

Contemporary Ecumenical Challenges of Historically Charged Liturgical Cult: The Services for Josafat Kuntsevych, Afanasiy Filippovych, and Andrzej Bobola

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The seventeenth century was a period of political and religious turmoil in the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania. The confessional conflicts produced martyrs whose cults consolidated the confessional boundaries of the Roman Catholic, the Orthodox, and the Greek Catholic Church. In my article, I compare three such saints: Josafat Kuntsevych (1580-1623, Greek Catholic), Afanasiy Filippovych (c. 1595–1648, Orthodox), and Andrzej Bobola (1591-1657, Roman Catholic), who were martyred in the hands of their Christian neighbours. For material, I use the hymnographical services composed for the saints. I argue that, in quest of genuine ecumenism, certain content in these services, such as exclusive concepts of the true faith and church unity, may actually induce rather than prevent hostility between the Churches.

Keywords: *hymnography, liturgy, Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Roman Catholic, confessionalization, ecumenism, saint, cult, martyr*

Introduction

The seventeenth century was a period of great political, social, and confessional turmoil in the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania, a multi-ethnic state that covered large areas of Central Eastern Europe. The religious pluralism of the Polish-Lithuanian society was, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, giving way to the supremacy of the Roman Catholic Church, which was being restored after the Protestant Reformation had shaken its foundations in the sixteenth century. The movement of the “religious tectonic plates” in the Polish-Lithuanian lands also resulted in a division within the Eastern Orthodox Metropolitanate of Kiev. In 1596, at the Union of Brest, representatives of the Kievan Metropolitanate proclaimed their loyalty to the Roman See.¹ During the following century, the new Greek Catholic Church

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¹ Barbara Skinner, *The Western Front of the Eastern Church. Uniate and Orthodox Conflict in 18th-century Poland, Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia*, DeKalb, Northern Illinois University Press 2009, p. 4. For an analysis of the process leading to the union, see: Borys Gudziak, *Crisis and*

and the Orthodox Church wrestled over legitimacy as well as property as two parallel Eastern Rite Churches.² The struggle became politicized in the second half of the seventeenth century when the uprising Cossacks claimed the Orthodox cause with the support of the Muscovite Tsar.³

The troubled time was burdened with violence. Confessional conflicts were often loaded with political or ethnic motives, or vice versa, and resulted in bloodshed. Yet from the perspective of the Church – Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Greek Catholic –, the tragic fates of individuals were extremely useful as fuel for each respective confessionalization process. The victims, perceived as martyrs, became cornerstones for the local construction of the Church. At the same time, they came to embody of the confessional antagonism that has continued to feed mistrust and prejudice between the Churches over the centuries. Since these saints perished *literally* in conflict with another confession, their veneration as martyrs inevitably stands in contrast with the perpetrators of their death, who in turn may have become hailed as defenders of faith in their own community.

This article focuses on three prominent saints produced by the seventeenth-century confessional conflicts in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The Greek Catholic saint Josafat Kuntsevych, Archbishop of Polotsk, from the monastic Order of Saint Basil (1580-1623), was an active advocate of the Greek Catholic Church and a controversial figure especially in his dealings with the Orthodox faithful. He was murdered in his own diocese, in Vitebsk, in 1623, by enraged masses of Orthodox people.⁴ The Orthodox saint Afanasiy Filippovych, Abbot (*igumen*) of Brest (c. 1595-1648), was a polemicist, whose campaign against the Union of Brest led him to trouble with the Polish authorities, who suspected him of being a spy for Moscow. He was tortured and executed by Polish (Roman Catholic) soldiers.⁵ Finally, the Roman Catholic saint Andrzej Bobola was a Jesuit missionary (1591-1657) and an equally passionate advocate of church

Reform. The Kyivan Metropolitanate, the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and the Genesis of the Union of Brest, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press 1998.

² For an evaluation of the consequences of the Union of Best, see, for example: Bert Groen, Wil van den Bercken (eds.), *Four Hundred Years: Union of Brest (1596-1996): A Critical Re-evaluation*, Leuven, Peeters 1998.

³ B. Skinner, *The Western Front*, p. 88-94.

⁴ A biography in: E. A. Vernikovskaya, “Иосафат Кунцевич (1580-1632), Полоцкий архиепископ греко-католической церкви” [Josafat Kuntsevych (1580-1632), Archbishop of Polotsk of the Greek Catholic Church], in: *Славянский альманах* [Slavonic Anthology], Moscow 2001, p. 20-41.

⁵ A short biography in: I. G. Moroz, “Афанасий” [Afanasiy], in: *Православная Энциклопедия* [Orthodox Encyclopedia]. I have consulted the electronic version of the article, <http://www.pravenc.ru/text/76850.html>, viewed September 30, 2019.

unity, which in the seventeenth-century Roman Catholic terms typically denoted the conversion of the Orthodox into the Roman Catholic Church. During the Cossack uprising, he suffered torture and death in the hands of the (Orthodox) Cossacks.⁶

My research was sparked by an interest in seeing whether the confessional controversies from which these saints emerged continue to inform their reception today, or more precisely, whether their contemporary liturgical cult transmits ideas that could be perceived as anti-ecumenical. The idea of *ecumenism* in relation to early modern confessional questions is, of course, anachronistic, as such a frame of thought is of a much later time. Yet if one perceives “the restoration and manifestation of Christian unity in faith, life, and mission” as the ultimate goal for contemporary inter-Christian relations, as it has been promoted by the modern ecumenical movement since the early twentieth century,⁷ it is worth exploring whether the past antagonisms, in the shape of controversial saints, may potentially hinder the perspectives of Christian reconciliation.

In this article, I will turn to contemporary liturgical services, dedicated to these three saints, with an aim to analyse what kind of representations they provide of the three saints in light of inter-confessional relations. My analysis focuses on the following questions: *How does the hymnographical service present and interpret the saint's actions with respect to his own Church or to the “opposing” side? What kind of challenges may these representations cause for the contemporary ecumenical cause?* While acknowledging the primary function of liturgical texts as spiritual, as vehicles of prayer and spiritual edification, I would like to argue that, if taken literally and reflected against the historical context of the saint, these liturgical services may actually induce rather than prevent hostility between the Churches.

