



MAKING THE SAINT

The Canonization Procedure during the Confessional Age: The Beatification of Josaphat Kuntsevych in 1643 as a Success Story in Times of Reform

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Summary. The fact that Josaphat Kuntsevych was only beatified in 1643 rather than canonized, which only occurred much later, was, and still is, considered a disappointment by many. Placed in the context of the longer-term developments in the Roman canonization policy, however, the beatification of Kuntsevych in 1643 can certainly be seen as a success. To illustrate this point, the chapter outlines the general framework in which the efforts to canonize Josaphat took place. The centralization of decision making in Rome, bureaucratization, and juridification, but also the need to accept regional diversity – these were the tendencies that shaped the canonization process and its regulation during the first decades of the 17th century. A look at the figures makes it clear how low the chances of canonization, or even beatification, actually were during these decades. Nevertheless, Josaphat’s advocates succeeded in setting the beatification process in motion very quickly; their rapid success could only have been achieved at the expense of the still-new regulations issued by Pope Urban VIII. In light of these findings, this question should be reversed – it is the reasons for the success of the year 1643 campaign, regarding Poland, the Church Union of Brest, but it is also the image policy of the Barberini family, which deserve our attention.

Keywords: Roman Curia; canonization policy; Congregation of Rites; Barberini; Josaphat Kuntsevych.

The fact that Josaphat Kuntsevych was only beatified in 1643 rather than canonized, which occurred only much later, was, and still is, considered a disappointment by many, starting with those who initiated the process in the 17th century and echoing down through the ages to today’s scholars.¹ In light of developments in

¹ As explicitly stated in K. Jobst, 2012, p. 7: “Finally, in 1643, twenty years after his death, Josaphat was beatified. After the concerted campaign for his canonization by Polish kings, aristocrats, and Catholic bishops of both confessions, this was a very disappointing result”.

Rome at the time, however, things could have turned out very differently. In fact, the beatification of Josaphat in 1643 could certainly be seen as a success if it is placed in the context of the longer-term developments in the Roman canonization policy. To illustrate this point, I would like to outline the general framework in which the efforts to canonize Josaphat took place. Insightful contributions which have been made by other experts on the specific steps and debates surrounding the beatification of 1643 and the canonization of 1867 are undoubtedly needed to supplement this point. But, perhaps, it is useful to first consider the basic features and trends of the Roman canonization policy, and this is exactly what the present article intends to do. The paper concentrates on Rome's perspective and on the decades surrounding 1600, i.e., the period in which the canonization process took on its modern form. The focus will be on the decrees of the pope who beatified Josaphat, notably, Pope Urban VIII.

The starting point of the overview is, however, the crisis in canonizations in the wake of the Protestant Reformation. By then, the papacy had, over a centuries-long process, succeeded in establishing canonization in the Latin Church as the pope's exclusive privilege on behalf of the Curia. Above all, this overrode the claims of local bishops, who had played a literally decisive role in this field in earlier centuries.² However, the procedure itself was certainly subject to criticism, and the forms of veneration of those people considered holy often escaped Roman control. This criticism could no longer be ignored when Benno of Meissen was canonized alongside Antoninus of Florence in 1523. Martin Luther was now able to direct his biting criticism of the Roman practice at the 'idol of Meissen' (*der 'Abgott zu Meissen'*). The further course of the Protestant Reformation demonstrated how vulnerable the cult of the saints had become.³

2 On the procedure and its development from a legal perspective, see M. Sieger, 1995. On the role of local bishops and synods during the early period, see, for example, the brief overview offered by U. Marckhoff, 2002, S. 24–30; for a more detailed account, see R. Klauser, 1954. The first canonization by a pope was carried out by John XV in 993 for Ulrich of Augsburg: "It was no longer a liturgy but a legal procedure" which led to canonization, as A. Angenendt, 1994, S. 180, concludes. After the pope was repeatedly asked to perform this act and thus give it greater weight, Alexander III (d. 1181) declared canonization a papal privilege in the decree *Audivimus*, which was included in Gregory IX's collection of decrees published as a code of law in 1234 and thus definitively anchored in Canon Law. This process of monopolization went hand in hand with further juridification: "The canonistics of the 13th and 14th centuries then developed a very detailed canonization procedure using well-known institutions of the canonical process, which remained decisive for the coming centuries"; see H.-J. Becker, 1994, S. 60.

