

The First Portraits of the Uniate Martyr Josaphat Kuntsevych at the Beginning of the 17th Century: The Vilnius Group of Images

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Summary. The subject of the article is the earliest images of the Uniate martyr Josaphat Kuntsevych and their influence on the later development of the martyr's iconography. The article considers what things were being emphasized in the earliest known of those graphic portraits of the martyr which included a coat of arms or scenes of martyrdom, what elements were used in his later images, and how these images related to Kuntsevych's *true* likeness. The origin of these early images of the martyr is investigated by using the broader context of the images created in Vilnius at that time, and explored through an attempt to identify the wood carver who worked in Vilnius on Kuntsevych's images during the first quarter of the 17th century. The later development of these works is examined through the copper engravings produced by Claes Jansz Visscher, an engraver and publisher who worked in Amsterdam, where these types of engravings attained the form of professional art. **Keywords:** Josaphat Kuntsevych; portrait image; Uniate bishop; Uniate martyr; iconography; Vilnius; wood carver from the first half of the 17th century.

1. Introduction

The subject of this study concerns the earliest known images of the Uniate martyr Josaphat Kuntsevych, or, more precisely, that group of *similar* engravings created in Vilnius featuring the image of the martyr. Here, they will be collectively referred to as the *Vilnian portrait images of Josaphat*. The study aims to reveal the importance and influence of these images, which were created for the canonization process, on the later iconography of the martyr, as well as the relationship of these images to his *true* likeness (*vera effigies*). The origin and development of the early images of St. Josaphat have been studied by both Polish and Ukrainian scholars.¹ The author of this article has also written about the first known images of this martyr.²

¹ A. Gil, 2005; A. Gil, 2011; M. Łepkowski, 2008.

² J. Liškevičienė, 2011.

Previous articles have put forward the idea that a portrait of Josaphat was created in Polatsk; but less attention has been given to Vilnius, where Josaphat lived and where an image of his *true* likeness, later sent to Rome, may also have been created. Mateusz Łepkowski identified two cities – Polatsk and Vilnius – where portraits of Josaphat could have been painted. The Vilnian portrait images demonstrate that Vilnius was significant both in shaping the image of Kuntsevych and establishing the Western art tradition there. The article focuses on two previously unknown and unconnected images of St. Josaphat, revealing the path of the martyr's images from Vilnius to Amsterdam.

2. Vilnian Images

Both Vilnius and Josaphat's fellow brethren played a crucial role in the case of Josaphat's sanctity. During the period between the end of the 16th century and the first quarter of the 17th century, Vilnius became a significant centre for printing and publishing within the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. It was in Vilnius that the first texts and images of importance to the martyr's canonization process were published, as was information about the crucial event itself – the martyr's death. Important parts of Josaphat's beatification process were the dossier of events and witnesses which related to him (his biography), and also an image of his *true* likeness – which was to be sent from the local area. It is the documents from this beatification dossier which are the primary source for researching the earliest images of Josaphat.³

First of all, it is worth making a mention of an image of Josaphat's *true* likeness – known as *Verus imago S. Josaphat Vilnensis* – which was preserved in the house of the Jesuit professors in Vilnius, but which has not survived to this day. It was widely discussed and published in the literature of the 19th and 20th centuries which appeared after Josaphat was declared a saint.⁴ In this portrait, Josaphat is depicted wearing monastic robes and a hood, and holding a crosier in one hand and with the palm of his other hand placed against his chest. Certain elements of the portrait – such as the expressive gesture of the hand and the facial features – bear similarities to elements in another one of the earliest and well-known images of the martyr: the graphic portrait of Josaphat. This graphic image was created in

3 *S. Josaphat Hieromartyr. Documenta Romana beatificationis et canonizationis*, vol. 1: 1623–1628, ed. Athanasius G. Welykyj, Romae: Sumptibus PP. Basilianorum, 1952.

4 T. Żychiewicz, 1986, s. 15.

Figure 1. Unknown engraver,
portrait of Josaphat Kuntsevych,
Archbishop of Polatsk, woodcut,
1624.

In: Lietuvos mokslų akademijos Vrublevskių bibliotekos Retų spaudinių skyrius (Wroblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, Rare Books Department), XVIII/101/10.



Vilnius (Figure 1), most likely, by following the earliest known prototype. This image was published together with the funeral sermon (translated into Polish) given by Lev Kreuza, which was delivered on 28 January 1624 in Polatsk Cathedral on the occasion of Josaphat's burial. The publication was printed as a book in Vilnius on 17 January 1625.⁵

What things are highlighted in this graphic woodcut portrait? The future saint is depicted as a high-ranking hierarch of the Church: he is wearing ornate liturgical garments and is shown with a mitre; he is also holding a shepherd's staff, i.e., a crosier. The features of the depicted Josaphat are as follows: dark complexion, black eyes, long hair, a beard, and a moustache. This distinctive portrait style was maintained later on when creating iconographic images of Josaphat, the blessed