The liturgical worship has played an important role in the construction of the past in different contexts. As Sean Griffin argues in his fascinating investigation into early Russian liturgy, the liturgical rites can be perceived as “a public technology for creating and controlling cultural memory”.⁸ Medieval clerical writers “created versions of the past that bound people

⁶ An extensive biography in: Ks. Jan Popłatek T.J., *Błogosławiony Andrzej Bobola Towarzystwa Jezusowego: Życie – męczeństwo – kult* [The Blessed Andrzej Bobola of the Society of Jesus: Life – martyrdom – cult], Kraków 1936.

⁷ Ola Tjørhom, “The Early Stages: Pre-1910”, in: Geoffrey Wainwright, Paul McPartlan (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Ecumenical Studies*, <https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199600847.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199600847-e-1>, viewed February 18, 2020.

⁸ Sean Griffin, *The Liturgical Past in Byzantium and Early Rus*, Cambridge, MA, Cambridge University Press 2019, p. 21.

together in imagined communities”, thus cultivating a sense of a common identity.⁹ In the liturgical commemoration of the saints, the past actualizes, or as Erin Kathleen Rowe points out,

The liturgy brings the past into the present through an ongoing celebration of a cycle of events. [...] Thus, the celebration of a specific saints’ feast days renders the distant past deeply relevant and immediately present [...].¹⁰

Following this frame of thought, my approach to the liturgical services considers the texts as actively constructing the community or the confession they represent. Thus, their function is not limited to interpretations of the past, but they continue to shape identities and ideas of a community even contemporarily.

It is, of course, relevant to ask whether these three saints, Josafat Kuntsevych, Afanasiy Filippovych and Andrzej Bobola, are the most representative for the analysis of the ecumenical challenges arising from historically charged cults. The seventeenth century alone produced a number of martyrs on confessional grounds.¹¹ Yet what is special about the three saints featured in this article is that, as historical figures, they were voluntarily active in the inter-Christian confrontations of their time. It is hardly surprising that, as we shall see, their veneration has in many ways outgrown the religious context and become used for political and national goals. Correspondingly, the tensions surrounding them continue to fuel the “mutually opposed memories of the winners and losers, the victims and perpetrators”, which, as Assmann notes, can be particularly tenacious when they become upheld by politicized forms of remembering.¹² One example of such politicized remembrance can be seen in the national commemoration of Saint Andrzej Bobola as the patron of Poland, which will be discussed later in this article.

While the theological perception of sainthood, especially in the Eastern Orthodox tradition, is based on the idea that it is God that grants glory to holy men and women, who are then officially “recognized” (canonized) by the Church,¹³ there are likely to be different motives behind each process of

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 26.

¹⁰ Erin Kathleen Rowe, *Saint and Nation: Santiago, Teresa of Avila, and plural identities in early modern Spain*, State College, PA, Pennsylvania State University Press 2011, p. 4.

¹¹ In Britain, for example, the Protestant Reformation and the Roman Catholic Counter-Reformation enriched the cult of saints with, for example, the Forty Martyrs of England and Wales.

¹² Jan Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press 2006, p. 7.

¹³ In the Roman Catholic Church, the canonization procedures have evolved under papal authority from the early thirteenth century on. The process was codified as a nine-step pro-

“making saints”, or as Robert H. Greene puts it, “human beings make saints, and for very human reasons.”¹⁴ The timing of the canonization often reveals motivations that are related to wider social circumstances. In the case of the three saints featured in this article, their canonization coincided with certain critical periods in the history of the Russian Empire and Poland. Yet from the perspective of the Church and its faithful, their sainthood is made no less valid by the historical or political constellations, but they are venerated as holy intercessors before God, in liturgy and in private prayer. Thus, this article addresses a delicate issue where the deconstructive approach to liturgical content may seem at odds with the recognition of the lived experiences of the sacred among the faithful. Yet it is exactly this dichotomy that may create tension or obstacles to mutual understanding in ecumenical relations, and thus deserves exploration.

Sources and method

My analysis focuses on three sets of liturgical texts which are used in contemporary practice on the yearly commemoration of the saint: the Church Slavonic service for Saint Josafat (12 November), published in 1937 by the Basilian Fathers in Zhovkva for the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church,¹⁵ the Church Slavonic service for Saint Afanasiy (5 September), included in the

cedure by the Code of Canon Law in 1917, involving pre-judicial phase of at least 50 years, the summoning of witnesses for a court of inquiry, initiated by the local bishop, the judgment of the candidate's orthodoxy on the basis of his or her writings, after which the process was handed over to Rome. After thorough investigation, the candidate could be declared “venerable”. Before the next stage, beatification, a miracle performed through the candidate's intercession was required. The case then lay dormant until another miracle, after which the Pope issued a bull of canonization. In 1983, this procedure was considerably revised by Pope John Paul II, resulting in a simpler three-phase process. See: Richard Gribble, “Saints in the Christian Tradition: Unraveling the Canonization Process”, in: *Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations* 6 (1/2011), p. 12-16, <https://ejournals.bc.edu/index.php/scjr>, viewed February 19, 2020. In the Orthodox Church, the recognition of saints has been a considerably less systematized process. The Russian Orthodox procedure is often initiated locally, sometimes on the basis of experienced miracles or the discovery of incorruptible relics. The liturgical cult is initiated by serving memorial services (*panikhida*). An investigation into the life, possible miracles, and possibly also the state of the relics takes place under church authorities. A vita is written and a liturgical service composed. A council of bishops proclaims the inclusion of the saint into the liturgical commemorations. The actual veneration typically begins with the ceremonial translation of the relics. See: S. Griffin, *The Liturgical Past*, p. 233; Robert H. Greene, *Bodies like bright stars: saints and relics in Orthodox Russia*, DeKalb, IL, Northern Illinois University Press 2010, p. 77.

¹⁴ R.H. Greene, *Bodies like bright stars*, p. 74.

¹⁵ *Вечірня і утрєня та інші богослужєння на всі недїлі і свята цілого року* [Vespers and Matins and other services for all Sundays and feasts of the whole year], Zhovkva: Vydavnytstvo i drukarnya oo. Vasyliyan 1937, p. 843-853.