3 On this criticism, see the overview in U. Köpf, 1990.

Rome reacted to the crisis by suspending further canonizations for the next few decades. It would take until 1588 for the Curia to return to this instrument, which today seems to us – perhaps a little too naturally – to be the ideal weapon for confessional confrontation. Evidently, Rome had grown aware that making saints could harm the Catholic cause. In any case, canonizations had to be better managed and monitored than before, and this was precisely the aim of the measures taken from 1588 onwards in order to overcome the crisis in canonization.⁴ The year 1588 not only saw the elevation to sainthood of Diego of Alcalà and thus the first canonization since 1523,⁵ but it also marked the appearance of the Congregation of Rites, the authority which would henceforth be responsible for examining all canonization procedures.⁶ The Congregation of Rites was not founded in isolation; rather, it was embedded in a fundamental reform of the Curia and thus part of a trend which can be described as the bureaucratization of the papal rule in both secular and ecclesiastical matters. In 1588, Pope Sixtus V established a whole system totalling 15 congregations with his great reform of the Curia. These collegial, central authorities were responsible for specific areas: nine of them took care of the administration of the Papal States, while the remaining six congregations were responsible for the affairs of the universal Church. Some of these already existed at the time of the reform, such as the Inquisition, which had been founded in 1542. Other congregations joined later, some only for a short time. The Congregation of Rites can be found as *Congregatio pro sacris ritibus et caeremoniis* on the list of the 1588-dated reform bull. Due to the great demand for its services, after only a few years, this Congregation was divided into two departments: one concerned with the Liturgy and the ceremonies held at the papal court, whereas the other, still called the Congregation of Rites, dealt with canonizations.

With this differentiation, the institutional reorganization of the canonization process was complete. In the Congregation of Rites, the Curia's canonization policy had found its institutional home, that is, until the next reform in 1969. What stood out even more, however, was the precise regulation of the procedure. Thus, the canonizations during the early years of the Congregation certainly showed continuities with the medieval procedures.⁷ In the years around 1600, however, the development of a new procedure can be observed, which finally took shape

4 For a focus on the early modern period and a broader contextualization, see S. Ditchfield, 2007.

5 For more background information, see J. A. Villalon, 1997, p. 712–713.

6 On the activities of this authority during the first decades of its existence, see G. Papa, 2001.

7 See S. Ditchfield, 2007, p. 207 as well as the detailed study by R. Finucane, 2002.

with the comprehensive codification of the new regulations in Pope Urban VIII's brief *Caelestis Ierusalem cives* of 5 July 1634.

The shape of the new canonization procedure, which remained in force in this form until 1983, also reflected a number of more general trends, i.e., lines of development which not only affected the canonization policy, but also the entire Curia and which can be considered typical of the papacy of the confessional age. One of these trends was the juridification of procedures. Of course, the canonization procedure was and is by its very nature a canonical 'process', consisting of two sub-processes: in the *informative process*, on the ground, the local bishop, on behalf of the pope, checks whether the conditions for canonization have been met. Here, information is obtained about the life, virtues, or martyrdom of the candidates, while a determination is also made as to whether they actually have a reputation for holiness. Once these preliminary investigations have been completed, the documents of this process are sealed and sent to Rome, and all the powers of the local bishop in this matter thus expire. The second sub-process, the *apostolic process*, brings the Curia into play. This essentially consists of reviewing the documents from the informative process. First of all, the authenticity of the submitted files is checked, then the content of the statements is analysed. This is carried out by a whole host of experts, from the expected theologians and lawyers, to textual-critic historians and, more recently, medical doctors, whose purpose is to examine miraculous healings.

The basic features of the canonical process from earlier times have not changed to this day. However, what can be observed occurring during the 17th century was the increasing involvement of qualified jurists in matters of canonization. Auditors from the Roman Rota played a role in several stages of the process. These experienced judges examined documents, compiled catalogues of questions on behalf of the Congregation of Rites, and, in the end, also wrote the *Relatio*, i.e., a report on both the person and the procedure which would later form the basis for the saints' official *vitae*. As part of the procedural steps in which the Congregation of Rites communicated its decisions and recommendations to the outside world, there were also consistorial lawyers, that is, top Roman jurists who were by no means necessarily clergymen. And, of course, the final decision was not up to the Congregation, but the pope, as the supreme judge of the Church.

