

Images of Josaphat Kuntsevych in Uniate Churches of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania during the 17th and 18th Centuries

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Summary. The images of Josaphat Kuntsevych in churches, as well as their veneration, were important factors not only for the survival of the cult of the martyr himself but also for the overall development of the Uniate Confession. However, to date, no comprehensive studies have been done on the spread of such images in either Uniate or Roman Catholic shrines. After 1839, the vast majority of altarpieces and other images dedicated to St. Josaphat were destroyed or repainted – thus ‘hiding’ the image of the martyr under the guise of another saint. As a result, few authentic altarpieces of Josaphat have survived. The main source of information about these former altarpieces and other types of images of Josaphat are the visitation records and other written documents from parish churches and monasteries. The article summarizes source data concerning the veneration of Josaphat’s images in the most famous Basilian churches within the Lithuanian Basilian province during the 17th and 18th centuries, i.e., before his official canonization. Due to the extremely large number of Uniate churches which existed, the uneven survival of their documents, and the limited scope of the article, it has not yet been possible to prepare a comprehensive and in-depth study of all the images of St. Josaphat which were located in the Uniate churches in Lithuania. The article focuses primarily on those churches which Josaphat was more or less associated with during his lifetime.

Keywords: St. Josaphat Kuntsevych; sacral art; Grand Duchy of Lithuania; the Uniates; the Basilians.

In the diverse studies into the life, martyrdom, and cult history of Josaphat Kuntsevych,¹ some attention has also been given to his images. This has focused primarily on graphic works, notably, portrait images and emblematic illustra-

1 Although Josaphat Kuntsevych was only canonized in 1867, believers had started calling him a saint much earlier than this date. In the titles of altars and other works dedicated to the martyr during the 17th and 18th centuries, the terms ‘blessed’ and ‘saint’ were used interchangeably; however, these terms did not express the official status of Josaphat but, instead, the level of his cult within a specific community; correspondingly, these terms are also used in the article.

tions describing the martyr's life.² Jolita Liškevičienė's publication on the early graphic images of Blessed Josaphat, which directly influenced painted artworks, is particularly important for the study of the iconography of altarpieces and other images in churches.³ Articles by Dorota Wereda and Tojana Račiūnaitė highlight the significance of the veneration of relics in the formation and consolidation of the cult of the martyr, as well as for the erection of altars dedicated to him.⁴ The tradition of venerating Josaphat's relics in Biała Podlaska and Polatsk has been the subject of several separate studies.⁵ Various publications on the history of religion and art in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania discuss, or at least mention, some of the altars dedicated to St. Josaphat. Aliaksei Khadyka has prepared a significant publication about the surviving paintings of Josaphat which can still be found in churches and sacred Belarusian art.⁶ However, a more extensive study devoted to the altars of Josaphat which were installed in shrines of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and the paintings which were housed in those shrines, has not yet been carried out.

The aim of the present article is to highlight the dynamics and trends present in the spread of images of St. Josaphat in Uniate churches, and to discuss their iconographic features by comparing the verbal descriptions of the images with well-known graphic images of St. Josaphat. Most of the emphasis in this article will be placed on discussing the altars dedicated to the honour of Josaphat and the paintings housed in them. More than anything else, the altarpieces reflect the formation of the tradition of Josaphat's veneration because the "elevation to the honour of the altar" signifies official recognition of the cult. In the 'lives' of Josaphat and in the sermons written for various occasions we can find, on more than one occasion, that people are encouraged to establish and visit altars in honour of the new patron. "Let us all hasten to build altars, chapels, *arcus triumphales* to our patron", urged Kyprian Zhokhovsky in Vilnius in 1667 in the booklet *Relacyja cztertnastoletniego wygnania z katedry połockiej B. Męczennika Josaphata*.⁷ Almost

2 J. Liškevičienė, 2002; J. Liškevičienė, 2016.

3 J. Liškevičienė, 2011.

4 D. Wereda, 2009; T. Račiūnaitė, 2011.

5 P. Sęczyk, 2016; D. Wereda, 2021; P. Krasny, 2000.

6 A. Хадька, 2006.

7 Cyprian Żochowski, *Wstęp po drodze do Stołecznego W^o Xięstwa Lit. Miastá Wilna, Powracającego z wćieczki przed nieprzyjacielem Błogosławionego Męczennika Chrystusowego Iozaphata Arcybiskupá Połockiego Witep. Mścisł. Do Arcybiskupiey Káthedry swoiey Połocká Ogłoszony z Pulpitu W Cerkwi Przenasw: Troycy Oycow Bazyljanow Monastyra Wileńskiego, skoro szczęś-*

a century later, Porfyrii Skarbek-Wazhynsky, with similar fervour, addressed the faithful in St. Sophia Cathedral in Polatsk as follows: “If not Josaphat, himself, triumphing in Heaven, then I raise before your eyes at least his image on this altar and the casket where his holy body rested for some time. [...] Hurry, all of you, hurry to His altar, and with hearts full of sorrow, fully trusting, call upon His help”⁸. Various miracles attributed to Josaphat which were recounted in the book *Korona Złota Nad Głową Zranioną B. M. Iozaphata*, published by Izaak Dominik Malinowski in 1673, clearly reveal that the most important medium of connection between the faithful and the martyr were his bodily relics; however, his image also played a significant role.⁹ For example, Prince Jerzy Czartoryski, while seriously ill, saw a painting of Josaphat hanging above his bed and, after making a vow to visit his tomb in Polatsk, immediately felt better.¹⁰ On another occasion, in 1628, when the wife of Łukasz Felicjan Massalski, who was suffering from terrible headaches, entrusted him to the care of Blessed Josaphat, a man wearing the chasuble of a Bishop of the Eastern Church, similar to that depicted in the painting of Josaphat, appeared to her in a vision and instructed her on how to help her spouse.¹¹ During the beatification process, Blessed Josaphat appeared to Pope Urban VIII in Rome dressed in a Greek bishop’s attire as depicted in the painting given to him by Metropolitan Rafail Korsak – this event hastened the process of beatification.¹² Another miraculous event occurred in Vilnius in 1667, during the period when the relic of Blessed Josaphat’s body was displayed for public veneration at the Basilian Church of the Holy Trinity before being returned to Polatsk: a three-year-old Orthodox child was saved from drowning in a river by invoking Josaphat’s help. From that time to the end of his life, the child’s father used to come to the Church of the Holy

liwie stanał w teyże Cerkwi w świętych zwłokach swoich tenże B. Arcybiskvp Przez X. Cypryana Zochowskiego Zakonu Bazylego S. S. Th. Doctora Z dozwołeniem Stárszych, w Wilnie, w drukarni Akad. Societatis Jesu, 1667, s. 14.