Mineya (Menaion) published by the Russian Orthodox Church in 2003,¹⁶ and the Polish service for Saint Andrzej (16 May), published in the 2014 edition of the Breviary, which is based on a 1986 edition, approved by the Conference of the Polish Bishops.¹⁷

Composing a liturgical service is a significant part of the construction of the saint's cult and thus any research on liturgy should be at least aware of the past evolution of the respective textual tradition. In this case, when the focus is on the contemporary reception of these services in light of ecumenical relations, the use of contemporary sources is justifiable. Yet the conditions in which they originated are not without meaning. The oldest of the three is the service for Saint Josafat, which can be identified as a slightly modified version of the earliest hymnographical cycle in his honour, published in 1738 at the Holy Dormition monastery in Uněv (Univ), Galicia.¹⁸ The most significant change in the 1937 edition is the reduction of the Canon to the *heirmoi* only.¹⁹ Saint Josafat's service thus reflects the sentiments of the time when the Greek Catholic confession was still being constructed – it is a valuable evidence of how the saint, or his opponents, were perceived only a century after his death.

We have little knowledge of the earliest forms of Orthodox hymnography dedicated to Saint Afanasiy. According to Moroz, a *troparion* and a *kontakion* for the saint were composed in 1819 by Archimandrite Markian.²⁰ According to Aleksander Naumow, new propers and a full liturgical service for Saint Afanasiy was composed by a clergyman of the Polish Orthodox Church, Konstanty(n) Znosko (1865-1943), and published in 1929.²¹ In

¹⁶ *Минея. Сентябрь* [Menaion for September]. Moscow: Izdatel'skiy Sovet Russkoy Pravoslavnoy Tserkvi 2003, p. 158-172.

¹⁷ *Liturgia godzin zakonów franciszkańskich w Polsce III* [The Liturgy of the Hours of the Franciscan Order], Wrocław 2014, p. 1104-1109.

¹⁸ *Воспльдованія праздники Пресвятой тайни Евхаристіи, Состраданія Богородица и Блаженнаго священномученика Юсафата от святого Собора Замойскаго преподаннимъ* [The Office of the Feast of the Most Holy Sacrament of Eucharist, the Compassion of the Mother of God, and the Blessed Hieromartyr Iosafat], Uněv 1738.

¹⁹ The reduction was most likely due to the suppression of the Matins in general in the Latinized Greek Catholic liturgical practice of the early twentieth century. As Galadza relates, “by [Metropolitan Andrei] Sheptytsky's day [1865-1944] even clerical families, not to mention the faithful at large, were beginning to avoid the only Byzantine office where the Resurrection narratives are consistently proclaimed.” Peter Galadza, *The Theology and Liturgical Work of Andrei Sheptytsky (1865-1944)*, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 272, Roma, Ottawa, Pontificio Istituto Orientale and Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky Institute of Eastern Christian Studies 2004, p. 445.

²⁰ I. Moroz, “Афанасий”.

²¹ The original Polish publication has not been available for this research, yet by comparing the existing service in the Russian *Menaion* with the examples presented by Aleksander

their emphasis on the rightful presence of the Orthodox faith in the Polish lands and the hardships the Orthodox had to suffer, Znosko's liturgical compositions reflect the charged atmosphere of interwar Poland, where the post-Russian Orthodox Church became a target of hostility and discrimination by the Roman Catholic-oriented Polish State.²² The rise of Polish nationalism towards the outbreak of the Second World War is likely to be reflected in the service for Saint Andrzej Bobola as well, although it remains unclear whether the current office was composed for the canonization in 1938, or later.

One of the challenges of comparing the services for Eastern Rite saints with a Roman Catholic one is the lack of symmetry between them in terms of sheer quantity. For example, whereas the service for Saint Afanasiy consists of 81 stanzas of hymnography, and Saint Josafat's service 40 stanzas,²³ the Latin Rite service for Saint Andrzej Bobola features only 18 stanzas classifiable more or less as hymnography: two hymns constituting eleven verses in total, three antiphons, and four responsories. The source material thus concretely reflects the general difference in the extent and function of hymnography in the two liturgical Rites, Byzantine and Latin; nevertheless, the unbalanced range is not necessarily an obstacle for comparison, if we focus on the content of the texts instead of their number.

My analysis of the hymnography is based on liturgical typology. Although the hymnography is certainly informed by the historical figures behind the three saints, their images are to a great extent "liturgical creations",²⁴ employing standard hymnographical devices, common tropes, to emphasize the different aspects of righteousness, perseverance, and martyrdom. I have first extracted from the text corpus the imagery that appears as relevant for the topic of this article, which I have then grouped thematically into larger topics, three of which I will focus on: depictions of the martyr in relation with *the true faith*, with *church unity*, and as a *good shepherd*. The analysis will reveal parallelisms between the three services, as well as some

Naumow in his analysis of Znosko's works, it is possible to conclude they are identical. See: A. Naumow, *Wiara i historia* [Faith and history], Kraków, Instytut Filologii Słowiańskiej Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego 1996, p. 185, 187-188.

²² A. Naumow, *Wiara i historia*, p. 192; Mirosława Papierzyńska-Turek, *Między tradycją a rzeczywistością. Państwo wobec prawosławia 1918-1939* [Between tradition and reality. The State and Orthodoxy 1918-1939], Warszawa, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe 1989, p. 5-11.

²³ The numbers include the Eastern Rite hymnographical genres of *stichera*, *troparia*, *kathisma troparia*, *kontakion*, and *heirmoi*, for example, for the Small and Great Vespers and Matins; in Saint Josafat's service, Great Vespers and Matins.

²⁴ See: S. Griffin, *The Liturgical Past*, p. 117.

individual emphases, which I will explain in light of the historical context of each of the three martyrs and their services and discuss their implications for today's ecumenical coexistence.

The Vita and the Cult

To understand the historical background on which contemporary veneration is based, it is relevant to first look into the lives of the three martyrs, as well as the development of their cult. While many of their characterizations have most likely been influenced by hagiographical conventions, their historicity is supported by written documents of their own production, for example, correspondence,²⁵ memoirs and polemical writings, such as Afanasiy's *Diariusz*,²⁶ and spiritual and practical compilations, such as Josafat's guidebooks for the clergy.²⁷

The three saints lived in relatively close proximity both in terms of time and space. While it is not known whether the three were aware of each other's existence, it is possible that their paths crossed, for example, in the 1610s in Vilna, which was the centre of religious intelligentsia of the time or in the Jesuit Academy (University), the Orthodox monastery of the Holy Spirit, or the Greek Catholic monastery of the Holy Trinity.