The processes occurring within the Congregation of Rites also became increasingly judicial. This can be seen in the emergence of the office of *Promotor fidei*, which became mandatory from 1631. The office is better known as *Advocatus diaboli*:

as with a public prosecutor, this member of the Congregation of Rites had to search for errors, contradictions, and weaknesses in the arguments for canonization, and only when all doubts had been resolved could the canonization finally take place.

This juridification of both the personnel and the procedure underlines Rome's desire to make truly *watertight* decisions and only elevate candidates to the honour of the altars who met the ideals of the Tridentine Church in every respect. It was no coincidence that all of this took place in close cooperation with the Inquisition: on the one hand, many a candidate for canonization turned out, in the eyes of Rome, to be an impostor, whose further fate was the responsibility of the Inquisition. On the other hand, and above all, questions of sainthood went hand in hand with forms of veneration which often fell into a grey area and required constant scrutiny.

The core of the problem was the premature veneration of a person who had not yet received Rome's stamp of approval, which brings us to what was arguably the greatest challenge the Curia faced in reorganizing the canonization process. There was no shortage of interested parties campaigning for certain candidates: from the resumption of canonizations in 1588, the number of canonization campaigns increased rapidly. Dynasties, cities, religious orders, all wanted a saint of their own whom they could regard as a symbol of their country or group and whom they could invoke as their patron saint. The political needs of state-building played just as much a role here as the search for symbols in confessional conflicts or competition between religious orders. Accordingly, the group of petitioners was diverse, and the number of supplications for individual candidates which arrived in Rome almost daily, was correspondingly large.

All of these candidates already enjoyed a certain level of veneration. The fact that they had the 'odour' of sanctity was one of the prerequisites for canonization. However, the boundary between reputation and full cultic veneration as *genuine, true* saints was often crossed before Rome had even dealt with the case. It was precisely the *beati moderni* – the individuals with the odour of sanctity, who had only just died but were already venerated and who were usually referred to as *beati* – who posed problems for the Roman Curia.⁸ If the papacy wanted to effectively assert its decision-making power over canonization, it had to put an end to such unauthorized beatifications *from below*. But how was the pressure from the various interest groups, from religious orders to royal courts, to be dealt with? And, above all, how to deal with public cults which lacked papal dispensation? In order to clarify

8 Simon Ditchfield has described in detail how the Curia dealt with the problem of these *beati moderni* and the many steps towards and forms of their veneration, see S. Ditchfield, 2010.

precisely these questions, Pope Clement VIII established another congregation in November 1602: the *Congregazione dei Beati*, or the Congregation of the Blessed.⁹

Interestingly, of the 17 cardinals who initially belonged to the Congregation of the Blessed, only one came from the Congregation of Rites. On the other hand, eight belonged to the Holy Office and two more to the Congregation of the Index. Accordingly, the Congregation's regulations focused on questions of what was allowed to be said, shown, and done – and what was not. The spotlight of criticism was on all measures which could be described as being piecemeal approaches to sainthood. At this time, the practice was still widespread: the promoters of a cult would try to advance the cause of their candidate by providing him or her with the appropriate attributes and symbols. In the Curia, however, there was a growing opposition to this traditional *canonizzazione pittorica* (pictorial canonization).¹⁰ Peter Paul Rubens, for example, had to rework his altarpiece of Filippo Neri, which the Oratorians had commissioned him to paint (1606–1608). He had portrayed Neri as a saint in a way which was a little too evocative, especially for someone who – at the time – had not yet been officially canonized.¹¹ The control over textual production at the time was equally strict. Quite a few authors had to reprint the *vitae* of their candidates, or at least change all those passages where they had described the venerated persons as blessed or even saints before they had been officially recognized as such.¹²

These regulations certainly had an effect: every change or additional detail with regard to the veneration of a candidate now had to have a request submitted to Rome to be legitimized. Clement's successor on the throne of St. Peter, Pope Paul V, was particularly determined to observe the rules with the utmost precision.¹³ However, it was not until Pope Urban VIII that a definite solution was found to replace the multitude of detailed regulations and thus make the Congregation of the Blessed superfluous.

