoriam, tuanquam artes quasdam illicitas improbet* (I will never argue with you about this, nor will I deny that you cannot paint pictures of Christ or the saints according to the facts of history. But that is not what we are arguing about, and I do not think there is a single unreasonable person who would condemn sculpture or painting and regard them as unacceptable art).

accept religious images for their didactic role. Even Calvin did not condemn forms of art (Dyrness, 2019, pp. 53-55). He censured the veneration of images or any representations of God as foolishness but considered depictions of the visible world to be somewhat useful for the didactic function (Vanhaelen, 2019, p. 141; Covington, 2020, pp. 115-17). The same notion can also be seen in Wolan's writings. He does not seem to be entirely iconoclastic, accepting the use of images for their didactic purpose based on historical and factual justification (*Oppugn.*, p. 1) as long as they are not used in places of worship due to what he calls the innate human inclination to idolatry[17].

Wolan is also concerned with the physical appearance of such images. He mentions the local example of Madonna of Częstochowa, which he describes as a piece of painted wood and fails to understand why this particular image is more worthy of veneration than any other similar painting of the Virgin Mary[18]. He also writes that Catholics should not 'sweat so much for the sake of the of the dolls which they smear with the paint of whoredom and set up to worship on the altars'[19]. Wolan's use of the Latin word *pup(p)a* (doll) indicates that he is talking not about sacred paintings, but about statues that might be coloured and dressed, and therefore remind him of dolls. Such a statement is clearly pejorative and demonstrates that Protestants do not recognise the use of such sculptures in sacred spaces. It is reaffirmed in another paragraph when Wolan calls Catholics pseudo-Christians for their use of clothed statues, which are also embellished with jewels and intricate fabrics[20]. He also thinks that such behaviour is due to some avaricious superstition or stupidity based on the idea that the more ornate the temples and statues appear, the more fervent is the faith[21]. Moreover, according to Wolan, the whole religion of the Church of Rome

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[17] *Oppugn.*, p. 12. *Illud tamen minime reticendum nobis esse videtur, ut quia usum imaginum, sis e intra legitimum finem contineant, nos non improbare dixerimus, in templa tamen et in oratoria nostra minime inferendas esse concedamus. Nam qua genus humanum inclinatione propendet a natura in idolatriam: nulla unquam doctrina, nullisque monitis efficient verbi Dei ministri, ut quod imperita multitudo in loco orationi consecrato collocatum conspicit, non utique ad illud colendum prava superstitione sese convertat* (We have said that we have no objection to the use of images, so long as it is within proper bounds, but we in no way agree that they should be brought into our chapels and churches. For as men are naturally inclined to idolatry, no instruction, no exhortation from the minister of the Word of God is of any avail, if an ignorant multitude, seeing what is placed in a place consecrated to prayer, is not naturally turned to worship it by false superstition).

[18] *Responsio*, p. 20: *Si enim (ut exempla attingam domestica) simulachrum illud Mariae Chestochovianum, nihil aliud quam lignum coloribus depictum esse statuitur: quae mala intemperies urget homines, ut cum similia in omnibus templis sese offerant, non eodem cultu nec veneratione digna habeantur* (For if (to give a few local examples) it is established that the well-known simulacrum of Mary of Częstochowa is nothing more than a piece of wood painted in colour, what could make people think that it is worthy of a different kind of veneration and worship, even though, as we can see, it is similar to others in all the sanctuaries?).

[19] *Oppugn.*, p. 1: *nec pro puppis istis suis, quas meretricio fuco oblinuunt, et adorandas in aris prostituunt, tanto labore desudarent.*

[20] *Oppugn.*, p. 26: *Et tamen Pseudo christiani isti, auratas aut purpureas statuis eorum imponunt vestes, a collo suspendunt gemmas et torques digitis imponunt annulos, ut scelesta cupiditatis, et avaritiae, qua ipsi titillantur, ipsos etiam reddant socios* (And yet these pseudo-Christians clothe their statues with gilded or purple garments, hang jewels and necklaces on their necks, and put rings on their fingers, so that those wicked means of lust and avarice which tickle them may make them accomplices).