It was in the Holy Trinity monastery of Vilna that Josafat Kuntsevych was tonsured in 1604 at the age of twenty-four.²⁸ He had been born in 1580 in an Orthodox family in the Volhynian city of Volodymyr (contemporary northwestern Ukraine). Expected to continue in his merchant father's trade, he had proved to be more interested in spiritual matters, and in the years after the conclusion of the Union of Brest (1596), he dedicated himself to liturgical practice in Vilna. Since Josafat received no formal theological education, he is said to have acquired his knowledge from the divine services. His natural talent became evident especially in preaching. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1609 and in 1613, he was granted the title of an archimandrite.²⁹

Josafat's years of activity at the Holy Trinity monastery coincided with the years of the novitiate and education of Andrzej Bobola (born 1591), from

²⁵ For example, correspondence (three letters) between Josafat Kuntsevych and the Chancellor of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Lev Sapieha, published in Polish in: Tadeusz Żychiewicz, *Josafat Kuncewicz. Kalwaria Zebrzydowska: Calvarianum* 1986, p. 156-184.

²⁶ Published, for example, in A. F. Korshunov, *Афанасий Филиппович. Жизнь и творчество* [Afanasiy Filippovych. Life and works], Minsk 1956, p. 97-179.

²⁷ E. Vernikovskaya, "Иосафат Кунцевич", p. 23.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 25.

²⁹ Sofiya Senyk, "Духовный профиль Св. Иосафата Кунцевича" [The spiritual profile of St Josafat Kuntsevych], *Pro Hereditate Catholica*, <https://fsspx-fsipd.lv/ru/istoria-cerkvi/o-cvsh-chmuch-iosafate>, viewed September 19, 2019.

Polish nobility, who entered the Vilna Society of Jesus in 1611 and gave his monastic vows two years later. Andrzej studied philosophy and theology at the Jesuit Academy of Vilna. In 1622, he was ordained to the priesthood, and after spending a year in Nieśwież, he returned to Vilna where he soon became famous as a preacher at Saint Casimir's church.³⁰ Not far from there, Afanasiy Filippovych was active in the centre of Orthodox Vilna, the Holy Spirit monastery. Born in Brest (contemporary Belarus) in an Orthodox family in c. 1595, Afanasiy had studied at the Confraternity school and continued there as a teacher until he gave his monastic vows in 1627.³¹

Josafat was the first of the three to be martyred. He had become assistant (coadjutor) to the Greek Catholic archbishop of Polotsk in 1617 and eventually succeeded him. As Vernikovskaya relates, there was a bitter competition over the eparchy when in 1621 Meletiy Smotrytskyi was appointed as the Orthodox hierarch of Polotsk. Josafat's severe actions especially in relation to the Orthodox population raised complaints, for example, from the Chancellor Lev Sapieha in 1622. Eventually, the tensions between the Orthodox faithful and the Greek Catholic hierarch escalated into a physical attack on Josafat in Vitebsk on 12 November 1623. His body was thrown into the river.³²

In the 1630s, both Andrzej Bobola and Afanasiy Filippovych left Vilna. Afanasiy became the deputy *igumen* of the Duboyskiy monastery near Pińsk after being ordained into the priesthood in 1632. When in 1636 the monastery was turned over to the Jesuits, Afanasiy reacted with a vision of the seven fires of hell, where he saw the papal nuncio, King Zygmunt III, and Chancellor Sapieha suffering for the persecution of the Orthodox. He settled at the monastery of Kupjati, near Minsk. Between 1637-1638, he travelled to Muscovy in search of alms from the Czar for the monastery church, by whom he was richly endowed. His travel to Muscovy made him suspected of pro-Muscovite aims in the eyes of the Polish authorities.³³

In 1640, Afanasiy became the abbot of the monastery of Saint Simeon the Stylite in Brest. In the following years, he campaigned actively against

³⁰ J. Popłatek, *Błogosławiony Andrzej Bobola*, p. 34-73.

³¹ I. Moroz, "Афанасий".

³² E. Vernikovskaya, "Иосафат Кунцевич", p. 32-34. See also: Kerstin S. Jobst, "Transnational and Trans-Denominational Aspects of the Veneration of Josaphat Kuntsevych", in: *Journal of Ukrainian Studies* 37 (2012), p. 3.

³³ I. Moroz, "Афанасий". See also Tomasz Hodana, "Moskiewskie wizje Atanazego Filipowicza. O postrzeganiu Rosji przez prawosławnych mieszkańców Rzeczypospolitej w dobie mohylańskiej" [The Muscovite visions of Afanasiy Filippovych. On the perception of Russia by the Orthodox inhabitants of the Commonwealth in the Mohylan era], in: *Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis* 3112 (2009), p. 18-22.

the Union of Brest, which he saw as “accursed”. His campaign took him to Warsaw, where in 1643, following the voice heard from the miracle-working Kupjati icon of the Mother of God, he gave a fervent speech at the Sejm about the oppression that the Orthodox Church had had to endure. He was placed under guard by the Orthodox hierarchs present at the Sejm, but Afanasiy, pretending to be a fool for Christ’s sake,³⁴ escaped and walked half-naked in the streets of Warsaw, crying out curses against the Union. He was defrocked and sent to Kiev, where Metropolitan Peter Mohyla, however, returned him to Brest with the rights of an abbot. Driven by the voice from the icon again, Afanasiy headed back to Warsaw, only to be arrested, then sent to Mohyla, to live in the Kievan Caves monastery. Throughout his years in captivity and in Kiev, Afanasiy wrote polemic testimonies against the Union. After returning to Brest again, Afanasiy was suspected of contacts with the rebelling Cossacks and was arrested. Refusing to renounce his Orthodox faith, he was tortured and executed by the Polish authorities on 5 September 1648, possibly by being buried alive.³⁵

Andrzej Bobola’s spiritual work and teaching positions took him, among others, to Płock, Warsaw, and Pińsk, then back to Saint Casimir’s church in Vilnius (1646-1652), and after that, again to Pińsk. His missionary work was aimed at the local Catholic population and at the Orthodox, or as Popłatek puts it, “schismatics, detached from unity with Rome”, whom he wished to “guide back to the Catholic Church”, which was “the only true Church whereas Orthodoxy was a mistake and a schism.”³⁶ When the rebelling Cossacks reached the region of Polesie, Andrzej was taken captive, tortured with extreme brutality, and finally executed on 16 May 1657 in the town of Janów Poleski.³⁷

After their death, the cult of each saint was first locally established, and over the centuries, they grew in significance – spiritual, political, and national. In Saint Josafat’s case, the local cult was initiated immediately after 1623. Aleksander Naumow argues that the earliest hymnographical texts in his honour can already be traced back to the late 1620s.³⁸ A painting of the archbishop was completed in Polotsk in 1624 and sent to Rome.³⁹ At the

³⁴ A fool for Christ is a type of a saint in Orthodox Christianity. By acting insane, the fools for Christ have questioned existing norms and often delivered prophecies.