5 Wawrzyniec Leon Kreuza-Rzewuski, *Kazanie o świętobliwym żywocie y chwalebney śmierci przewielebnego w Bodze oycy Iosaphata Kunczewicza, arcybiskupa połockiego, witebskiego y mscisławskiego w cerkwi cathedralney połockiej przy depozyciey ciała iego odprawowane...* [S. l., 1625], in: Lietuvos mokslų akademijos Vrublevskių bibliotekos Retų spaudinių skyrius [Wroblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, Rare Books Department], XVIII/101/10.

and saint. There is an important legend surrounding the 1625 portrait with its inscription: “*Josaphat Kuncewicz, Archiepiskop Połocki, Władyka Witebski, Mścisławski etc. etc. Dla iedności Cerkwi S. w Witebsku od nieposłusznych owiec okrutnie zamordowany w Roku 1623 Nowem[bra] 2*” (“Josaphat Kuntsevych, Archbishop of Polatsk, Vitsyebsk and Mstislavl eparchies. He was brutally murdered [in Vitsyebsk] by rebellious sheep on 2 November 1623, for the unity of the Church”). Attention should be given to the date, which we will return to later. One element confirms that the image was created following a model: the reversal of the hand holding the crozier. In the early Vilnian painting (a *true* likeness), Josaphat is holding the crozier in his left hand; while, in the graphic image, he is holding the crozier with his right hand. By directly copying and reproducing the image, everything is reversed according to the mirror principle.

Łepkowski thinks this is a technical error made by the engraver.⁶ I would suggest that this is merely evidence that the engraving was created based on an existing portrait of Josaphat, possibly following the aforementioned image of his *true* likeness known from the Jesuit portrait gallery in Vilnius. It can be said that a copy of Josaphat’s *true* likeness was created, and that it later became an important prototype for producing other images of Josaphat.

Another graphic work was created at that time, which was recently discovered in the Vasyl Stefanyk National Scientific Library of Ukraine in Lviv and published in an article by Volodymyr Alexandrovych⁷ (Figure 2). The description of the image indicates that it is from the Lubomirski collection, and the engraving style is noted as belonging to the Ukrainian school (with a question mark).⁸ However, given the printing styles of early 17th-century Vilnius, this image more closely aligns with the stylistics of the Vilnius art school and is similar to the work of an unknown engraver who was active in Vilnius during the early 17th century. It is a large-format woodcut, composed of two prints of different sizes, with inscriptions in Cyrillic.⁹ What is interesting here is that the inscriptions are in the language spoken by Josaphat himself, and which was used in the Church Liturgy. The engraving is composite, containing many significant elements, and provides an expanded depiction of Josaphat’s identity and his martyrdom. The main message about Josaphat is conveyed by the title of the carving: “*Ивасафат архиепископъ*

6 M. Łepkowski, 2008, s. 310.

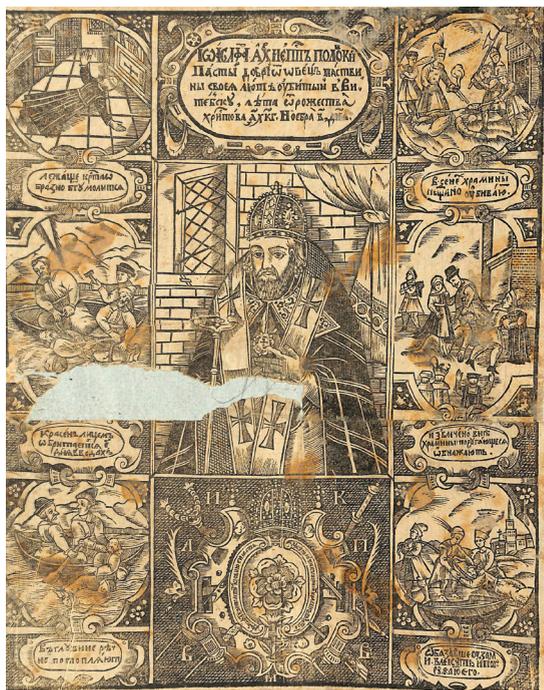
7 В. Александрович, 2023. I want to thank Ivan Almes for this reference.

8 Львівська національна наукова бібліотека України імені В. Стефаника [Vasyl Stefanyk National Scientific Library of Ukraine in Lviv] (hereinafter referred to as ЛННБУ), card index.

9 ЛННБУ, inv. nr. 59350.

Figure 2. Unknown engraver, portrait of Josaphat Kuntsevych, Archbishop of Polatsk, with a coat of arms and martyrdom scenes, woodcut, Vilnius, 1624.

Ін: 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-59350.