8 Porfiriusz Skarbek-Ważyński, *Kazanie na Uroczystosc Bł. Jozafata Kuncewicza Arcybiskupa Połockiego Biskupa Witebskiego, Mscislawskiego, Orszáńskiego i Mohilowskiego, Za Jednosc z Kosciółem Rzymskim Męcennika Miane w Katedrze Połockiey*, w Wilnie, w Drukarni J. K. M. u xx. Bazyljanow, 1762, s. E2.

9 Izaak Dominik Malinowski, *Korona Złota Nad Głową Zranioną B. M. Iozaphata Kyncewicza Arcybiskvpa Połockiego Zakonv S. Bazylego W. Za Jedność z Kościołem S. Rzymskim, od odszczeniencow Witebskich okrutnie Zabitego \: Drogiemu Kamieñmi Cudow co przednieyszych y Dobrodziejstw Boskich Sadzona*, w Wilnie w Drukarni ww. oo. Bazyljanów, roku 1667.

10 *Ibid.*, s. 50.

11 *Ibid.*, s. 51.

12 *Ibid.*, s. 58.

Trinity every year during Josaphat's feast day to give thanks by lighting candles in front of the martyr's image on the altar.¹³

It is with the Basilian Church of the Holy Trinity that we begin our discussion of those images of Josaphat which were housed in the most famous Basilian monasteries in the Lithuanian Basilian province. The significance of the Basilian monastery of the Church of the Holy Trinity in Vilnius in the history of this province in Lithuania, and Basilian monasticism as a whole, is determined by the fact that it was there that Josaphat's monastic path began. In addition, Vilnius monastery was chosen as the centre of the congregation at the first general chapter of the Holy Trinity Congregation of the Lithuanian Basilians, held in Navahrudak in 1617, and retained this status until the abolition of the order in 1839. It is true that the earliest records of Josaphat's images in Vilnius are related to the Jesuits rather than to the Basilians. Before his official beatification, a portrait of Josaphat was painted at the Jesuit St. Casimir's College in Vilnius, and it is considered to be a 'true' image of the martyr¹⁴ (Figure 1). It was precisely this image which was sent to Rome in 1624 for the beatification process, and the original was still present in the library of the Lithuanian Orthodox Bishop in Vilnius at the end of the 19th century.¹⁵ Another early image of St. Josaphat is an engraving from Lev Kreuzza's sermon on the holy life of the archbishop of Polatsk, published in Vilnius in 1625.¹⁶ These images, in which Josaphat is depicted as a monk or an archbishop, were extremely significant for the formation of his iconography and influenced some of the altarpieces, including, most probably, the first painted image of Josaphat. As described in Jesuit sources, in 1642, this painting arrived at Vilnius Basilian Church of the Holy Trinity in a ceremonial procession, during which, the image of the blessed martyr was carried in a triumphal chariot and placed on the altar.¹⁷ Thus, at that time, there must have already been an altar dedicated to Josaphat in Vilnius Basilian Church of the Holy Trinity. However, there is no specific information about what it looked like, or in what specific place it was installed. In 1670, Andrzej Kwaśniński-Złoty, the Archbishop of Pinsk, bequeathed 100 ducats for the building of a new altar dedicated to Blessed Josaphat in Vilnius. However, it

13 Ibid., s. 60–61.

14 J. Liškevičienė, 2011, p. 114, il. 1.

15 *Витебская старина*, сост., ред. Алексей Парфенович Сапунов, Витебск: А. Сапунов, 1888, с. LXXXIV–LXXV.

16 Ibid., с. 114–115, ил. 2.

17 S. Rostowski, 1877, p. 332, 336.



Figure 1. Reproduction of a portrait of Josaphat Kuntsevych, which was part of Vilnius Jesuit collections.

In: *Памятники русской старины в западных губерниях*, Вып. 8. Санкт-Петербург: [М-во внутр. дел], 1885, ил. 13.

appears that this was only realized in 1687, when the burgomaster of Vilnius, Jan Ohurcewicz, had the altar for Blessed Josaphat built, and granted a legacy with the obligation to offer Mass at that altar and care for it on a regular basis.¹⁸ The altar was rebuilt in 1710, or shortly thereafter, at the expense of the priest Joachim Cechanowicz.¹⁹ The altar was made of wood, with ornate, gilded carvings.²⁰ In its structure and decoration, it was similar to the altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which was dedicated to the famous Our Lady of Vilnius icon; it can therefore be assumed that these two installations stood parallel to each other. The earliest mention of the painting of Josaphat is found in the 1719-dated inventory of the church treasures, which notes that the painting was approximately a cubit in size (about 65 cm) and in a black frame. At this time, the image was described as already being

18 R. Janonienė, 2017, p. 213.

19 O. Viničenko, 2017, p. 131.

20 R. Janonienė, 2017, p. 214.

adorned with silver casings, as, among the precious metals separately listed were Josaphat's *sakkos*²¹ and *omoforion*²² of a golden marzipan colour, as well as a silver mitre, a palm branch, and his pastoral staff, which all covered the corresponding painted details.²³ The latter three items had already been mentioned as early as 1701 as being among the treasures which were taken to Zhyrovichy to hide them from the Swedes.²⁴ This indicates that the painting of Josaphat was no longer in the Basilian Holy Trinity Church in Vilnius when a fire occurred there in 1706, and the painting therefore survived this devastating incident. The iconography of the image seems to have been similar to an engraving by Aleksander Tarasewicz made in the 1670s–1680s which is not perfectly identical as the engraving does not depict the mitre (Figure 2).