³⁵ I. Moroz, “Афанасий”.

³⁶ J. Popłatek, *Błogosławiony Andrzej Bobola*, p. 130.

³⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 146.

³⁸ A. Naumow, *Wiara i historia*, p. 98.

³⁹ Mateusz Łepkowski sees it not as a devotional object but as an image of real likeness, which could later be used as model for iconography. Mateusz Łepkowski, “Najwcześniejsze

request of the Greek Catholic bishops, Pope Urban VIII initiated the investigation of his life in 1628, and on 16 May 1643, Jozafat was beatified.⁴⁰ His relics, which initially lay in Polotsk, were transferred several times in the course of the century. Most dramatically, they were liberated to Biała Podlaska in 1705, before the advancing army of Russian Emperor Peter I invaded Polotsk.⁴¹ After the partitioning of Poland in the late eighteenth century, the cult weakened outside Polotsk and Biała.⁴²

In the nineteenth century, the reception of Jozafat's cult varied in different territories. It was intertwined with the Polish national uprising as an anti-Russian symbol, and correspondingly politicized as part of the Polish question in the Russian Empire. According to Jobst, however, Saint Jozafat was regarded with surprisingly little interest by many Ruthenians themselves, whether under Russians or Austrians. Yet it was in the interest to Rome to emphasize his role as a symbol of the church union especially after the Russian authorities had dissolved the Greek Catholic Church in the Russian territory in 1839 and "returned" numbers of Greek Catholics by forcible conversions to the Russian Orthodox Church.⁴³ The canonization of Saint Jozafat took place in 1867. In 1917, the relics were transferred to Vienna, to Saint Barbara's Ukrainian Greek Catholic church, from where they were moved in 1949 to the Vatican, where they currently lie in the altar of Saint Basil in Saint Peter's Basilica.⁴⁴

The cult of Afanasyj was also initiated immediately after his death. In 1658, the Muscovite Tsar Aleksey Mikhailovich was informed about his incorruptible relics, and in 1666, the relics were exposed in the monastery of Saint Simeon and a *vita* was written. Early in the eighteenth century, Afanasyj's skull, thus recognized as a relic, was transferred to Saint Petersburg under the orders of the Emperor Peter I.⁴⁵ The relic as well as a number of

przedstawienia św. Jozafata Kuncewicza a problem *vera effigies* w kształtowaniu się ikonografii świętych w okresie potrydenckim" [The earliest presentations of St Jozafat Kuntsevych and the problem of *vera effigies* in the development of the iconography of saints in the post-Tridentine period], in: *Fides, Ars, Scientia. Studia dedykowane pamięci Księdza Kanonika Augustyna Mednisa*, Tarnów: Muzeum Okręgowe w Tarnowie 2008, p. 304.

⁴⁰ A. Naumow, *Wiara i historia*, p. 97-98.

⁴¹ Dorota Wereda, "Rozwój kultu Jozafata Kuncewicza w XVIII wieku" [The development of the cult of Jozafat Kuntsevych in the 18th century], in: *Śladami unii brzeskiej* [On the traces of the Union of Brest]. Lublin-Supraśl, Wydawnictwo KUL 2010, p. 255-257.

⁴² K. Jobst, "Transnational", p. 7-9.

⁴³ *Ibidem*, p. 10-14.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 16-17.

⁴⁵ I. Moroz, "Афанасий".

documents related to Afanasiy were damaged in a fire in 1816, yet parts of the relics were saved and placed in the Cathedral of Brest.⁴⁶

It is not certain when the canonization of Saint Afanasiy took place. It was common that local saints were venerated as special patrons of the community where their shrines were located,⁴⁷ where the cult could predate the official recognition. Golubinskij estimates that Afanasiy's sainthood was proclaimed in the latter part of the nineteenth century, since a historical description from 1811 does not mention his commemoration, yet in 1893, a church in Grodno was dedicated to the saint.⁴⁸ A significant step in this process constituted the testimonies to miraculous healings with Saint Afanasiy's intercession, the earliest of which were reported in 1853 and 1860.⁴⁹ Up to the First World War, Saint Afanasiy's cult flourished locally in Brest and in the monastery of Leśna in Podlasie (contemporary Poland) which received a portion of his relics in 1894. Apart from the local importance, the canonization of Saint Afanasiy can be viewed in the context of the "dramatic upsurge in the number of saints" canonized during the last century of Romanov rule, which Robert Greene associates with larger social changes, as providing tools for easing the "economic, social, and political anxieties produced by Russia's transition to modernity."⁵⁰

After the death of Andrzej Bobola, his memory faded in times of political unrest, to be rekindled in 1702, when the head of the Jesuit Collegium of Pińsk, Marcin Godebski, received a message from him in a dream. When the body was exhumed, it was found to be untouched by decay.⁵¹ Despite attempts at his swift beatification, it took place only in 1853. The local cult, however, in the form of miracles, images and vitas, developed already in the course of the eighteenth century.⁵² In 1807, with the consent of the Emperor Alexander I, his relics were transferred from Pińsk to Polotsk.⁵³ The local veneration was interrupted after the First World War. With the aim to prove the veneration of relics as based on fraud and superstition, the Bolsheviks exhumed a number of saints' remains all around Soviet Russia.⁵⁴ Bobola's

⁴⁶ E. Golubinskiy, *История канонизации святых* [The history of the canonization of the saints], Moscow 1902, p. 218.