полоцки пастыр добрі Ѡ вѣць пастви/ны своєа лють оубитиИ в Ву/тебску, льта Ѡ рожества / Христова ѠАХКГ. Ноебра В, дна. (“Josaphat, Archbishop of Polatsk, the good shepherd, killed by his rebellious sheep in Vitsyebesk, on 2 November 1623, the year of Christ’s birth.”) The legend is very similar to that of the portrait discussed above, with the same, somewhat inaccurate, date for the martyr’s death. Specifically, the date is missing a ‘1’ to make it ‘12 November’. And it is this inaccuracy which allows us to establish a more precise sequence for the creation of the two carvings and to make assumptions about their creator. Comparing the two portraits, it is clear that they are two works of the same engraver: the faces are accurately replicated, there are evident similarities in the engraving technique, a consistent style, a clear combination of black and white spots, and an extensive use of texture and hatching. Both these engravings can be attributed to the same engraver who worked in Vilnius during the first half of the 17th century. The only difference is observed in the backgrounds of the engravings, behind the portraits: in one of the images, Josaphat is depicted in an interior, with a brick wall, an open

glazed window, and ornate curtains; it is the background of the interior of a palace or a more luxurious building. Whereas, in the other image, Josaphat is depicted against a neutral background (outdoors), as if *pulled* from a specific place and placed in a non-specific environment.

Returning again to the second image, preserved at the Vasyl Stefanyk National Scientific Library of Ukraine in Lviv, Archbishop Josaphat's family coat of arms, *Poraj* (also known as 'Rose'), is depicted at the bottom of the carving beneath the portrait of Josaphat. The coat of arms is incorporated into an expressive cartouche and supplemented with an inscription alluding to the figure who bears the coat of arms and his sufferings: "Цвѣтъ рожѣ въ терніи красенъ возрастаетъ Иосафатъ въ страстехъ кровію сіяетъ" ("The rose blooms beautifully among the thorns, Josaphat shines in his sufferings with blood"). In the decoration of the cartouche and inscription, the archbishop's attributes are arranged alongside numerous instruments of torture: an axe, clubs, and stones, at both the top and bottom of the cartouche. All of this symbolizes the meaning of a martyr's death on the path to eternal glory – and it is also an allusion to Christ's suffering and the crown of thorns.

Scenes of the martyrdom of Josaphat are depicted on both sides of the engraving. They narrate the storyline in a circular arrangement around the portrait by following a clockwise direction. Let us compare the scenes depicted in the engraving with the first known written source about the life and death of Josaphat. This work was prepared by Yoakhym Morokhovsky and Yosyf Rutsky Veliamyn, and published in both Latin and Polish *Relacia o zamordowaniu okrutnym...* (Zamość, 1624).¹⁰ The title of the book itself *A brief and correctly written REPORT ABOUT THE CRUEL MURDER OF Archbishop of Polotsk, honourable Father of God JOSAPHAT KUNTSEVYCH and on his extraordinary sanctity* indicates that the aim of the work was to emphasize Josaphat's murder and his holiness. The visual narrative begins with a prayer scene accompanied by the following inscription "Лежаще крестаобразно бг҃у молитсѧ" ("Lying in the shape of a cross, he prays to God"). This scene is described in some detail in the above-mentioned report by Morokhovsky and Rutsky Veliamyn: "Awakened by such cruel blows and the cries of his innocent members of the family, as if from a dream, from the prayers he was saying while lying prostrate on the ground in one of the inner rooms of

10 [Joachim Morochowski, Joseph Rutsky Veliamyn], RELACIA O ZAMORDOWANIU OKRUTNYM, y osobliwey Swiętobliwości w Bodze Wielebnego Oycа IOSAPHATA KUNCEWICZA Archiepiskopa Połockiego krotko a prawdziwie opisana, w Zamosciu: [Drukarnia Akademicka], 1624; *Pirmasis Juozapato Kuncevičiaus gyvenimo aprašymas*, 2023.

that house, with only one [member of the family] remaining with him, the bishop leaves the room and goes to the murderers. In order to evoke their pity for his innocent servants, he surrenders himself of his own free will to their fury.” The depicted scene can be understood as a sign of fidelity to Christ and His Church, emphasizing the importance of the servant of God’s sacrifice.

The second scene depicts the murder of the bishop: “*Въ сенех храмины/ нещадно оубивают*” (“On the porch of the palace, they mercilessly kill”). This event is described in detail in the report as well: “[H]aving completed the morning service, he returned home from church (since he intended to celebrate pontifical Mass that day), passing among his enemies: he was not even touched as he walked by them. But as soon as he stepped into the house, they attacked him with all their force. And then the bishop’s family defended themselves as best as they could, but they were outnumbered by the frenzied, large, and well-armed crowd, and they were forced to retreat. So, he first blessed them, and then addressed them with kind words: ‘Children’, he said, ‘why are you tormenting my servants, innocent people? If you have anything against me – here I am’. Everyone was stunned and refrained from the killings for a while, about as long as it takes, as they say, to say one ‘Our Father’. At that moment, no one standing around dared to speak or even move a hand. Finally, two of the sacrilegious parricides, having forced their way through the crowd, attacked, and, leaving everyone else behind, raised their hands against the bishop alone. One of them struck the bishop on the forehead above the eye with a scorched club, so that he, unable to remain on his feet, first fell against the wall and then to the floor. The second one then clove the holy head with a long-handled axe, commonly known as a bardiche. Finally, everyone else who was nearby stabbed and beat the bishop’s entire body with whatever weapons they had, especially his head, so that his face barely retained any human semblance. But that was not the end of the horrific cruelty, for, believing him to be dead, they withdrew their hands from him and redirected their fury toward others. Meanwhile, the bishop moved his hand, perhaps to make the sign of the cross, and with a faint, dying voice, uttered these three words: ‘Glory to you, Lord’. Seeing this, the wicked parricides immediately seized him a second time, dragged him from the porch into the courtyard, and there shot him twice in the head with pistol bullets. Then they savagely beat the holy body with clubs, which no longer felt the falling blows, as he had already breathed his last from the pistol shots”.¹¹ The scene, as