In 1721, Proto-Archimandrite Antoni Zawadzki allocated funds to have the altar of Josaphat in the Church of the Holy Trinity in Vilnius gilded;²⁵ and, in around 1751, the renewed altar was newly consecrated.²⁶ A more detailed description of the altar and the painting only reaches us from a later time, referring us to the 1774-dated inventory, where this altar is again described as having the same structure and decoration as the altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary, i.e., it was made of wood, carved, and painted black, and the columns and some carvings were gilded.²⁷ From later documents, we know that the altar painting of Josaphat was large (about 200 x 90 cm), painted on wooden boards, had a background carved with a floral ornament, and that it was gilded.²⁸ The composition of the painting can be roughly reconstructed based on the description of the claddings: it is mentioned that Josaphat's figure was covered with silver casings, in some places gilded, and

21 The upper liturgical vestment of Orthodox and Eastern Rite Catholic bishops, resembling a dalmatic.

22 Corresponds to the Roman Catholic stole.

23 Wileńskiej cerkwi splendory inwentarzowe, in: Ададуrow В. et al., 2019, с. 447.

24 *Археографический сборник документов, относящихся к истории Северо-Западной Руси*, т. 10, Вильна: Изд. при Управлении Виленского учебного округа, 1874, с. 297.

25 Accounts of the Monastery of the Holy Trinity in Vilnius, in: Центральний державний історичний архів України у місті Львові [Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Lviv], ф. 684, оп. 1, д. 3290, л. 38–39.

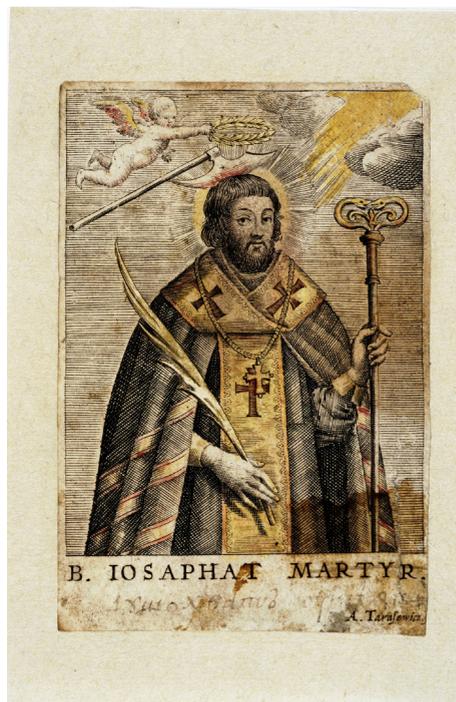
26 Information about the condition of Vilnius Basilian Monastery, 1823, in: Lietuvos mokslų akademijos Vrublevskių bibliotekos Rankraščių skyrius [Wroblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, Manuscripts Department] (hereinafter referred to as *LMAVB RS*), f. 41–83, l. 3.

27 Inwentarz klasztoru Wileńskiego przy cerkwi Świętej Trójcy, 1774, in: Ададуrow В. et al., 2019, с. 483, 484.

28 Information about the condition of the Vilnius Basilian Monastery, 1823, l. 3.

Figure 2. Aleksander Tarasewicz, *Blessed Josaphat Kuntsevych*, copper engraving, second half of the 17th century.

In: Biblioteka Narodowa, Warszawa
(National Library, Warsaw), G. 2209.



was adorned with a gilded floral ornament; his head was surrounded with silver rays which were partially gilded. The composition was complemented by a mitre adorned with cherubs²⁹ over the head of Blessed Josaphat, covered with silver-gilded casings adorned with 23 stones; next to the mitre, there were two angels covered with silver casings; a silver casing also covered the pastoral staff, the curved upper part of which was adorned with 10 stones. In his right hand, Josaphat held a 'martyr's laurel'; attached to his left was a ribbon with 25 artificial gemstones called Scottish glass; and, in his right hand, he held a large silver reliquary adorned with 23 stones and two small corals.³⁰ Based on this description, one assumes that, in the painting, Josaphat was depicted standing at full height. Elements from the aforementioned engraving by Tarasewicz and a widely circulated engraving from

29 A mitre is a bishop's ceremonial headgear.

30 *Inwentarz klasztoru Wileńskiego...*, 1774, c. 484.

a work by Antonio Gerardi,³¹ published in Rome in 1643, were combined in this iconography. The popularity of Gerardi's engraving is evidenced by its reproductions: it was published in the Latin version of *The Life of Blessed Josaphat* prepared by Yakiv Susza and published in Rome in 1665, as well as in the Spanish translation of this work published in Madrid in 1684³² (Figures 3, 4). However, the painting in Vilnius differed from these and similar engravings in that it apparently did not depict the main attribute of martyrdom, the axe, or, at least, it was not emphasized with a casing. Interestingly, the main altarpiece was covered by another painting of Josaphat, this time painted on canvas. Additionally, the same altar contained a small painting of the Blessed Virgin Mary with casings and two urn-shaped ornate silver reliquaries containing the relics of St. Basil and Blessed Josaphat. The overall appearance of the altar was completed by a luxurious blue fabric antependium, in a gilded frame, with the image of Josaphat in the centre embroidered in silver and gold threads and surrounded by an abundance of embroidered flowers.³³

The high altar, the altar of St. Basil (along with the reliquary of St. Lucidius), the altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the altar of St. Onuphrius, and the altar of St. Josaphat are mentioned in the 1778–1780 monastery documents.³⁴ During the reconstruction of the church, carried out in 1789–1792, the interior features were reconstructed, and an ensemble of brick altars decorated with plaster mouldings was built.³⁵ The inventories for 1793 and 1799, when describing the altars, mention the fact that the brick altar of St. Josaphat, archbishop and martyr, stood next to a pilaster on the left (the other three altars by the pilasters were dedicated to St. Bas-

31 Antonio Gerardi, *Sommaria relatione delia vita, e miracoli del bcato martire Giosafat Cuncevio dell' Ordine di S. Basilio Magno, Archimandrita, e poi Archivescovo di Polocia, martirizzato dagli Scismatici in Russia nella Citta di Vttebsco del Regno di Polonia [...]*, Roma, 1643.