⁴⁷ R.H. Greene, *Bodies like bright stars*, p. 12.

⁴⁸ E. Golubinskiy, *История канонизации*, p. 218.

⁴⁹ A. Naumow, *Wiara i historia*, p. 187.

⁵⁰ R.H. Greene, *Bodies like bright stars*, p. 14.

⁵¹ J. Popłatek, *Błogostawiony Andrzej Bobola*, p. 153-157.

⁵² *Ibidem*, p. 169-215, 236.

⁵³ *Ibidem*, p. 220.

⁵⁴ R.H. Greene, *Bodies like bright stars*, p. 144-146.

relics were taken in 1922 to Moscow, to be exhibited at the Museum of Social Hygiene of the Commissariat of Public Health.⁵⁵ At the request of the Pope, two American Jesuits were allowed to rescue the relics by transporting them via Odessa and Constantinople to Brindisi and finally, in 1923, to Rome.⁵⁶ Saint Andrzej was canonized by Pope Pius XI at Easter 1938 and triumphantly returned to Poland in the same year. As Kramarz relates, the canonization was taken as an important gesture of encouragement by the Poles who were alarmed by the pre-Second World War political situation.⁵⁷ Currently, the relics of Saint Andrzej lie in a sanctuary in Warsaw.⁵⁸

Hymnographical constructions

The historicity of the three saints is likely to have influenced the hymnographers in the creation of the liturgical services, although they contain few references to concrete events in the lives of the saints. The services are rooted in Christian textual traditions in general by employing typologies, tropes and expressions familiar from the existing sources, which has been a standard technique of constructing new liturgical services.⁵⁹ Yet in the context of these historical figures, the common tropes may be seen as acquiring new, historically charged and highly polemic meanings.

One of the most characteristic arguments, witnessed to some extent in each of the three services, is the claim that the particular saint represents the *true faith*, the only confession capable of leading to salvation (see Table 1).⁶⁰ This is far from surprising considering the historical context of the saints. It was in the Polish-Lithuanian lands that the Eastern and Western Churches had collided time and time again since their Christianization in the tenth century. Each considered themselves to be the sole true Church. In the late sixteenth and seventeenth century, the propagation of the supremacy of the Roman Catholic Church was invariably accompanied by the exclusion of other confessions from the prospect of salvation (*extra Ecclesiam nulla salus*).

⁵⁵ The same museum hosted a number of saints' relics, exhumed by the Bolsheviks, from all over Russia. See: R.H. Greene, *Bodies like bright stars*, p. 150.

⁵⁶ J. Popłatek, *Błogosławiony Andrzej Bobola*, p. 250-252.

⁵⁷ Henryka Kramarz, "Św. Andrzej Bobola na łamach prasy polskiej w 1938 roku" [St Andrzej Bobola in the Polish press in 1938], in: *Rocznik Historii Prasy Polskiej* [The Yearbook of the History of the Polish Press] 14 (1-2/2011), p. 214.

⁵⁸ Anna Dziemska, "Andrzej Bobola, patron of unity and peace", in: *Jesuits in Europe* (29 May 2017), <https://jesuits.eu/news/375-andrzej-bobola-the-patron-of-unity-and-peace>, viewed February 20, 2020.

⁵⁹ See: S. Griffin, *The Liturgical Past*, p. 93-228.

⁶⁰ I have selected the most relevant and grouped the citations roughly on the basis of their corresponding content. The grouping does not suggest they are seen as fully identical.

This view characterized the negotiations for the Union of Brest (1596), and it was readily adopted by many Greek Catholic hierarchs, who used it in polemics with the Orthodox side.⁶¹ In answer to the accusations of standing outside the “saving Church”, the Orthodox polemicists frequently described their community with concepts such as “*pravovernyj*” (those of “right faith”) as opposed to “*levo-*” or even “*kryvovernyj*” (those of “left” or “twisted” faith).⁶²

Table 1: References to true faith (a selection)

Saint Afanasiy	Saint Josafat	Saint Andrzej
пострадав же за истину Христову даже до крове, <i>having suffered for Christ's truth even to blood</i> (Great Vespers [further: GV], doxasticon for <i>Lord, I have called</i>)		
светом истинныя веры люди наставил еси, <i>you have edified people with the light of the true faith</i> (GV, aposticha)		syna, którego śmierć opromienia prawdziwej wiary wspólnotę, <i>a son whose death illuminates the community of true faith</i> (Matins, hymn)
яко страдальца за веру Христову украшенного, <i>as a sufferer for Christ's faith</i> (Matins, canon 1st ode)		
просветлен был еси в деяниях ... защищения истины ... побеждающий гонители Церкви истинныя Христовы... возстал еси противу врагов веры Православныя,		Jestem kapłanem katolickim, powiedział Andrzej do Kozaków, urodziłem się w katolickiej wierze i w te wierze chcę umrzeć, Albowiem prawdziwa wiara prowadzi do zbawienia. – Przyjmując moją wiarę, poznacie prawdziwego Boga i ocalicie wasze dusze.

⁶¹ See: Liliya Berezhnaya, “«True Faith» and Salvation”, in: *Cahiers du Monde russe* 58 (3/2017), p. 442-444.

⁶² Peter Galadza, “Літургічне питання і розвиток богослужень напередодні Берестейської унії аж до кінця XVII століття” [Liturgical questions and the development of the divine services before the Union of Brest and up to the end of the 17th century], in: *Берестейська унія та внутрішнє життя Церкви в XVII столітті. Матеріали Четвертих “Берестейських читань”*. Львів, Луцьк, Київ, 2-6 жовтня 1995 [The Union of Brest and the inner life of the Church in the seventeenth century. Materials of the Fourth “Brest Readings”. Lviv, Lutsk, Kyiv, 2-6 October 1995], Lviv 1997, p. 7.