11 *Pirmasis Juozapato Kuncevičiaus gyvenimo aprašymas*, 2023, p. 117.

described in Morokhovskiy and Rutskiy's report, is quite accurately depicted in the engraving of Josaphat's death scene: he was killed with a long-handled axe and a club, and his head was shot through with pistol bullets.

The third storyline focuses on the events immediately after the Josaphat's murder, that is, the desecration of his body: *"Извлеченог вниъ/ храминны поругающеса/ обнажаютъ"* ("Dragged out of the palace, they mockingly strip him"). The text extract from Morokhovskiy and Rutskiy's description runs as follows: "Finally, after emptying the barrels, the drunken revellers hurried over and stripped the honourable body of all its clothes down to the hair shirt. Finding this instead of regular undergarments, they were very surprised and began to doubt whether they had killed the bishop or some other monk".¹² In the engraving, the figures of the non-believers (identifiable by their clothing and hats) are used in depicting this scene. The action of carrying the bishop's stolen clothes and shoes reveals their greed. The image also points to one of the first signs of the martyr's holiness – the hair shirt he wore under his clothes, which later became an important relic attesting to Josaphat's miracles.

The fourth scene begins the story of the hiding of the desecrated body in water: *"Облазбше оузам/и влекуть и пог/рүжают его"* ("Bound with ropes, they drag and load him [into the boat]"). This is the detailed description in the report: "Afterward, [...] having descended to the bank of the Dvina River, where the body of the murdered bishop lay discarded, they dragged it from there and placed it in a boat. Not content with any ordinary depth of the river, they transported it to the place they knew to be the deepest. Tying a hair shirt around his neck, which they had previously filled with stones like a sack, and attaching a large stone to his feet, they drowned him to ensure that no one could ever retrieve the drowned body from there".¹³ The fifth scene seemingly concludes the story of the desecrated body being submerged in the deepest part of the river, also known as the Holy Well: *"Въ глубине рѣчи/не потопляют"* ("They sink it in the depths of the river").¹⁴

The sixth scene, *"Красенъ лицемъ/ обрѣтается ѿ/ дна в водахъ"* ("Found five days later in the water with a beautiful face"), encompasses the climax of the event and the crucial sixth day, when "on the sixth day after the sinking it was retrieved". A broader textual description helps to better understand the story: "City council officials and other devout men showed great diligence, spending five full

¹² Ibid., p. 119.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ M. Krečunas, 2023, p. 81.

days trying to find the body of the man of God. And since they themselves did not clearly know the location, they seized those who had been involved in the sinking and searched diligently. However, even in this way, they could not find it until, as the story and many witnesses recount, the location was revealed by a miraculous light rising from the water like a flash of lightning. Therefore, to the eternal confusion of the schismatics and to the comfort and joy of the Catholics, on the sixth day after the sinking, the body was retrieved and honourably laid to rest by the city council in the stone church of the castle [...]. The body pulled out of the Dvina was even more beautiful than when it was alive, radiant with a rosy hue and pleasant to look at. This extraordinary transformation drew everyone's eyes and moved them to tears."¹⁵ The plot and its inscription emphasize the duration of the search, specifically, five days, and the beauty of the martyr's face. The beauty of the martyr's face was also testified to by Ivan Dyagilevich: "I saw with my own eyes, along with the officials of Polatsk Castle, the face of Josaphat, which was like that of an angel, more pleasant and beautiful than when he was alive (though he was always handsome and pleasant), as if joy radiated from his heart because he had attained the martyr's crown"¹⁶

Thus, the six illustrations depict the martyr's death: from prayer and devotion to God, through his death, the hiding of his body, and its discovery in the water when the location is miraculously illuminated. The visual narrative and the short plot sentences very accurately reflect the written account, providing a brief retelling of the event and forming the necessary dossier for the murdered St. Josaphat. In other words, the engraving provides a complete set of elements needed to represent him: a portrait with an inscription/legend; a coat of arms with initials and a cartouche decorated with the symbols of martyrdom; and six scenes depicting the martyrdom itself, each with brief summaries and annotations of the event in Cyrillic. The engraving is a condensation of the written report, highlighting the key points which inform the viewer about the individual and the circumstances of his martyrdom. It is associated with the earliest informational prints (*Relatio, oratio*, etc.), which served the function of reporting and providing new information. It can be said that this is one of the first developed visual reports on the martyrdom of Josaphat, the bishop of Polatsk, to have included explanatory texts in Cyrillic, which would have been understandable to the local people and the illiterate.