As is well known, the Barberini pope brought the development of the modern canonization process to a certain completion with his great brief, *Caelestis Ierusalem cives*, of 1634. Of course, Urban VIII built on the provisions of his

9 For a detailed analysis, see the foundational study by M. Gotor, 2002.

10 See G. Papa, 2001, p. 285.

11 See R. S. Noyes, 2018.

12 One example from the pontificate of Paul V is mentioned in T. Mörschel, 2002, S. 325–326, see esp. note 12.

13 See B. Emich, 2024, p. 75.

predecessors, which the bull summarized. What he personally contributed to this package, however, were clear regulations against the proliferation of unsanctioned local cults. The 1624 decree *Per decem annos* stipulated that, henceforth, a term of ten years had to have elapsed between the conclusion of the first local procedure conducted by a bishop and the opening of an Apostolic Process in Rome. In 1627, the so-called 50-year-rule was added, which prescribed that discussions could be opened on the question of whether or not the requirements of martyrdom (or, in cases without martyrdom, sufficient heroic virtues) had been met only half a century after the death of the potential saint. The most important decree in those crucial years was the *super non cultu* decree of 1625. It explicitly spelled out the goal of the Barberini pontificate's regulatory zeal within this context. Henceforth, only those saints could be elevated to the honour of the altars who had been liturgically venerated on site from times immemorial (i.e., for more than 100 years), 'or not at all'.¹⁴ This provision obviously targeted the still-widely-diffused practice of introducing, essentially overnight, a cult for those with the odour of sanctity who had recently died, and then exerting pressure on Roman decision-makers with a thus-crafted *fait accompli*. Urban VIII's measures put a definitive end to similar practices: in one stroke, the decree *de non cultu* transformed the regional veneration of candidate saints from a pressing argument for canonization into a compelling reason for exclusion.

These changes, however, did not solve a further problem, which was another of the general issues facing the papacy during the confessional age: the tension between the central claim to a monopoly and regional needs. For behind the numerous requests arriving in Rome, and behind the local cults which were successful even without Rome's approval, there were generally a set of unfulfilled needs, and it was irrelevant whether they were politically or personally, denominationally, or spiritually based. What mattered to Rome was the necessity of taking such regional interests and peculiarities into consideration. Of course, not all candidates would actually be canonized. In order to preserve the exclusivity of the title, a strict selection had to be made; but, on the other hand, Rome had to cater to the religious

14 See the concise overview in U. Marckhoff, 2002, S. 33, which very aptly speaks of 'safety mechanisms' (*Sicherheitsmechanismen*) used to curb uncontrolled worship. The corresponding *Processus super non cultu*, in which this is checked, is still one of the prerequisites in the procedure today. Exceptions (*casus excepti*, which could then be canonized *per viam cultus*) were only permitted by Urban VIII for persons who had already been worshipped for more than a century at the time of the issue of the relevant brief *Caelestis Ierusalem cives* (1634). On this variant of the procedure in particular, see J. Brosch, 1938.

concerns and models of piety of local churches if Curial decisions were to find long-term acceptance in the Church's provinces across the globe. Sainly persons who were only venerated regionally could not be 'processed' out of existence; nor was such rigour convenient, as these unofficial saints were likely to be particularly close to local communities and, thus, constitute a tangible bond between these communities of the faithful and the universal Church – a concern which was central to the Catholic reform after the Council of Trent.

This reflects a fundamental question for the Curia in regard to the implementation of the Tridentine reforms: *How should Rome deal with the diversity of a universal Church which was growing ever larger as a result of European expansion and the policy of forming Church unions?* There was no way to standardize local conditions; but Rome could not just hand over the decision making, either. The canonization procedure, therefore, had to be able to process this diversity without endangering Rome's role as the centre and supreme authority.