32 Iacobo Susza, *Vida y martyrio del B. San Iosaphat Kuncevicz arzobispo de Polocia [...]*, en Madrid: por Iuan Garcia Infançon, 1684; Jakub Susza, *Cursus vitae, et certamen martyrii, B. Iosaphat Kuncevicii Archiepiscopi Polocen[is] Episcopi Vitepscen[is] et Miscilauien[is] Ord[inis] D[ivi] Basillii Magni, calamo, Iacobi Susza, Episcopi Chelmen[is] et Belzen[is] cum S.R.E. Uniti Ord[inis] eiusdem adumbratum*, Romae: Ex Typographia Varesii, 1665.

33 Inwentarz klasztoru Wileńskiego... 1774, c. 484, 497; Visitation acts of the Basilian monasteries, in: Lietuvos valstybės istorijos archyvas [Lithuanian State Historical Archives] (hereinafter referred to as LVIA), f. 634, ap. 1, b. 58, l. 86.

34 The diary of the Basilian monastery in Vilnius, 1758–1891, in: LVIA, f. 1178, ap. 1, b. 374, l. 38, 48v–49, 51v, 55v, 57, 58. In 1776, Pope Pius VI granted the privilege of receiving plenary indulgences at the Holy Trinity Sanctuary on the feast day of St. Josaphat.

35 Inventory of the Basilian monastery and the Church of the Holy Trinity in Vilnius, 1793, in: LMAVB RS, f. 41–221, l. 1; Inventory of the Basilian monastery and the Church of the Holy Trinity in Vilnius, 1799, in: LMAVB RS, f. 41–81, l. 2v.

Figure 3. Juan de Noort, *Beatus Martyr Iosaphat Councevitius*, copper engraving, 1684.

In: *Vida y martyrio del B. San Iosaphat Kunczevicz, Arzobispo de Polocia [...] del Señor Iacobo Susza*, Madrid, 1684. Real Academia Española (Royal Spanish Academy), 14/VII/19.



Figure 4. B. M. Josaphat.

In: *Manuscrito del Curso de Artes del padre Andrés de Arze y Miranda*, 1714. Biblioteca Lafragua, Universidad Autónoma de Puebla (Meritorious Autonomous University of Puebla, José María Lafragua Historical Library), 11852-41010402.



il, St. Nicholas, and St. Makrina). The description of the altar of Josaphat and its decorations hardly differed from the description given in 1774.

The magnificent altar was even more resplendent during celebrations for Josaphat, when numerous worshippers gathered around it, especially on the 25th of September, during the annual procession from Vilnius Cathedral to the Basilian church. During these special days, a choir would chant, litany prayers were recited at the altar, hymns were sung, and the faithful were allowed to kiss the relics of Josaphat.³⁶ In the second half of the 18th century, the growing cult of Josaphat was evidenced by votive plaques (including pictures of the Blessed Virgin Mary) being hung next to his painting, and also by images of Josaphat appearing on liturgical items of the Church of the Holy Trinity. The Church had a monstrance adorned with figures of the Holy Trinity, the Virgin Mary, St. Basil, and Blessed Josaphat. Among the old, elaborate red velvet chasubles, one was embellished with the figure of Josaphat embroidered in gold, and another featured an embroidered composition consisting of Josaphat's coat of arms, the pastoral staff, and a cross.³⁷ It is worth mentioning that, during the second half of the 18th century, as worshippers approached the Church, they were greeted by a painting of Josaphat the Martyr on the gates of the monastery; this was still visible in 1837.³⁸

Among other Basilian sanctuaries associated with the memory of Josaphat, the aforementioned St. Sophia Cathedral in Polatsk stands out. There, the painting of Josaphat the Martyr was publicly displayed for veneration earlier than it was displayed in Vilnius as the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith in Rome allowed it to be hung above the martyr's tomb (next to the altar of the Holy Cross) as early as in 1626.³⁹ According to information dating back to 1637, in this large painting, Josaphat was depicted standing, wearing an episcopal vestment, and a robe adorned with diagonal stripes (it is noteworthy that he would later be depicted in a similar way in engravings created in Rome). Ten scenes from his life were arranged around the central figure. Another image, which hung nearby and depicted Josaphat lying dead, is also mentioned. These paintings, together with the martyr's grave and the votive offerings, relics, and other liturgical items, became an important centre for pilgrimage and the spread of the cult of Josaphat,

36 The diary of the Basilian monastery in Vilnius, 1758–1891, l. 44, 63v.

37 Inventory of the Basilian monastery and the Church of the Holy Trinity in Vilnius, 1799, l. 4v., 9.

38 Inventory of the Basilian monastery and the Church of the Holy Trinity in Vilnius, 1837, in: LMAVB RS, f. 41–220, l. 1.

39 P. Krasny, 2005, s. 9.

even before his official beatification. After beatification, a splendid marble altar dedicated to Josaphat was built in a separate chapel. A silver sarcophagus-reliquary, commissioned by Kazimierz Leon Sapieha in 1650, and adorned with relief scenes depicting the martyrdom of Josaphat, lay on the altar. A life-size silver figure of Josaphat, depicting him as an archbishop wearing liturgical garments, his hands folded in prayer, with a symbol of martyrdom – an axe in his head – was placed on the top of the sarcophagus.