[21] *Oppugn.*, p. 26: *Imo tam bruta stupiditas omnium occupat mentes, ut tanto ferventiorem homines existiment religionem, quanto templa et simulachra conspiciant ornatiora* (Nay, such is the brute stupidity that occupies the minds of all, that men think that the more ornate their temples and statues appear, the more fervent is their faith).

is designed to please and to flatter the mind, for everything is done to attract and delight the human senses. And by means of various adornments, the eyes can derive the pleasure that is diverted only to the sensory satisfaction[22]. Interestingly, Wolan's accusation of the Catholic concern with the senses seems rather contradictory. Although the Protestant iconoclastic impulse seems to have eradicated images, it was inescapably connected with sight and the senses in general (Dyrness, 2020, p. 20). Belden Lane argues that Calvin 'conceived the world as a theatre for the contemplation of divine beauty with God assuming the central role at the heart of the action on the stage' (2011, p. 58). Similarly, William A. Dyrness states that 'Calvin will come to highlight the journey to God through the hearing of the word. But hearing for Calvin will complement, not undermine, the visual spectacle of creation. This dialectic between seeing and hearing, central to Calvin, is evident at the very beginning of the *Institutes*' (2019, pp. 68-72).

Wolan's address of colours and various ornaments of statues used in sacred spaces is clearly an aesthetic argument, establishing aesthetic values and categories of evaluation. Furthermore, Wolan says that worshippers who do not find the movement of life in cult images begin to believe that the deity is within and that the effigy is like a living body[23]. This argument again conveys an aesthetic evaluation because it is connected to the question of similitude. That is, in order for people to believe that the deity is within and that the statue is like a living body, the depiction must be lifelike. This question of similitude was a frequent topic in Renaissance aesthetic theory. As early as 1438, Leon Battista Alberti's treatise on geometric perspective *Della pittura*, the theoretical works of Lorenzo Ghiberti, Piero della Francesca's *De prospectiva pingendi*, and Leonardo da Vinci's *Trattato della pittura*, written in the second half of the 15th century, and the theoretical works published in Florence and Venice in the first half of the sixteenth century (Pino, 1548; Doni, 1549; Biondo, 1549; Varchi, 1549; Dolce, 1557) were mainly concerned with the philosophical ideals of beauty (Hutson, 2016, pp. 103-4; Keizer, 2017, p. 60). Wolan may not have been directly familiar with these theoretical works, but in general Protestants were well acquainted with the views of contemporary Catholic theologians, and in particular the works of the Jesuit Roberto Bellarmino (Kosman, 1973, pp. 145-47), who belonged to the same intelectual circle that was concerned with the question of the use of sacred images in the post-Tridentine Catholic Church (Jones, 1993, p. 75). Thus, Wolan's brief notion

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[22] *Oppugn.*, p. 26: *Toto ergo religio Romanae Ecclesiae ad voluptatem, et demulcendos animos est composita, quando affatim subministrantur omnia, quae omnes hominum capiunt ac delectant sensus. Quid enim nitor levigati marmoris? Quid tam insignes picturae? Quid spendentes variis coloribus, auroque et gemmis intertextae aliud sibi volunt vestes, nisi ut ex suavissima rerum omnium contemplatione, maxima oculis capiatur voluptas?* (The whole religion of the Church of Rome, therefore, is designed to please, to flatter the heart, because everything is given there to attract and delight the human senses. For what is the splendour of polished marble? Why are pictures so remarkable? What else do they want for their garments, which shine with different colours and are woven with gold and precious stones, but that the eyes may derive the greatest pleasure from the sweetest contemplation of all things?).

[23] *Oppugn.*, pp. 12-13: [*u*]*t quoniam in illo figmento non invenit vitalem motum, credat numen occultum, effigiem tamen viventi corpori similem, seductus forma et commotus autoritate quasi sapientium institutorum, obsequentiumque turbarum, sine vivo aliquo habitatore esse non putat* (Not finding the movement of life in this figment, they begin to believe that the deity is within, and that the effigy is like a living body. Seduced by the form, influenced by a supposedly wise order, and by the influence of the crowd that carries it out without opposition, man begins to believe that there is in fact some living creature).

that is concerned with the similitude is another example of his aesthetic paradigm and how it was influenced by the Renaissance humanistic tradition.

We can see that even if aesthetic notions are scarce in Wolan's theoretical writings on the polemics on the use of images, the few sparse ideas that do appear lift the veil from Wolan's aesthetic mind. Although Wolan's arguments may seem almost exclusively theological, he does criticise some aesthetic aspects of images used in Catholic churches. He focuses primarily on the historicity, similitude, and sensory effect of such images, which reflect the Renaissance humanist influenced approach and, interestingly, correlate with the aesthetic evaluation categories that were widely discussed in the Catholic Church shortly after the Council of Trent.