15 Ibid., p. 123–124.

16 Ibid, p. 86.

Volodymyr Alexandrovych believes that this engraving is an independent version based on an earlier, original image.¹⁷ I would not agree with this theory. It seems that the engraving and the text are closely matched.

Another theory worth proposing is that the text and the visual narratives are identical, created to communicate the story of the event as quickly as possible. This engraving seemingly emphasizes the inevitability of the martyr's death before the forthcoming beatification process. As early as in 1623, documents and witness testimonies began to be collected to expedite the initiation of the beatification process. Thus, the engraving in question is more likely an original image reflecting a *true* portrait of Josaphat, testifying to his death as a servant of God, and it forms a kind of material representation of his martyrdom. It had to have been created with the deliberate intent of shaping and preparing material for the beatification case.

It is also worth noting that portrait depictions of specific individuals surrounded by illustrations of events from their life and death were popular in Western art iconography. Such portrait paintings with scenes of life and miracles were also created for other saints of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania; for example, a hagiographic image dedicated to St. Casimir, created by the engraver Peter Overradt and printed in a cycle of engravings titled *Images and Miracles of the Saints of Poland*,¹⁸ which was published in Cologne; also, in 1650, Jacobus Laurus created an image of St. Casimir as a warrior, accompanied with scenes from his life, and an image of Blessed Michał Giedroyc, surrounded by eight scenes from his life, one scene of his death, and a coat of arms.¹⁹ It was in Vilnius, where the canon of art in the Western tradition was much stronger than in the East, that the image of St. Joseph could have been created in a way which was appropriate to the tradition.

3. The Beatification Case and the Portrait

At the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries, the iconography of the new saints which appeared at this time began to gain popularity in the Catholic Church, based not only on the saints' attributes but also on their *true* likeness. This trend was encour-

17 В. Александрович, 2023, с. 68.

18 *Icones et miracula sanctorum Poloniae*, Coloniae: Peter Overradt excudit, 1605–1606, access online: http://pauart.pl/app/artwork?id=BGR_035006_10.

19 The copper engraving created by the artist Jan Szczyrski, who worked in Vilnius, was published in J. Liškevičienė, 2015, p. 454.

aged by the many notable reformers of the Catholic Church. For example, in his postulates, Carlo Borromeo recommended that all those who created icons aim for the principle of *veritas historica* in religious art.²⁰ When creating the image of a new saint, it was a requirement that it would match the saint's real appearance; thus, a request was made for such an image to be sent from the place where the person lived and acted. In this way, the appearance of the person, his/her physiognomic particularities and his/her characteristic features, became another important aspect of the *vera effigia* image of the saint.

Josaphat was one of the first personalities in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania to be placed on altars after the Council of Trent, and so his image was created according to the same principle as that of other newly canonized saints. Therefore, the development of his iconography could have been greatly influenced by portraits which held the status of *true likenesses*. After Josaphat's death, it was necessary to quickly attend to an image of his *true* likeness. This is evidenced by the beatification materials. It is known that, in a letter sent from Rome on 4 May 1624, there was a discussion about the "possibility of reassigning the case and the necessary instructions to begin examining the life and death case of the Archbishop of Polatsk".²¹ It was particularly important to investigate the cause of his death. The letter also requested that an image of the aforementioned archbishop be sent as soon as possible, since "the congregation felt it would be better not to let this fact fade into oblivion, as the circumstances and accompanying attributes deserved to be revealed to the entire Church".²²

It is clear that urgent attention should have been given to this matter. On 16 September 1624, Metropolitan Yosyf Rutsky Veliamyn wrote the following in a letter to Rome: "the painting has already been painted and will be sent to the Council of Warsaw for transmission to Rome".²³ However, the transportation of the portrait to Rome was delayed for unknown reasons, and it was only on 1 December 1624 that Rutsky Veliamyn confirmed that the portrait of St. Josaphat had finally been delivered through the Vilnius canon and Brest suffragan Marcjan Tryzna.²⁴ The correspondence between Rutsky Veliamyn and Rome mainly took place from Vilnius, and it is most likely that the painted image came from Vilnius as well. In

20 M. Łepkowski, 2008, s. 303.

21 S. *Josaphat Hieromartyr*, 1952, p. 41.

22 Ibid.

23 Ibid, p. 55.

24 Ibid, p. 56.

this same Vilnius, other necessary materials were also taken care of, such as the translation of Josaphat's funeral sermon into Polish and Latin. It is no coincidence that the aforesaid translation of Kreuzza's sermon was accompanied by the first of the woodcut portraits of Josaphat mentioned above. This portrait could have been a copy of the painted portrait being sent to Rome, and which later became a prototype for his other images. However, Polish researchers, on the basis of surviving documents, have concluded that the image intended for beatification was created in Polatsk between May and September 1624 and then sent to Rome. Andrzej Gil even speculates that it may have been produced in the studios of Polatsk artists.²⁵