But how could Rome's claims be accommodated to such regional concerns? It is, again, Urban VIII who solved this conundrum, firstly by sharpening the contours of what had been until then, the rather vague distinction between *Beati* and *Santi*, i.e., between those who were blessed and those who were saints;¹⁵ and, secondly, by making both titles strictly dependent on Rome's decisions.¹⁶ Those who were allowed to be venerated locally, and only in a particular region or only by a specific religious order, had to be first beatified in Rome. Universal devotion, on the other hand, could only be bequeathed to those who, after beatification, also became the subject of canonization. Both procedures passed through the Congregation of Rites and hardly differed from each other: the 'future blessed' had to go through the whole examination procedure outlined earlier in this Chapter and to fulfil many similar requirements, including the criterion of having performed miracles. Canonization, then, required one more miracle to be performed by the blessed in question, after her or his beatification.¹⁷

But what was the benefit of this two-step approach? Rome could continue to reserve the highest form of veneration – which was not only permitted but obligatory throughout the Church – for those candidates who were believed to be

15 On the *beati* and the institutional consolidation of the corresponding procedure, see M. Gotor, 2002.

16 This connection is described very clearly and convincingly in S. Ditchfield, 2007, p. 209–217, as well as in S. Ditchfield, 2024.

17 On the various steps of the procedure, see M. T. Fattori, 2024.

understood and recognized as role models throughout the world. A limited form of veneration could now also be granted to candidates who were especially well suited to the needs of a particular group or region but who could hope for less understanding and acceptance in other parts of the world, precisely because of their regional fit. This distinction between saints and blessed thus made it possible to combine the universal claims and messages with local or regional needs, all under the control of Rome.

The centralization of decision-making in Rome, bureaucratization, and juridification, but also the integration of regional diversity within the Curia's procedures – all these tendencies shaped the canonization process in the decades surrounding Josaphat Kuntsevych's death, and, during these developments, the efforts for his canonization began. Against this background, can it be considered a failure that it was only his beatification which took place in 1643? Measured by Roman standards, I would say no. The fact that, according to Urban VIII's canonization decree of 16 May 1643, Josaphat could henceforth be called 'blessed' and be liturgically venerated on his feast day (12 November) by every clergyman in Ruthenia as well as by Basilians worldwide, was a great success for all those who had fought for it.¹⁸

To conclude, I would like to consolidate this idea with three points. First, Josaphat's advocates succeeded in setting the beatification process in motion very quickly. As early as in 1628, Urban VIII had appointed the first commission to investigate the life and death of the murdered bishop, while a second commission took up its work in 1637.¹⁹ The fact that the beatification took place just six years later is not a failure, but, actually, a speed record.

Second, such rapid success could only have been achieved at the expense of the still new regulations. The first investigation began just five years after Josaphat's death, whereas the second investigation was initiated only nine years later, which was hardly compatible with the ten-year rule that had already been put in force

18 The papal brief *Beatificationis Servi dei Josaphat*, Archiepiscopi Polocensis, Rome, May 16, 1643 (*S. Josaphat Hieromartyr. Documenta Romana beatificationis et canonizationis*, vol. 3: 1637–1867, ed. Athanasius G. Welykyj, Romae: Sumptibus PP. Basilianorum, 1967, p. 119–121, nr. 202) decreed “*ut ipse Dei Servus Josaphatus in posterum beatus nuncupari, atque ab omnibus Monachis dicti Ordinis S.ti Basilii ubique terrarum existentibus necnon in omnibus ecclesiis Dioecesis et Provinciae Polocensis, ac totius Metropolis Russiae a quibiscumque sacerdotibus tam saecularibus, quam regularibus die natalis ipsius duo decima mensis Novembris officium, et Missa de communi unius martyris Pontificis recitari, respective ac celebrari iuxta rubricas Breviarii, et Missalis romani, nec non graeci seu rutheni ab Apostolica Sede approbari valeat*”. (Ibid., p. 121).