3. Jurgiewicz's response and his aesthetic paradigm

Theologically, the opposing Catholic position was also primarily concerned with the transubstantiation. The rector of the Vilnius Academy, Piotr Skarga, for example, discusses that God can be adored through his creations and that all symbols, such as sacred images or crosses, signify the sacred but are not sacred themselves (Skarga, 1582, pp. 353-54, 360-61; de Vega, 1585*,* pp. 124-27; Jurgiewicz, 1586, pp. 22-23), and in *On the pious use of sacred images* […] (*De pio* […] *sacrarum imaginum usu* [...])[24] (Jurgiewicz, 1586) Andrzej Jurgiewicz, further explains this argument by writing that it is not the image that is venerated, but what it represents (Jurgiewicz, 1586, p. 74). As Jurgiewicz's treatise is a response to Wolan's tractate of 1583, he employs a similar argumentative strategy to his opponent. He mainly refers to the Bible and the sources that Wolan, according to him, had misinterpreted. For example, Jurgiewicz replies to Wolan's comment from Herodotus (*De pio*, p. 14) on the etymology of the word *idolum* (*De pio*, pp. 14-17), by extending the argument and alluding to Homer, Virgil, Lucretius, and Lucian (*De pio*, p. 17). In addition, Jurgiewicz refers to Chrysostom (*De pio*, p. 14), Nazianzenus (*De pio*, p. 14), Eusebius (*De pio*, p. 35), Sozomen (*De pio*, pp. 34-35, 67), Lactantius (*De pio*, p. 81), and Tertulian (*De pio*, pp. 81-82); Jurgiewicz also alludes to the decrees of the Council of Trent (*De pio*, pp. 27, 49) and the historical practice of sacred images (*De pio*, pp. 67-70, 77-80).

It seems that based on the argument of images as representations, for Jurgiewicz, one of the main aspects of the use of sacred images is their ability to become visual witnesses to historical or theological sources. It is not a unique notion. In the 16th century's post-Tridentine Catholic art theory and theology, the idea emerges that artists, drawing on authoritative historical and theological texts, should convey historical and theological information as accurately as possible, visually affirming the relationship of Catholic tradition and doctrine to the early Church and the continuity of this relationship, involving arguments specific to history, theology, hagiography and ecclesiology (Jones, 1993, pp. 168-69). If Wolan considered only the historicity of profane images, Jurgiewicz is generally concerned with it as evidence of the authenticity and the *auctoritas* of the Catholic Church and its

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[24] Henceforth this work will be referred to as *De pio*.

doctrine (Herklotz, 1985, pp. 56-60; Plahte Tschudi, 2017, pp. 1-33). Jurgiewicz defends the veneration of Marian images of Loreto, Częstochowa, and Vilnius[25] because of their authenticity, e.g. the Ruthenian image of the Virgin Mary in Vilnius was believed to be painted by Saint Luke (*De pio*, p. 46).

Jurgiewicz says that pictures excite the mind of the beholder to contemplate, love, and humbly adore the Saviour[26]. For Jurgiewicz, this means that physical representations are possible because of the aforementioned capacity to lead the viewer to the contemplation[27]. In other words, his argument is that the representation of God in any physical form is the same to the viewer's eyes as his depiction in the Bible is to their ears[28]. In the Catholic art theory after the Council of Trent, similitude was thought to be capable of uniting the visible and invisible worlds together by removing the metaphysical limitations of time and space in representation (Jones, 1993, p. 211). It was widely considered that in order to become representations of saints or martyrs, images must be created primarily with the aim of conveying a visual likeness to the prototype through a plausible likeness or a convincing representation of reality. In other words, the aspect of historicity, as already briefly mentioned, is closely linked with the problem of similitude. The fulfilment of one requires the principles of the other, but these aesthetic categories cover different levels of an image. While historicity defines the plausibility, historical and artefactual validity of a sacred image, similitude is primarily concerned with the mimetic representation of the visual reality.