It is undeniable that the image with scenes from the martyr's life discussed earlier was later important in shaping the design of the place for Josaphat's tomb and his cult in Polatsk Cathedral. The 1637 visitation record for Polatsk Cathedral reveals that the martyr's tomb was adorned with two images: a full-length portrait of Josaphat and an image of him lying (deceased). The first portrait was surrounded with scenes from the martyr's life and martyrdom, along with the coat of arms of the Kuntsevych family, *Poraj*, depicted above it. One of these life scenes showed the body being thrown into the Dvina River.²⁶ These elements would only go to support the idea that the portrait with the *vita* cycle discussed above could also have been a prototype for the image painted by the later artist.

4. The Unknown Vilnius Woodcarver from the Early 17th Century

The question is who could have commissioned a work of this nature. Of course, we should first of all look to the Voivode of Vilnius and Polatsk, Lew Sapieha, the main organizer of the trial of Josaphat's murderers, whose name is also found in the following written source: "Thus, selected judges are appointed and given full authority, men who have distinguished themselves for piety, wisdom, and honour, with the foremost among them being the illustrious Lord Lew Sapieha, Voivode of Vilnius, who is a hero worthy of all praise on account of the services he has rendered to the Republic and to the Church of God"²⁷

He was concerned not only with the investigation of the crime, but could also have initiated the promotion of the event and the sanctity of the person involved. He

25 A. Gil, 2005.

26 A. Młodzianovskis, 2015, p. 455.

27 *Pirmasis Juozapato Kuncevičiaus gyvenimo aprašymas*, 2023, p. 135.

was also concerned with the printing of texts and, undoubtedly, had to turn to the famous Leon Mamonich Printing House in Vilnius – notably, the main publisher of legal texts in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania – which he had already collaborated with in publishing the printing house's most significant publication in Slavonic: *The Third Statute of Lithuania* (1588).²⁸ Sapieha took care of the preparation and printing of this book and became the main patron of the Leon Mamonich Printing House. Leon Mamonich often referred to Sapieha simply as the 'chief patron of the printing house'. Under the direction of Mamonich, and with the approval of Sapieha, books were printed to fulfil the needs of the young Uniate Church. Vilnius University Library's collection of Cyrillic publications includes nine editions from this printing house.²⁹

Thus, we can confidently assume that it was indeed Sapieha's initiative which led to the creation of the first significant graphic works documenting the event of Josaphat's martyrdom. Moreover, at that time, Vilnius was home to a professional woodcut artist who could create portraits, and who had produced several illustrations for different printing houses in Vilnius. One of his more notable works is a print dedicated to the Grand Hetman Jan Karol Chodkiewicz, featuring four woodcut illustrations intended to honour the builder of a church and to commemorate the construction of the Jesuit church in Kražiai.³⁰ The distinctive treatment of figures and the use of the black colour and ornamentation are related to the carving style used in the woodcut portrait in question. A similar engraving style was used in the illustrations for prints from the Mamonich Printing House and Vilnius Jesuit Academy.³¹

Let us compare several prints published at around the same time. One of these is the stemma of Hieronim Wołłowicz, printed in a commemorative collection of greetings.³² Its exclusiveness lies in the hanging draperies depicted in the corners,

28 In 1614, the printer Leon Mamonich was granted the title of the Royal Typographer with the right to print official state documents in Ruthenian (Cyrillic) and Polish. During the second half of the 16th century and in the early 17th century, the Mamonich Printing House was the main publisher of legal texts in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

29 I. Kažuro, 2013, p. 57.

30 [Matthias Casimirus Sarbievius], *Sacra Lithothesis in prima templi, Magnae Virgini Matri dedicata, erectione a patribus collegii Crosensis Societatis Iesu... liberalitate... Ioannis Caroli Chodkiewicz... fundati auspicio celebrata, ab eiusdem collegii Chodkieviciani studiosa iuventute descripta... et oblata*, Vilnae: typ. Acad. S. I., 1621. For more details about the illustrations in this book, see J. Liškevičienė, 2005.

31 *Vilniaus universiteto bibliotekos kirilikos leidinių kolekcija*, 2013.