19 For a brief account of this, see K. Jobst, 2012, p. 7, and, in more detail, see G. Hofmann, 1923, S. 224–228.

at the time. And, if the 50-year rule, which had been in force since 1627, had been taken seriously, the examinations into the possible canonization would not have been allowed to begin until 1673 at the earliest.²⁰

Third, a look at the figures makes it clear just how low the chances of canonization, or even beatification, actually were during these decades. After Sixtus V set things in motion with the canonization in 1588, it is true that saints were appointed during almost every pontificate over the next few decades. However, there were usually only one or two canonization ceremonies per pontificate, and it was only thanks to the canonization of large groups of candidates in 1622 and 1671, each with five candidates for each occasion, that the total number of the canonized between 1588 and 1700 rose to 27.²¹

The situation was a little better for beatifications, where the numbers per pontificate were slightly higher. However, the following should be noted for the critical phase of efforts occurring around Josaphat. In the 1630s, the Congregation of Rites issued decrees for at least 70 individuals concerning what form of veneration was permissible for them; however, not a single person was canonized or beatified during that entire decade.²² In the 1640s, there were still no canonizations, but – as Josaphat proves – there were beatifications. However, the frequency of the Congregation of Rites' meetings was reduced to such an extent (three times a year) that the procurators involved in ongoing proceedings fell into despair by the dozen.²³ Many were simply no longer able to get their matters placed on the authority's agenda. The fact that the beatification of Josaphat Kuntsevych took place during this period of slowdown was certainly not a failure; rather, it was something of a miracle.

The question remains as to how this success can be explained in light of the sources. So far, researchers have mainly had questions about the reasons for what

20 Numerous sources prove that this regulation was perceived as a serious obstacle, see the quote in Note 26.

21 For an overview of canonizations during the Early Modern period, see P. Burke, 1984. An official list of the activities of the Congregation is provided in *Congregatio pro Causis Sanctorum*, Index ac Status Causarum, Città del Vaticano, 1988.

22 See *ibid.*

23 For an example of these often tenacious and frequently unsuccessful efforts, see S. Ditchfield, 1992, p. 404 on the efforts to gain the support of Cardinal Antonio Barberini in the campaign for Gregory X. The fact that Urban VIII's actual cardinal-nephew, Francesco Barberini, had sided with the supporters of the Spanish competitor, reduced Campi's chances of finally getting his cause put on the Congregation's agenda, thus demonstrating that the Barberinis were by no means always on the same page in matters of canonization.

was, and still is, widely considered to be a rather disappointing outcome; namely, the fact that Josaphat was only beatified rather than canonized, which only happened much later.²⁴ However, in light of the findings, this question should be reversed – it is the reasons for the success of the year 1643 campaign which deserve our attention. Doing so would require a thorough analysis of the files, most of which are accessible thanks to the editions produced by Father Athanasius G. Welykyj.²⁵ This article does not seek to anticipate the conclusions of such an analysis; however, some key features can already be determined after a first glance at the sources which have been edited from the holdings of the authorities involved. The documents of the Secretariat of State, which handled the correspondence between the nuncio in Poland and the local political actors; of the *Propaganda Fide*, as the competent authority for issues concerning the mission territories beyond the Roman diocesan structures; and, of course, of the Congregation of Rites, clearly reveal two aspects: on the one hand, Rome regarded the canonization of the blessed as a concession to the King and Queen of Poland who had placed themselves at the head of Josaphat’s petitioners. In dealing with the Polish rulers, the papal nuncio in Poland never tired of emphasizing that the beatification, and all the steps along the way, should always be seen as an act of grace granted to them by the pope.²⁶ And indeed, the royal couple signalled that they now felt particularly committed to the pope and

24 According to K. Jobst, 2012, p. 7, the reasons as to why *only* the beatification took place are unclear; she refers to the argument offered by M. Niendorf, 2006, S. 167, according to whom, Urban VIII delayed the matter out of respect for Orthodoxy.

25 Esp., S. *Josaphat Hieromartyr. Documenta Romana beatificationis et canonizationis*, vols. 1–3, ed. Athanasius G. Welykyj, Romae: Sumptibus PP. Basilianorum, 1952–1967. A detailed examination of the individual steps before and after the beatification of Josaphat, albeit with a different focus, is provided by S. Rohdewald, 2010.