Jurgiewicz expands on this idea by stating that adoration consists of three acts, the first of which is understanding, the second – the wish to honour, and the third – the proclamation of the veneration through the external physical act[29]. In this sense, Jurgiewicz reflects

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[25] *De pio*, p. 47: *Quae de Italis, imaginem Lauretanam, vel de Polonia Czestochoviensem, aut de Ruthenis Vilnensem pro beata Maria adorantibus, ais, calumniam esse putidam, qua Ecclesiam Christi in invidiam vocare conaris, nec tu ipse inficiari potes, qui non ignores, Ecclesiam idololatriae condemnare eos, qui vel vitam, vel sensum imaginibus in esse credunt, vel ab eis aliquid petunt, vel spem aliquam in eis collocant* (You say that it is a decrepit fallacy that Italians adore the image of Loreto, the Polish the image of Częstochowa, or Ruthenians worship the image of Vilnius for the blessed Mary, and you try to make the Church of Christ odious even though you do not realise yourself that the Church condemns with idolatry those who believe that there is life or meaning in images, or those that ask anything from them, or place any hope in them).

[26] *De pio*, p. 21: *Fatemur ergo ingenue, cum Catholica Ecclesia nos imagines pingere, ut illarum aspectum facilius ad Servatorem nostrum contemplandum, et amandum ardentius, ac humilius adorandum mens assurgat* (Let us therefore openly confess that the Catholic Church allows us to paint pictures, so that the sight of them may more easily excite the mind to contemplate our Saviour, to love him more ardently, and to adore him more humbly).

[27] *De pio*, p. 53: *Ergo illi sine mendacio imagines Spirituum pingere potuerunt: nos corporeae illius figurae, quam nobis illae beatae montes ostenderunt, verissimam effigiem, sine mendacio, pingere non possumus?* (That is why they could paint pictures of spirits without lying: can we not paint the truest portrait of the physical form that those blessed mountains have shown us without lying?).

[28] *De pio*, p. 53: *Quod si ita est, quid impedit, Volane, quo minus Deum sic depingamus, quemadmodum eum nobis Scriptura exprimit: cum idem sit, Deum corporeum auribus exhibere per Scripturam, et oculis per picturam?* (And if this is so, what prevents us, Wolan, the less from representing God in the way in which Scripture presents him to us: for is it not the same thing to present a corporeal God to the ears through Scripture, and to the eyes through a picture?).

[29] *De pio*, p. 22: *Adoratio tribus actibus constat: actu intellectus, quo excellentia personae apprehenditur; actu voluntatis, quo excellenti personae volumus honorem secundum cognitam excellentiam deferre; et actu externo, quo eum honorem declaramus aprtione capitis, genuflexione, adoratione, et similibus* (Adoration consists of three acts:

the general ideas of the post-Tridentine Catholic aesthetic theory, which was formulated after the Council of Trent in theoretical works by authors such as Giovanni Andrea Gilio (1564), Carlo Borromeo (1577), Gabriele Paleotti (1582), or Federico Borromeo (1624) and was influential in the post-Tridentine Catholic Church.

At the same time, Jurgiewicz is not blindly following other Catholic theologians that were presumably known about in Lithuania (Jovaiša, 2000, pp. 37-38), but he seems to discuss with Wolan. Not only does he reply to Wolan's arguments by noting the pages of his tractate in the margins (*De pio*, pp. 1, 19-21, 25, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44-46, 49-51, 66, 70, 82, 84), but he also makes numerous references to the writings of Calvin (*De pio*, pp. 6, 20, 29, 34). Like Wolan, Jurgiewicz tries to deconstruct the Protestant arguments from the inside out and to demonstrate that they are foul. For example, although it was more common in the 16th century for Protestants to raise the question of the Catholic idolatry, in his reply to Wolan Jurgiewicz says that, following the teachings of Calvin, the Protestants in Vilnius worship idols by placing the image of the triumphant Lamb on the top of their temple and by having effigies of their ancestors in homes and meeting places[30]. In fact, the same argument is repeated a second time, in stronger terms, later in Jurgiewicz's text[31]. It is an interesting inversion of the culpability of idolatry. In other words, just as "idolatry" should be regarded as a fighting word in the context of the polemics on sacred images (Eire, 1990, p. 52), Jurgiewicz attempts to reverse the narrative. Not surprisingly, both Jurgiewicz and Wolan tend to appeal not only to theological arguments, but also to raise the question of illegal persecution (*Dedic.Ep.,* pp. 12-13; *Responsio*, p. 7; *De pio*, pp. 40-48), since the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth had guaranteed religious freedom since the Warsaw Confederation of 1573 (Stone 2001, 120). In fact, King Sigismund Augustus, whose secretary Wolan had been since 1568, flirted with Protestantism, and with his accession to the throne, the state ceased to interfere in religious education (Weintraub, 1971, p. 37; Kras, 2002, p. 131). The latter argument seems to be unique feature of the Catholic-Protestant polemics in the late 16th-century Europe.