In 1653, the martyr's image and relics were removed to protect them from the Muscovites. From 1667 until 1706, they were again kept safe in St. Sophia Cathedral in Polatsk. During the 18th century, the altar dedicated to Josaphat was rebuilt in the Cathedral's chapel, however, when the main relic – the martyr's body – was taken to Biała Podlaska, the cult of Josaphat began to decline in Polatsk. In a sermon delivered in 1762, Porfyrrii Skarbek-Wazhynsky urged the faithful to revive their former piety, citing, as an example, the prelate of the Samogitian Cathedral and pastor of Mogilev, Michał Zenowicz, who, reportedly, every time he passed through Polatsk, even on urgent matters, never missed the opportunity to visit the cathedral and pray at the altar of St. Josaphat.⁴⁰ After losing the main relic, pilgrims were encouraged to turn their attention to the painting of Josaphat on the altar and to the remaining relics: the martyr's blood-stained clothes, a tuft of his beard, and the pastoral staff, which was preserved in a silver reliquary in Polatsk until the beginning of 1839.⁴¹

As well as in Vilnius, images of Josaphat in Polatsk were present not only among the Basilians but also in Jesuit surroundings: in the Jesuit order's church, there was an altar dedicated to Blessed Josaphat, whereas, in the college, there was a large picture painted on the wall depicting the Blessed Virgin Mary along with the saints Casimir, John of Nepomuk, and Josaphat.⁴²

The contribution of the Jesuits to the spread of the cult of Josaphat is evident also in the place of his death, i.e., the city of Vitsyebsk. Here, the first altar dedicated to Josaphat was built in the Jesuit church rather than in the Basilian one: it was commissioned in 1672 by Adam Franciszek Kisiel, a clerk of Vitsyebsk District Land Court.⁴³ Services were held every Monday at the altar, hymns were sung about Josaphat's martyrdom, and the martyr's relic was presented to be kissed. It

40 Porfiriusz Skarbek-Ważyński, *Kazanie na Uroczystosc...*, s. 4.

41 E. Hellenijusz, 1861, s. 177.

42 S. Załęski, 1905, s. 228.

43 W. Boberski, 2002, s. 329.

seems that the painting here was similar to the one in the Jesuit college in Vilnius. Soon, this same benefactor also had a Basilian monastery in Vitsyebsk erected, along with the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which was built in 1682 on the site of Bishop Josaphat's death.⁴⁴ Kisiel also transferred to the Basilians a relic of Blessed Josaphat, which had previously been kept in the Jesuit monastery church in Vitsyebsk. Both Josaphat's reliquary and the altar painting were destroyed in 1705 when Peter I took the city. The composition of the painting can be somewhat inferred from the surviving casings, which were described in the 1725 inventory: a silver, partially gilded 'crown' and a pastoral staff indicate that the martyr was depicted in liturgical garments, and the image was likely full-figured.⁴⁵

A new altar dedicated to Josaphat was built between 1715 and 1743, after the brick-constructed Basilian monastery in Vitsyebsk had been built (the construction was supported by Miron Hałłuz, and the architect was Giuseppe Fontana). Additionally, a new relic in the form of the martyr's hand was obtained.⁴⁶ Information about St. Josaphat's new altar built at the beginning of the 18th century is found in the inventory of 1725. The painting of Josaphat for the altar was adorned with silver casings made by Augsburg goldsmiths in 1715; these were gilded and consisted of ten parts (including a sword, a 'laurel', a chalice, a cherub, a coat of arms, and a heart).⁴⁷ This altar also contained a reliquary, above which, a picture of the Mother of God, richly adorned with casings and precious stones, had hung since 1717; these items had been donated by Izabela Kisiel, the wife of Vitsyebsk chamberlain.⁴⁸

In describing the renewed ensemble, mention was made of the fact that, in 1720, a sculpture of Josaphat was "re-erected on a pillar", which indicates that such a sculpture was most likely already present in the churchyard at the end of the 17th century.⁴⁹ Another image of Josaphat was among the saints painted on the façade of the new brick church. These images were captured in a watercolour painted by Józef Peszka at the beginning of the 19th century (Figure 5).

In the Basilian church in Vitsyebsk, images of Josaphat were also present on liturgical vessels donated by the benefactor. Josaphat's image and the benefactor's

44 Ibid.

45 Inventory of the cathedral in Vitsyebsk, 1725–1727, in: LVIA, f. 634, ap. 3, b. 451, l. 1–5.

46 Visitation Act of the former Basilian church in Vitsyebsk, 1842, in: LVIA, f. 696, ap. 1, b. 149, l. 1.

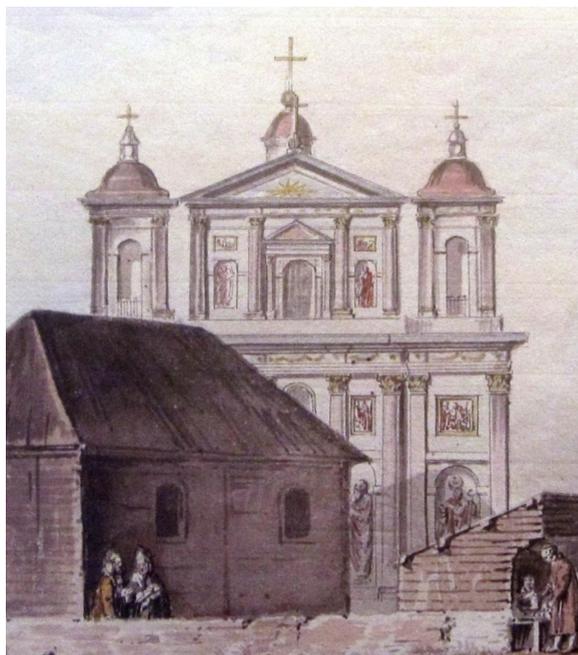
47 Inventory of the cathedral in Vitsyebsk, 1725–1727, l. 5.

48 Ibid., l. 2v.

49 Documents of the Basilian monastery in Vitsyebsk, 1598–1798, in: LVIA, f. 634, ap. 3, b. 528, l. 39.

Figure 5. Józef Peszka, the Basilian church in Vitsyebsk, watercolour, early 19th century.