32 *Gratulationes novo Samogitiae capitaneo, illustris. & Mag. Domino d. Hieronymo Wolowicz Ma-*

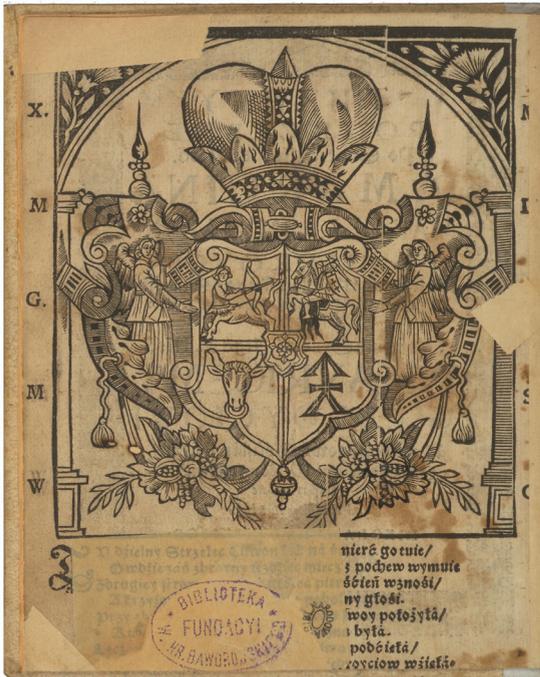


Figure 3. Unknown engraver, stemma of the Governor of Ukmergė and Voivode of Mstislavl, Marcin Marcel Giedroyć.

In: Mykolai Rybinski, *Threny pogrzebne po smierci Jeg. X. Msci p. Marcina Marcela Dowmanta Giedroycia, woiwody Mscislawskiego [...]*, W Wilnie, 1621. Biblioteka Narodowa (National Library of Poland), SD XVII. 3.5790.

which resonate with the above-mentioned portrait with the *vita* cycle. The distinctive feature of this engraving is the broken cartouche with curves. Similarly engraved stemmas can be seen in another Vilnius print. This print is a funeral sermon dedicated to the Prince and Governor of Ukmergė, and Voivode of Mstislavl, Marcin Marcel Giedroyć (1545–1621).³³ It is illustrated with five woodcuts, the most ornate of which is the quartered coat of arms with the Giedroyć ‘Rose’ in the centre, printed on the reverse side of the title page. It is set within an arch-shaped architectural frame and is held by shield-holding angels who are depicted with small heads but large hands. These figures are analogous to the human figures shown in the scenes depicting Bishop Josaphat (Figure 3). Thus, Vilnius was home

gni Ducatus Lithuaniae Procancellario; Upitensi, Szaulensi, Poiurensi, Gondigensi, Rudnicensi &c. &c. Capiteo &c &c a Nobili Studiosa Iuventute Gymnasij Chodkieviciani Crosensis Societatis Iesu, oblatae, Vilnae in Typographeo Acad. Soc. Iesu, 1618. The stemma of Hieronim Wołłowicz was published in Ź. Nedzinskaitė, 2019, p. 129.

³³ Mikolai Rybinski, *Threny pogrzebne po smierci Jeg. X. Msci p. Marcina Marcela Dowmanta Giedroycia, woiwody Mscislawskiego...*, W Wilnie, 1621.

to a wood engraver with a distinctive artistic style, who decorated a number of Vilnius prints from the first quarter of the 17th century. We can see at least a few engravings of this style in the publications of the Mamonich Printing House. A print featuring a decorated frontispiece with the Sapieha family's coat of arms and woodcut portraits of King David and the evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, is characterized by a similar engraving style.³⁴ The print of the portrait of Josaphat is thus part of the artistic tradition of Vilnius prints at that time.

Even more would likely have been done for the Uniate Church in Vilnius had it not been for the death of Leon Mamonich, the main manager of the Mamonich Printing House in 1625; this also marked the end of the glorious fifty-year history of this printing house.³⁵ The translation of Kreuza's sermon, mentioned above, can thus be considered this printing house's last work, although the name of the publisher is not indicated on it. Later, the tradition of Uniate publications was continued by the newly established and successfully operated Basilian Monastery Printing House in Vilnius.³⁶

5. The Promotion of Josaphat's Portrait in Amsterdam

Finally, it is worth mentioning another well-known image of Josaphat, created by the Amsterdam artist, and renowned publisher and printer Claes Jansz Visscher (1587–1652), who is known for his excellent copper engravings.³⁷ It was him who was commissioned to create not only the image of Josaphat the Martyr, but also the image of another, more recently canonized saint, Prince Casimir.³⁸ Obviously, the client must have been a wealthy person in a position of authority (Was it the same Lew Sapieha?). The images of these two saints of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania were created directly from, and based on, the previously discussed Vilnius wood-

34 *Новый Завет и Псалтирь. Новый завет господа нашего Исуса Христа...*, В Вилне, 1623. See the description in *Vilniaus universiteto bibliotekos kirilikos leidinių kolekcija*, 2013, nr. 128, p. 261.

35 T. Iljaszewicz, 1939.

36 I. Kažuro, 2019.

37 F. W. H. Hollstein, 1991, p. 199.

38 See illustrations: Friedrich Wilhelm Heinrich Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish etchings, engravings, and woodcuts, ca. 1450–1700*, t: 38: *Claes Jansz Visscher to Claes Claesz Visscher II (Nicolae Vis-scher II): Text*, comp. Christiaan Schuckman, ed. Dieuwke de Hoop Scheffer, Roosendaal: Koninklijke van Poll, 1991, il. 121, p. 197; il. 91, p. 193.