Saint Afanasiy	Saint Josafat	Saint Andrzej
<i>you have been enlightened in your works ... of defending the truth ... conquering the persecutors of the true Church of Christ ... you have stood up against the enemies of the Orthodox faith</i> (GV, aposticha)		<i>I am a Catholic priest, said Andrzej to the Cossacks, I was born in the Catholic faith and in this faith I want to die, For the true faith leads to salvation. – By accepting my faith, you will find the true God and save your souls.</i> (Office of readings, responsory)
в вере Православней твердым стоянием ... истинный нам путь к Небеси указуеши, <i>by standing fast by the Orthodox faith ... you have pointed for us the true path to Heaven</i> (Small Vespers [further: SV], aposticha)	заблуждшихъ на путь истинный наставиль еси, <i>setting those who have been lost on the true path</i> (SV, aposticha)	
твердым стоянием за веру Православную и безстрастным исповеданием ея, <i>standing fast at the Orthodox faith and dispassionately confessing it</i> (kathisma troparion)		
настави нас верою правоверную восхваляти Господа, <i>set us with the orthodox faith to praise the Lord</i> (GV, Lity)		
верно пожил еси, стоя бодренно за святую Православную веру ... заповедуя никомуже нарушати Православныя веры святых, пострадав за свидетельство истины даже до смерти, <i>you have lived faithfully, standing courageously for the holy Orthodox faith ... prohibiting anyone to disturb the holy Orthodox faith, suffering, in testimony to the truth, even to death</i> (troparion)		

Saint Afanasiy	Saint Josafat	Saint Andrzej
<p>неустанно обличая хулители Православныя веры и предрекая им гнев Божий, претерпел еси за сие злострадания, <i>tirelessly exposing the abusers of the Orthodox faith and foretelling them God's wrath</i> (Matins, at Praises)</p>		
<p>столп непоколебимый веры Христовы и истинный ревнитель отеческих преданий был ... бодренно стоя за святую Православную веру, <i>you were an unwavering pillar of the faith of Christ and a true zealot for the tradition of the forefathers ... standing courageously by the holy Orthodox faith</i> (GV, at Lord, I have called)</p>		
<p>Ревнуя о вере Православней, возскорбел еси... яко вера сия от неправоверных попирается ... все житие твое земное предал еси на защищение веры праотеческия, <i>Zealous for the Orthodox faith, you have become mournful ... as this faith is trampled upon by the unorthodox ... you have given all your earthly life for defending the faith of the forefathers</i> (GV, doxasticon at Lity)</p>		

From the three services, it is the Orthodox Saint Afanasiy that is most emphatically described as serving the true faith. In the total of fifteen references, which is more than for any other topic in any of the services, the saint is described as having defended and suffered for “Christ’s truth”, “the true faith” or “Christ’s faith”, which is the “holy Orthodox faith”. By standing fast by Orthodoxy, he is described as “showing us the true path to Heaven”. It is the “faith of the forefathers”, whose tradition the saint is described to have defended against the attacks of the unorthodox, “*nepravovernnye*”.

Historically, Saint Afanasiy's protests against the discrimination of the Orthodox Church after the Union of Brest were founded on the firm and exclusive conception of Orthodoxy as the Church of Christ. The service, written in the charged inter-Christian atmosphere of the 1920s Poland, elaborates on the history by using typical Byzantine tropes associated with *orthodoxy* in general.⁶³ A similar kind of unwavering conviction is found in the service for the Roman Catholic Saint Andrzej Bobola, in which the historical encounter between the saint and his murderers is turned into a proclamation of the Catholic confession as the true faith of God:

I am a Catholic priest, said Andrzej to the Cossacks, I was born in the Catholic faith and in this faith I want to die, For the true faith leads to salvation. – By accepting my faith, you will find the true God and save your souls.⁶⁴

Interestingly, the service for Saint Josafat uses other means of manifesting the rightfulness of the Greek Catholic Church. Only once, in the *aposticha*, does the hymnography resemble the above-depicted service of Saint Afanasiy in its persistence on the true faith: Saint Josafat is described as “setting those who have been lost on the true path”. The Greek Catholics were, in the early eighteenth century when the service was most likely compiled, still very much in a state of transition. There was no clear idea of what the Greek Catholic Church was: to what extent should it follow exactly the Catholic tradition, and to what extent preserve its Orthodox identity, supported by their adherence to the Eastern Rite liturgical tradition.⁶⁵ Perhaps for this reason, and for the reason of constantly being condemned by the Orthodox as “*nepravoverny*”, unorthodox, the hymnographer of Josafat's service emphasized the trueness of their confession by reflecting it against the opponents. This becomes particularly visible in the references to *church unity*, which can be seen as the main topic of emphasis in Saint Josafat's service, shared with Saint Andrzej, but missing completely in the service for Saint Afanasiy (see Table 2).

⁶³ However, a browse of possible sources in Byzantine hymnography, such as the commemoration of the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea, or the Seventh Ecumenical Council, or of the Sunday of Orthodoxy, has not revealed direct connections with Saint Afanasiy's service.

⁶⁴ *Liturgia godzin zakonów franciszkańskich*, p. 1108.

⁶⁵ See: Maria Takala-Roszczenko, *The 'Latin' within the 'Greek': The Feast of the Holy Eucharist in the Context of Ruthenian Eastern Rite Liturgical Evolution in the 16th-18th Centuries*, Joensuu, University of Eastern Finland 2013, p. 90-120.

Table 2: References to Church unity

Saint Josafat	Saint Andrzej
прелестъ попалиль еси раздороторныхъ ... въру оуяснилъ еси соединениемъ, <i>you have burnt away the charm of those who create discord... you have clarified the faith by unity</i> (Matins, kathisma troparion)	
ясно проповѣдавъ соединение, погасилъ еси распрюлюбныхъ распаленная раздорствиемъ сердца, мученическую твою кровию, <i>clearly preaching for unity, you have extinguished the hearts, inflamed by discord, of those who love quarrel, with mar- tyr's blood</i> (kontakion)	
радуйся, имже тма распрюлюбивыхъ пом- рачися, радуйя, имже свѣтъ възде соеди- нения, <i>rejoice, by whom the darkness of those who love discord has become darker yet, re- joice, by whom the light of unity arises</i> (oikos)	
къ соединению наставилъ еси люди, <i>you have set people to unity</i> (GV, sticheron at <i>Lord, I have called</i>)	
къ соединению церкви православныхъ кафолическия привелъ, <i>you have led the Orthodox Catholic Church to unity</i> (GV, aposticha)	
неубоявся мучителей злочестивыхъ суровства, но мужески со дерзновениемъ проповѣдую соединение въры, <i>not being afraid of the sternness of the impious persecu- tors, but steadfastly, with audacity, preaching the unity of faith</i> (aposticha)	
пострадав за соединение, <i>having suffered for unity</i> (GV, sticheron at <i>Lord, I have called</i>)	oddal życie za jedność Kościoła, <i>gave his life for the unity of the Church</i> (I Vespers, antiphon)
Величаемъ тя... яже за соединение претерпѣлъ еси, <i>We magnify thee ... who have suffered for the sake of unity</i> (megalynarion)	Bo Andrzej oddal swe życie za zjednoczenie Kościoła, <i>For Andrzej gave his life for the uniting of the Church</i> (Matins, hymn)
радуйся непоколебимый соединения столпе, <i>rejoice, o unwavering pillar of unity</i> (oikos)	
нынѣ молися, даровати церквамъ соединение и миръ, <i>pray now that [God] gives the Churches unity and peace</i> (refrain for stichera 1–6 at <i>Lord, I have called</i>)	