It is clear that Jurgiewicz's tractate follows the post-Tridentine Catholic theological tradition and reflects the concurrent aesthetic paradigm to some extent. In his response to

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the act of understanding, by which the excellence of the person is apprehended; the act of will, by which we wish to honour an excellent person according to his known merits; and the external act, by which we proclaim his honour by bowing the head, kneeling, venerating, and the like).

[30] *De pio*, p. 9: *Quin etiam vos ipsi, novo splendore quinti Evangelii secundum Calvinum illlustrati, vestris expensis conflari, erigi, et in patentissimo loco, insummitate nimirum Synagogae vestrae Vilnensis collocari iussistis execrandum idolum Agni triumphantis. Domus quoque ilsas suas, vestro permissu, primarii Quique cotus vestri refertas habent idolis; quia maiorum suorum imaginibus eas magnis sumptibus exornant* (Moreover, you yourselves, enlightened by the new splendour of the Fifth Gospel according to Calvin, have had the accursed idol of the triumphant Lamb forged at your own expense, erected and placed in the most open place, at the very top of your synagogue in Vilnius. Your houses and meetings are filled with idols with your permission, for you adorn them with images of your ancestors at great expense).

[31] *De pio*, p. 31: *Iactant Zvingliani vestri agnum illum triumphantem in suae Synagogae Vilnensis summitate, ideo a vobis collocatum, ut non Sanctos mortuos, aut hominum traditiones, sed solum agnum Christum, quem sequuntur ipsi perpetuo intueantur* (Your Zwinglians flaunt this triumphant Lamb on the top of their synagogue in Vilnius, which you built so that they would not follow the dead saints or the traditions of men, but only the Lamb Christ, whom they themselves follow and adore forever).

Wolan's mostly theological arguments, Jurgiewicz inescapably follows similar argumentative strategies. Nevertheless, various local examples underline the importance of historicity and similitude in sacred images and reveal the aesthetic categories of evaluation that circulated in the local community and were equally important in the wider Catholic context. Such examples and unique argument of illegal persecution also imply that the printed polemics were mostly intended for the local audience and, therefore, reflects the aesthetic consideration behind confessional debates on the use of sacred images in the 16th-century Lithuania.

Concluding remarks

We can see that the question of the use of sacred images did not attract as much attention from either Catholics or Protestants as the transubstantiation or other theological issues. It represents a relatively minor aspect of the broader confessional debates between Catholics and Protestants in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania at the end of the 16th century. Despite the large number of theological treatises produced during this period, only a small fraction focused on the issue of sacred images, with only two key works representing the Protestant perspective, and three responses by Jesuit theologians representing the Catholic side. From the remaining texts, however, we can discern certain features of the argumentative strategies and the aesthetic considerations behind them of both sides of the polemic.

Both Wolan and Jurgiewicz based their writings mainly on theological arguments that cover the Bible, the writings of Church Fathers and Teachers, as well as various historical sources. Wolan and Jurgiewicz tend to deconstruct the opposition's arguments from the inside out, quoting or referring to authors or sources that are important for the opposing side. In this sense, both of our authors are almost exemplary Renaissance humanists, demonstrating their broad cultural and literary education, as well as reflecting general European religious and cultural shifts during the Catholic and Protestant Reformations. Wolan's arguments, while rooted in theological discourse, also touch on the aesthetic paradigm of the time, reflecting the Renaissance-inspired desire to return to the original simplicity of Christian doctrine. Jurgiewicz echoes the Catholic Reformation's emphasis on the visual aspects of sacred images. His arguments assert the role of sacred images as authentic visual witnesses to the continuity of Catholic tradition and doctrine. In this sense, Jurgiewicz reflects the general ideas of the post-Tridentine Catholic aesthetic theory, especially the aesthetic categories of similitude and historicity.

This polemic also reveals a unique aspect of the confessional debates in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth of the 16th century. Both Jurgiewicz and Wolan implicitly accuse the opposing side of religious persecution, which had been illegal in the state. Such argument also reveals the polemics on the use of sacred images were primarily aimed at a local audience, thus reflecting the aesthetic considerations in the 16th-century Lithuania. Of course, this is only a glimpse of the theoretical and theological perspectives of the two opposing sides, and further research would be necessary to understand the aesthetic theory behind the wider polemics in other parts of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and compare it with the artistic practice in the region.

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