26 This is most explicitly emphasized in connection with the suspension of the 50-year rule. A letter of 20 January 1629 from the *Propaganda Fide* to the nuncio in Warsaw states: “*Ad istanza di cotesti Serenissimi Re e Regina e di questa Sacra Congregazione N.ro Signore ha fatto gratia a’ Rutheni Uniti che sapra il processo della pia memoria dell’Arcivescovo Josafat, non ostante che vi sia un Decreto della Sacra Congregazione de’ Riti che per 50 anni non si possino aprir questi processi, ad effetto di procedere inanzi nella Canonizatione. Il qual decreto, sicome difficultava grandemente il negotio per esser stato fatto solamente tre o quattro anni sono, così potrà significare a coteste Maestà che straordinaria è stata la gratia, soggiogendole che la medesima Sacra Congregazione ha fatto in ciò la parte sua, sapendo d’incontrare il gusto delle Maestà loro*”, see *Acta Nuntiaturae Polonae*, t. 23: *Antonius Santa Croce (1627–1630)*, vol. 2: 1 VIII 1628–31 III 1629, eds. Henricus Litwin, Paulus Duda, Cracoviae: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 2021, s. 163–164, nr. 482: Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith to Antonio Santa Croce, Roma, 20 I 1629.

to the cardinals of the Congregation.²⁷ On the other hand, the Curia was clearly interested in strengthening the Church, as well as the Union of Brest.

The fact that Blessed Josaphat was credited with having achieved the (alleged) reunification of the Greek and Latin churches may be a gross exaggeration, but, nevertheless, this wishful dream was used in the papal mandate of 27 January 1629 as an argument to justify the suspension of the newly issued 50-year rule.²⁸ There is indeed no doubt as to the Curia's interest in a rapprochement with the Churches of the Byzantine rite. Members of the Barberini family were particularly active in this regard, including the pope himself, but also his cardinal-nephew, Francesco Barberini, and Francesco's uncle, the pope's brother, Cardinal Antonio Marcello Barberini. Francesco Barberini, for example, not only had the acts of the Council of Ferrara and Florence printed, he also acted as cardinal-patron of the *Accademia Basiliana*, where supporters and officials involved in the Church Union regularly gathered at the Curia between approximately 1635 and 1640.²⁹ Meanwhile, Cardinal Antonio Barberini was widely regarded as the most important promoter of the canonization process. Not only had he promised the Basilians that he would, at his own expense, organize the first celebration of the newly Blessed Josaphat

- 27 In his reply to Cardinal Francesco Barberini, sent from Warsaw on 17 March 1629, the papal nuncio reported success: "*Notificai a queste Maestà la grazia, che cotesta Sacra Congregatione ad istanza loro haveva ottenuta dalla Santità di N.ro Signore di far aprire il processo della pia memoria dell'Arcivescovo Giosafat Ruteno Unito, per tirar ava[nti]-a nella canonizzazione; e rappresentai anco loro la specialità e grand[ezza]-a di simil grazia, stante ostacolo che vi faceva il decreto della Sacra Congregatione de' Riti. Le Maestà loro ne sentirono estremo gusto [e] perciò tanto maggior obbligo confessarono di tenere a N.ro Signore et alle Signorie Loro Ill.me, le quali mi richiesero ch'io ringraziassi cald[amente] in nome Loro, come faccio*". (Ibid., p. 285, nr. 595: Antonio Santa Croce to Cardinal Francisco Barberini, Varsovia, 17 III 1629).
- 28 See *S. Josaphat Hieromartyr. Documenta Romana beatificationis et canonizationis*, vol. 2: 1637–1867, ed. Athanasius G. Welykyj, Romae: Sumptibus PP. Basilianorum, 1955, p. 6–7, nr. 98: S.C. Rituum Processum polocensem ex anno 1628 aperiri iussit, de mandato SS.mi D.N.: "*In causa Servi Dei Josaphat Archiepiscopi Polocen. et Ruthen., martyrium pro Christi Fide ab Haereticis passi, et D.N. mandavit aperiri Processus auctoritate Apostolica fabricatos, et ad ulteriora in qualibet Congregatione procedi, non obstante Decreto, quod non possit agi de Canonizatione cuiusquam, nec etiam Martyris, nisi sint lapsi anni quinquaginta a die obitus, vel martyrium passi, attento, quod ultra instantiam, et enixam supplicationem Regis, Antistitum, Procerumque omnium Regni Poloniae, fuit hic Servus Dei Archiepiscopus in Graecia, univert Ecclesiam Graecam cum Latina et pro Christi fide passus est, quae omnia Sanctitas Sua mandavit annotare, et dignoscantur causae quibus mota fuit ad id faciendum et ne trahatur in exemplum*".
- 29 On this aspect, see I. Herklotz, 2007. A key figure in this *academia* was Lucas Holstenius who, from 1633 onwards, also promoted the founding of a Greek printing press in Rome; see *ibid.*, p. 147.