In: Львівська національна наукова бібліотека України імені Василя Стефаника, Інститут досліджень бібліотечних мистецьких ресурсів (Vasyl Stefanyk National Scientific Library of Ukraine in Lviv, Institute for Library Art Resources Research), графіка-83369.



coat of arms were engraved on three partially gilded chalices of various sizes; there was a large silver monstrance with a Roman and Greek Melchizedek adorned with golden rays and decorations, while an image of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Zhyrovichy was incorporated on the top of the monstrance, and figurines of St. Basil and St. Josaphat were placed at the bottom; an also mentioned item was a large silver reliquary (lined with oak wood) for Josaphat, topped with the sculptured figures of Josaphat and two cherubs. In addition, the martyr's altar was decorated with elaborate brass candlesticks, donated by an unknown benefactor, and a pair of tin 'Moscow-style' candlesticks, and was covered with fabric curtains on which several votive offerings were hung.⁵⁰

Alongside the Jesuits and Basilians, the Vitsyebsk cult of Blessed Josaphat was also promoted by the Bernardines, who had settled there in 1685. In a new brick church, built during the second half of the 18th century, one of the side altars was dedicated to the honour of Josaphat the Martyr and archbishop. The altarpiece was

50 Inventory of the cathedral in Vitsyebsk, 1725–1727, l. 4v–5.

painted on canvas and covered with silver casings, which highlighted individual details of the painting such as a stole, a pastoral staff, and an axe.⁵¹ It is possible that the painting was based on a version of – or was a copy of – Josaphat's image created by Carlo Grandi in Rome in the middle of the 18th century (Figure 6).

Returning to the Basilians, it is important to mention the monastery in Bycien, one of the oldest in the Basilian province in Lithuania. Josaphat Kuntsevych was the monastery abbot from 1613 to 1615; he ensured that Basilian novices were transferred from Vilnius to his monastery. At the beginning of the 18th century, the monastery church featured eleven altars. The altar of Blessed Josaphat, containing a painted canvas, stood in the chapel, while a painting of the Transfiguration of Christ hung on the second level.⁵² In this case, also, the iconography of the picture of Josaphat was partially defined by the silver casings: a wreath above the martyr's head, and a mitre with a small cross, an *omophorion*, and a pastoral staff were at his side. Josaphat's painting also hung on the wall of another chapel.

The Basilian monastery in Supraśl also preserved the memory of Josaphat. While living in Vilnius, he visited Supraśl multiple times, sent his students there, and, it is believed, from 1653 to 1667, relics of Josaphat were kept in the Basilian monastery's church.⁵³ In the mid-17th century, under the care of Archimandrite Oleksii Dubovych of Supraśl Monastery, four side altars were built next to the pillars in the church, one of which was dedicated to St. John the Evangelist and St. Josaphat.⁵⁴ The 1764 description indicates that there was a crown above the head of St. John, and that he had a silver-gilded bracelet on his left hand; the image of St. Josaphat was similarly adorned with a crown featuring eleven precious stones and a bracelet on his right hand. A third silver-gilded crown was located above the head of an eagle.⁵⁵ The 17th-century painting, possibly repainted and without any casings, was captured in a photograph in the year 1913, in which, St. John is seen being dressed in priestly garments, holding a chalice, a lily, and a closed book, with an eagle on the right. Next to him, St. Josaphat (?), also with a lily (perhaps, after 1839, the picture was repainted, and Josaphat was 'turned into' another saint).⁵⁶

51 Inventory of the Bernardine monastery in Vitsyebesk and the Church of St Anthony of Padua, 1820, in: Vilniaus universiteto bibliotekos Rankraščių skyrius [Vilnius University Library, Manuscripts Division], f. 4–A2110, l. 216–218.

52 Visitation Acts of the Basilian monasteries, l. 158.

53 K. Stawecka, 2017, s. 140.

54 Ibid.

55 Ibid., s. 141.

56 Ibid.

Interestingly, in an older photograph of this altar from 1864, a different painting of Saint John is seen: the Evangelist is depicted with a book on his knees, holding a quill, and has an eagle beside him and an angel on the right. It is possible that this painting was covering an older, main image.⁵⁷

Another Basilian monastery associated with the events and relics of the life of Josaphat was active in Zhyrovichy. Josaphat was the first superior of the monastery, and, on top of that, during the 18th century, Zhyrovichy church housed, for a time, Josaphat's silver reliquary from Polatsk and a relic from his body. Nevertheless, the main sacred object in this monastery was the image of the Mother of God, renowned for its graces. However, Blessed Josaphat was also remembered, as, during the years when he was leading the monastery, he actively promoted the veneration of the Mother of God of Zhyrovichy. In 1730, during a solemn ceremony for the crowning with papal crowns of the Zhyrovichy icon of the Mother of God, a silver statue of Josaphat, larger than the real-life size, was raised above the golden gates of the iconostasis, as if greeting the crowned queen.⁵⁸ The following description of the celebration vividly discusses the altar of Blessed Josaphat: "Since the day following the octave, on September 27th, was the feast of Blessed Josaphat, Archbishop of Polatsk and martyr, I wanted to briefly review the course of this celebration. The altar of the Blessed Martyr for the coronation celebration was adorned with tapestries and carpets, gold and precious stones, so that no additional decorations were needed. Although many candles and lamps burned here throughout the entire octave, even more were lit now, and preparations were made to display the relics of this saint for veneration by the people. If you were to observe the course and splendour of this celebration, the eloquence and zeal of the eulogists of the Mass and piety of the people, you could say that, through this celebration, our Blessed one, as the first superior of this place, arranged a new triumph for the Crowned".⁵⁹

At the end of the 18th century, many Basilian churches had either a side altar dedicated to Josaphat, or at least they featured a publicly displayed painting. In more than one case, the name of Josaphat was mentioned in the titles of the church. The church of the Basilian monastery in Biała Podlaska was dedicated to the memory of Josaphat. Built in the mid-18th century, it served as a mausoleum for the relic of Josaphat (the martyr's body), which had been brought from Polatsk and kept in the chapel of the Radziwiłł castle since 1706. On 24 June 1765, Josaphat's