Figure 4. Portrait of Josaphat Kuntsevych.

In: Jan Danckaert, *Beschryvinge van Moscovien ofte Ruslandt, verhalende der volckeren rechten, godtsdienst, leven en gewoonte der geestelijcke en wereltlijcke personen...*, Amsterdam: gedrukt Gillis Joosten Saeghman, 1665, p. 5. Universiteitsbibliotheek Utrecht (Utrecht University Library), T qu 230 (Rariora) dl 1-13.

cuts, which undoubtedly had to be sent from Vilnius and physically transported to Amsterdam. We would not be mistaken in saying that they were used as a reference for creating copper engravings, as Josaphat's same gestures, symbolism, and clothing are repeated, and the same texts in Polish and Latin (in the legend and cartouche) were transferred. When transferring the texts, the same mistake regarding the date of Josaphat's death – notably, 2 November – was repeated. These works were of a significantly higher artistic level (matching the European art canon of the time) compared to the previously discussed ones produced in Vilnius (which are noted for a certain local amateurism).

Another unexpected image of Josaphat is printed in a book by the Dutch diplomat Jan Danckaert, which describes the Principality of Muscovy.³⁹ In one chapter which discusses religion, the Metropolitan of Kyiv, Josaphat Kuntsevych, is

39 Jan Danckaert, *Beschryvinge van Moscovien ofte Ruslandt, verhalende der volckeren rechten, godtsdienst, leven en gewoonte der geestelijcke en wereltlijcke personen.* [...], Amsterdam: Gedrukt Gillis Joosten Saeghman, 1665.

mentioned, and his portrait, as a copper engraving, is printed (Figure 4).⁴⁰ Comparing this with the aforementioned portrait by Visscher, we can see that it quite accurately replicates the first copper engraving, but it has a distinctive feature as it is without the inscriptions around the portrait and has a completely different engraving for the bishop's mitre. An interesting fact is as follows: in Russian literature, this image is identified as the portrait of the Orthodox metropolitan Daniel.⁴¹ This mistake was introduced by a researcher of old images, Dmitrij Rovinskij, when publishing a gallery of portraits of famous Russian figures (actually, this error has been repeated by many other researchers).⁴² It should be noted that both copper engravings show a significantly high level of artistic quality and conform to the canon of Western European professional art of that time.

6. Summary and Brief Conclusions

To sum up, from the study of the early engravings, we can infer the following sequence for the discussed works: first, in 1624, an image was created depicting the scenes of Josaphat's death with inscriptions in Cyrillic; this was followed by a portrait also created in 1624 but printed at the very beginning of 1625 in the book containing the funeral sermon by Lev Kreuza; later, this portrait served as a model for the Amsterdam artist Claes Jansz Visscher, who, following the inscription, repeated the same erroneous date for Josaphat's death. The portrait created in Amsterdam has two versions: a portrait with inscriptions, and a portrait in a book without any inscriptions. All of these form a group of Vilnius images which have many similarities and which followed the one *true* portrait of Josaphat which once resided in Vilnius.

Vilnius, as the capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, brought together a multilingual community and artisans from various professions. They created visual documents with inscriptions in three languages (Ruthenian, Polish, and Latin), which were later used in the beatification process of the new Ruthenian martyr.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 5.

⁴¹ The portrait is indicated as being from the first edition: Jan Danckaert, *Beschryvinge van Moscovien ofte Ruslant: gestelt in twee deelen*, Amsterdam: Broer Jansz., 1615. Josaphat's portrait could not have been included in this book, as the book was published in 1615, when Josaphat had not yet become an archbishop.

⁴² *Материалы для русской иконографии*, 1884, ил. 91.

Thus, it is reasonable to assume that not only the portrait but also the engraving depicting Josaphat's life and death events with inscriptions in Cyrillic could have been produced in Vilnius. This is supported by the visual similarity of the engravings. The capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was an important place for the Uniates, and the Holy Trinity Sanctuary was not only one of the centres of the Kyivan Uniate Metropolitanate but also a specific space related to Josaphat's life and activities.

The early prints discussed here are important visual documents which not only testify to the appearance of the martyr but also convey information about the Uniate martyr himself. These images became a starting point for the later iconography of Josaphat and the development of his cult.

On the one hand, the graphic image was a reproduction of a painting, while, on the other hand, it became an intermediary and aid in creating other images. In the provided material, we can see how repeating one image serves as the basis for other works of art. The woodcut portrait printed in Kreuza's sermon became a reference example for the copper engraving by the Amsterdam artist and printer Visscher.

The early painted image and the other examined graphic portraits, along with the features of the Uniate martyr's appearance, clothing, mitre, and instruments of martyrdom depicted in them, became recurring elements in the iconography of later portraits of Josaphat. Thus, Vilnius became one of the early centres for the development, along with the artworks created there, of the *true* image of Josaphat.

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