with great pomp and circumstance in one of the largest and most important churches in Rome – Il Gesù. He also became the main promoter of the Church of the Ruthenians in Rome.³⁰ The fact that Antonio Barberini's name can still be read on the architrave above the main entrance of *Santi Sergio e Bacco*, which was renovated with his help and is the current Ukrainian national church in Rome,³¹ makes one thing abundantly clear: the success of Blessed Josaphat Kuntsevych was also due to the efforts of the papal family, who knew perfectly well how to combine their political and ecclesiastical goals with the cultivation of their own *memoria*. In keeping with the spirit of the time, the papal family's commitment to Blessed Josaphat was not presented as a mere act of earthly patronage, for which the beneficiaries would henceforth owe the papal family something in return;³² rather, the papal family's strategy of self-representation portrayed their support for the requests coming from Ruthenia as involvement in Church politics which was entirely unmotivated by personal interests. Nevertheless, the appropriation of Blessed Josaphat and the entire Church Union by the Barberinis to enhance their track record certainly served the purpose of permanently securing the reputation of this by no means uncontroversial family.³³ In exploring the reasons

30 In a 1643 petition, the Basilians first reminded the cardinals of the *Propaganda Fide* that “*l'Emin. mo Sig. Cardinale Antonio Barberini, ch'è stato il Promotore principale di questa pia causa s'era dichiarato di voler a sue spese col solito suo regio animo celebrar tal solennità nel Giesù di Roma, per non haver li Padri Ruteni Basiliani che la picciola Chiesa di Santi Sergio e Bacco, ... per tanto li detti Padri Basiliani ricorrono alla pietà dell'Eminenze VV. degnarsi scriverne lettera a detto Emin.mo Antonio, acciò ordini à chi le parerà, che tal solenne festa si faccia nel Giesù ò altro logo capace per questa sol volta che parerà all'Emin.za sua, in suo nome, con le sue armi, portiere, e paruti, con quella splendidezza maggiore sua solita che il Santo Martire compenserà del tutto e Sua e le Vostre Eminenze in Cielo*”. (*S. Josaphat Hieromartyr*, 1967, p. 121–122, nr. 203). Another petition from the Basilians, dating back to 1644, states that the celebration of 1643 had been cancelled due to Antonio Barberini's absence; the monks had then asked the cardinal directly for generous alms and for his support for the celebration. Even if the Basilians continued to hope for Il Gesù or the Church of the Greeks as the venue, the changed tone of the two petitions clearly indicates the extent to which the end of his family's pontificate had limited Cardinal Barberini's room for manoeuvring (see *ibid.*, p. 138–139, nr. 205).

31 See A. Upart, 2026.

32 As I have argued in B. Emich, 2024, the canonization policy of the popes was not a mere extension of the Roman patronage policy into the heavenly sphere, as is often suggested, but rather protection against appropriation by papal nepotism.

33 When, shortly after his election, Urban VIII's successor, Innocent X, made preparations to put the Barberinis on trial in view of their nepotistic enrichment during their family's pontificate, the former cardinal-nephew Francesco Barberini immediately fled to France. However, the fact that his uncle, Antonio, was able to remain in Rome and continue his secluded, pious life as a religious priest without any problems should be seen as recognition of his renunciation of the

for the success of the campaign for Blessed Josaphat, one should, therefore, not only keep an eye on the holdings of the papal authorities who were involved, but also on the Barberini family archive.

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worldly business of politics and patronage. His resources for supporting Blessed Josaphat may have suffered as a result of the campaign against his family (see Note 30), but, in principle, the Barberinis benefited from this initiative.

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