57 Ibid., p. 152.

58 L. Griciūtė-Švėrebieienė, 2011, p. 235.

59 Ibid., p. 252.

body was transferred with great ceremony to this new sanctuary, along with his portrait adorned with magnificent casings. It remained at this location until the beginning of the 19th century.⁶⁰ The Basilian monastery's church, commissioned by Jan Fryderyk Sapieha in Stradzyech (in the district of Brest), was also granted the title of St. Josaphat the Martyr; however, during the first half of the 18th century, there was a painting of the Crucifixion in the main altar of the church, while one of the side altars was dedicated to the honour of Josaphat the Martyr (parallel to it was the altar of St. Onuphrius the Hermit).⁶¹ The Church of the Holy Trinity and of St. Josaphat in Tarakan Basilian Monastery, established on the initiative of the Vilnius Basilian monks, is also worth mentioning. In 1710, the Basilian monks of Vilnius built a brick Uniate church in the area of Tarakan, next to which, Superior General Lev Kiszka established a monastery. By the middle of the 18th century, it had become one of the main residences of the superior general. The brick church built in 1757 was consecrated in 1780 and given the title of Blessed Josaphat the Martyr. According to the records from the year 1823, the main altar of the church displayed the following paintings: The Conversion of Saint Paul and the Mother of God and Child, while an old painting of Josaphat hung in the monks' choir, above the stalls.⁶² Another image of Josaphat adorned a procession flag, with St. Onuphrius depicted on the other side.⁶³

The images of St. Josaphat in the Basilian monastery churches in other Lithuanian provinces are usually only briefly mentioned in the acts of visitations and inventories. In 1677, a side altar dedicated to Blessed Josaphat in the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Basilian monastery erected in Kasuta (Viljeyka *powiat*) stood parallel to the altar of St. Basil.⁶⁴ In the Church of Saints Peter and Paul of the Basilian monastery in Brest, a painting of Josaphat, adorned with silver casings which covered the mitre, *omophorion*, pastoral staff, and axe, is mentioned.⁶⁵ In 1798, within the Holy Trinity Basilian Sanctuary in Drohiczyn, a side altar to St. Josaphat stood parallel to the altar of St. Basil the Great.⁶⁶ A description

60 A. Dydycz, 1997, s. 213; P. Sęczyk, 2016, s. 59; D. Wereda, 2021, p. 261.

61 Visitation act of the Orthodox Church of the Holy Martyr, Archbishop Josaphat of Polatsk in Stradzyech, 1804–1813, in: LVIA, f. 599, ap. 1, b. 111, 9.

62 Visitation act of the Basilian monastery in Tarakan, 1823, in: LVIA, f. 634, ap. 1, b. 2, l. 5.

63 Visitation act of the Basilian monastery in Tarakan, 1822, in: LVIA, f. 1671, ap. 4, b. 2, l. 2; Visitation act of the Basilian monastery in Tarakan, 1823, l. 1–5.

64 Visitation Acts of the Basilian monasteries, l. 128v.

65 Ibid., l. 185v.

66 Ibid., l. 401.

of a visitation to the Church of the Holy Cross of the Basilian monastery in Lepersk mentions a painting of Josaphat on the second level of a side altar dedicated to St. Basil. At the residence of the Basilian monks in Pastavy, in the Church of the Holy Trinity, one of the side chapels opposite the altar of St. Nicholas had an image of Josaphat painted on the wall.⁶⁷ In 1748, Padubysys Monastery church had an altar honouring St. Josaphat (the 1804 visitation mentions that the painting of the martyr was hung on the second level of an altar dedicated to St. Onuphrius); in addition, outside the town, there was a chapel containing a painting of Josaphat.⁶⁸ And the list could go on.

In Uniate parish churches, altars dedicated to Josaphat were built much less frequently. For example, even at the end of the 18th century, the visitation acts for the Uniate parishes of the Mazyr deanery do not mention a single altar dedicated to him. However, in some deaneries, one or two cases could be found. In the Minsk and Navahrudak regions, late 17th-century visitation acts mention a picture of Blessed Josaphat covered with a silver casing in the Church of the Holy Trinity in Minsk, and an altar dedicated to him in the Church of Sending the Holy Spirit in Dawhinava, located within the domains of the scribe Michał Drucki-Sokoliński of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.⁶⁹ That the cult of the martyr was cherished there is also evidenced by a relic of St. Josaphat embedded in the silver-gilded monstrance. In the earliest times, altars dedicated to Josaphat were most frequently installed in Uniate parish churches or chapels built on estates owned by the Sapieha or Radziwiłł families. Among the churches erected by the Sapieha family, the Church of Sending the Holy Spirit in the castle of Kodeń is to be mentioned; in the first half of the 18th century, it had a magnificent side altar with a large painting of Josaphat the Martyr. It is said that the Sapieha family commissioned the painting shortly after Josaphat's martyrdom. In it, the Archbishop of Polatsk was depicted at full stature, with a beautiful, well-proportioned face, and hands folded on his chest.⁷⁰ The Church of Saint Josaphat the Martyr in the Hradec Uniate parish of the Brest deanery, which contained a canvas painting of St. Josaphat in one of the side altars, was also built with money donated by the Sapieha family.⁷¹

67 Collection of documents of the Basilians of Lithuania, 1796–1798, in: LMAVB RS, f. 17–190, l. 10v, 57.

68 Visitation Acts of the Basilian monasteries, l. 23v–24.

69 *Візіты уніяцкіх цэркваў Мінскага і Навагрудскага сабораў 1680-1682 гг.*, склад. Дзяніс Лісейчыкаў, Мінск: І.П. Логвінаў, 2009, с. 32, 62.

70 J. Łoski, 1857, s. 734–735.

71 Visitation acts of Uniate churches in the Brest Deanery, 1773, in: LVIA, f. 634, ap. 1, b. 50, l. 8.

According to the visitation acts for 1781, only in one of the 50 Uniate churches in the Minsk deanery was there an altar dedicated to St. Josaphat. It was installed in the chapel of Blessed Josaphat built by Adam Chmara in Gródek Sołomerecki during the second half of the 18th century.⁷² Two images of Josaphat are recorded in the visitation acts for the Kobryn deanery from the end of the 18th to the beginning of the 19th centuries: in 1724, in the church in Stryków, which was erected by the Jesuits of Lutsk, large paintings of St. Basil and St. Josaphat hung on the walls on both sides of the main altar (which was of the Crucifixion);⁷³ whereas, in the Uniate church of Byaroza, which was built in 1707, a picture of Josaphat adorned the second level of the side altar dedicated to Jesus of Nazareth.⁷⁴ Meanwhile, in the Kamianec deanery, the cult of Josaphat the Martyr was cherished in three out of the forty churches: in the first half of the 17th century, there was a side altar in the church in Kamianec containing a painting of him; in 1782, in the church of Dzmi-trovichy, erected by Stanisław August Poniatowski, a painting of Josaphat hung on the second level of the main altar, above the titular painting of the Transfiguration of Christ; while in the church of Cerkwie, a painting of Josaphat with a mitre depicted above him hung on a side altar; there was also a processional banner with the image of Josaphat.⁷⁵ In the Bielsk deanery, in the Church of Saint Josaphat in Dubiny, which was commissioned in 1780 by Marcin Klimański, Chamberlain of Hrodna district, one painting of Josaphat hung on the main altar, and there was another on the second level of a side altar, above a picture of the Crucifixion.⁷⁶ During a visitation of the Bielsk deanery in 1797, out of the 35 churches, a picture of St. Josaphat was only mentioned in one, specifically, in the Church of Saint Nicholas in Kosian: that was a two-sided (portable?) side altar with pictures of St. Nicholas and St. Josaphat.⁷⁷ A similar fraction of churches having a painting of Josaphat was also found for other deaneries.

Unfortunately, in many of the cases for the monasteries mentioned here, we cannot say exactly what the paintings of St. Josaphat looked like, nor those in other

72 Visitation acts of Uniate churches in the Minsk Deanery, 1781, in: LVIA, f. 634, ap. 3, b. 400, l. 81.

73 Visitation acts of Uniate churches in the Kobryn Deanery, 1784, in: LVIA, f. 634, ap. 1, b. 52, l. 41d.

74 Visitation acts of Uniate churches in the Kobryn Deanery, 1802, in: LVIA, f. 634, ap. 1, b. 56, l. 61–65.

75 Visitation acts of Uniate churches in the Kamianec Deanery, 1802, in: LVIA, f. 634, ap. 1, b. 57, l. 9v, 25, 57.

76 Visitation acts of Uniate churches in the Bielsk Deanery, 1784, in: LVIA, f. 634, ap. 1, b. 51, l. 38v–39.

77 Visitation acts of the Orthodox churches in the Bielsk and part of the Drohiczyn deaneries, 1797, in: LVIA, f. 634, ap. 1, b. 55, l. 8.



Figure 7. Carlo Grandi, *Beatus Josaphat Martyr*, copper engraving, mid-18th century.

In: Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie (National Museum in Kraków), MNK III-ryc.-18252.



Figure 8. Engraving by Pietro Campana based on a drawing by Cristofano Gaspari, *Beatus Josaphat Martyr*, copper engraving, mid-18th century.

In: Lietuvos nacionalinis dailės muziejus (Lithuanian National Museum of Art), LNDM G 1664/a.

monastery or parish churches could be described with precision. It can be assumed that full-figure images which were created based on illustrations printed in various publications or on individual engravings were most often hung on the first level of the altar. Among these, the most popular representations seem to have been based on Antonio Gerardi's 1643 engraving and its later remakes, which carried the image of Josaphat the Martyr far beyond the borders of Europe (Figure 6). Oval or circular paintings were hung on the second level of the altars; these were painted on the basis of engravings of a similar composition (for example, engravings from Yakiv Susha's 1665 book, and those by Jacobus Labinger, Carlo Grandi, and Pietro Gaspari, and their reproductions)⁷⁸ (Figures 7, 8).

After 1839, the great majority of images of Josaphat were either destroyed or repainted as images of saints venerated by the Eastern Orthodox Church, such as St. Charalampos the Martyr.⁷⁹ When the dissolved Capuchin monastery's church in Zbryzh (currently in Ukraine, Kamianec district) was converted into an Orthodox church, the painting of St. Josaphat by Franciszek Smuglewicz it contained was ordered to be repainted as the image of St. Nicholas.⁸⁰ There remains an image of St. John Chrysostom in a Belarusian collection, which is clearly painted over a former picture of Josaphat.⁸¹ It seems that paintings were repainted not only by the Orthodox believers but also by Catholics who wished to preserve the prohibited images. This conclusion is supported by an image of Josaphat being 'transformed' into a portrait of Mikołaj Krzysztof Radziwiłł 'Sierotka'.⁸² The fate of the painting of Josaphat in the Basilian Church of the Holy Trinity in Vilnius is unknown; according to information for 1846, an image of St. John Chrysostom, painted on a canvas, was already hanging in its place.⁸³

Conclusions

On the basis of the descriptions of altars and paintings found in the visitation acts and inventories of monasteries and parish churches, we can conclude that, during

78 A. Хадыка, 2006; J. Liškevičienė, 2011, p. 12.

79 E. Hellenijusz, 1861, s. 177.

80 Wołyniak, 1928, s. 278.

81 A. Хадыка, 2006.

82 Ibid.

83 R. Lebedytė, 1997, p. 50.

the 17th and 18th centuries, altars which were dedicated to Josaphat were primarily built in Basilian sanctuaries. The monasteries to which the events of Josaphat's life were related were particularly rich in images. However, most often, even in titular churches, the altars dedicated to Josaphat were side altars, with his paintings hung on the main altar only in a few isolated cases. On those altars dedicated to Josaphat, there would often also be a painting of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who was revered by the faithful, or a reliquary containing relics of the martyr. The image of Josaphat was quite often compared to images of St. Basil the Great, St. Onuphrius, St. Nicholas, and sometimes with St. John of Nepomuk, or images of Jesus (a picture of Josaphat was either placed on the second level of altars dedicated to these saints, or the altars were placed in parallel). Judging from the casings of paintings described in church visitation acts and inventories, we can conclude that, most commonly, they depicted Josaphat in the liturgical vestments of a bishop, wearing a mitre and having a pastoral staff, and also with attributes highlighting martyrdom, notably, a palm branch and an axe.

Written sources reveal certain trends in the spread of Josaphat's images in churches, but these data cannot be accepted without reservation, because the sources have survived unevenly, and altar titles are not always indicated in visitation acts. The sculptures of Josaphat preserved in museum collections indicate that sculptural representations of the martyr could have been present on church altars, however, no mention of them has been found in the visitation acts.

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