Saint Josafat	Saint Andrzej
<p>яко истинный пастырь и наслѣдникъ Христовъ, вопия непресталь еси: Отче соблюди всѣхъ во имя твое, да будутъ едино вси, и нынѣ всеблаженне Иосафате, молися даровати церквамъ соединение, и всѣмъ въ соединении сущимъ, спастися намъ, <i>as a true shepherd and follower of Christ, you have not ceased to cry: Father, keep them all through Your name, that they may be one</i>⁶⁶, and now, <i>all-blessed Josafat, pray [to God to] give the Churches unity, and to us all who are in unity, salvation</i> (aposticha)</p>	<p>by do jednego Pasterza zwiedzionych przywieść na powrót i w jednej wierze zachować, <i>to bring back the misguided to the one Shepherd and to keep them in one faith</i> (Matins, hymn)</p>

In Saint Josafat's service, the image of the Greek Catholic confession is constructed by means of contrasting it with those who stand in opposition to church unity. The hymnographer uses strong antitheses to distinguish those who are in *razdor*, discord, from those who are in *soedinenie*, unity. These, in turn, are further polarized by association with good and evil, light and darkness, for example: "the souls darkened by the evilness of the enemy, you have enlightened with the light of your words" (the *aposticha*),⁶⁷ "Rejoice, by whom the darkness of those who love discord has become darker yet. Rejoice, by whom the light of unity arises" (*oikos*)⁶⁸. The hymnographer proves highly inventive in using initial rhyme and coining new expressions. The recurrent use of the prefix *raz-* or *ras-*, which has a connotation of breaking, dividing, or tearing apart, intensifies the poetic effect: *razdorotvornye* (creators of discord), *rasproljubnye* or *rasproljubivye* (those who love quarrel), and, of course, *raskol* (schism, dissent, division). In the kontakion for the saint, the effect is further strengthened by the repetition of similar sounds: "*Jasno propovedav soedinenie, pogasil esi rasprolyubnyh raspalennaya razdorstviem serdtsa muchenicheskoyu kroviju*" ("Clearly preaching for unity, you have extinguished the hearts, inflamed by discord, of those who love quarrel, with martyr's blood").⁶⁹

As opposed to the wicked lovers of discord, Saint Josafat is described as the embodiment of the church union, which is emphasized by the repetition of the word *soedinenie*, more than thirty times, in different combina-

⁶⁶ Citation from Jn 17.11.

⁶⁷ "Душы омраченныя злобою врага, свѣтлостію словесъ [...] просвѣтили еси", in: *Вечірня і утренняя*, p. 847.

⁶⁸ "Радуйся, имже тма распролюбивыхъ помрачися, радуйся, имже свѣтъ взыде соединения", in: *Ibidem*, p. 851.

⁶⁹ "Ясно проповѣдавъ соединение, погасилъ еси распролюбныхъ распаленная раздорствомъ сердца, мученическую твою кровию", in: *Ibidem*.

tions. Josafat “sets people to unity”, “leads the Orthodox Catholic Church to unity”, “suffers for unity”, “clarifies the faith by unity”, and is the “unwavering pillar of unity”. He is addressed as an intercessor for “unity and peace” and for the salvation of “us all who are in unity”.

The cause of the church union is also manifested in the service for Saint Andrzej, who is described as “giving his life for the unity (or union) of the Church”. Characteristically, the service also reflects the Roman Catholic ecclesiological understanding by implying that the church union means in essence the *return* of other churches to the Catholic sphere: “to bring back the misguided to the one Shepherd and to keep them in one faith.”⁷⁰

Because all three martyrs were also members of the clergy, and Saint Josafat an archbishop, they are recurrently likened to Christ’s parable of the Good Shepherd, which of course likens them to Christ himself, following the liturgical typology of *imitatio Christi* (see Table 3).

Table 3: References to the Good Shepherd

Saint Afanasiy	Saint Josafat	Saint Andrzej
верное стадо твое в истине укрепляя, <i>strengthening your loyal flock in truth</i> (Matins, the Praises)	яко оубо добрый пастырь положилъ еси душу твою за овцы, от распрюлюбныхъ враговъ оубиень еси, <i>a good shepherd who has given his soul [life] for his sheep and become slain by quarrel-loving enemies</i> (GV, troparion)	Jako dobry pasterz karmisz Pana, <i>As a good shepherd you feed the Lord’s flock [of sheep] with the truth of the words</i> (Office of Readings, hymn)
образ подражателен быв верному стаду твоему, <i>you were an image for imitation for your loyal flock</i> (GV, doxasticon at Lord, I have called)	Низложъ враговъ раздороторыхъ возношения, яко пастырь добрый, <i>depose the offerings of the discord-creating enemies, like a good shepherd</i> (Matins, kathisma troparion)	
	божественная оучения запечатлѣвъ кровию от раздороторныхъ овецъ, <i>you have sealed the divine teachings with your blood, away from the discord-creating sheep</i> (GV, Lity)	

⁷⁰ *Liturgia godzin zakonów franciszkańskich*, p. 1108.

Saint Afanasy	Saint Josafat	Saint Andrzej
яко пастырь прези- рядный... стадо во истине наставил еси, <i>like a good shepherd, you have set the flock to truth</i> (SV, aposticha)	яко пастирь добрый къ страданию мужески оуготовився и за соеди- нение церкви Божия, много скорби подяль еси терпѣливо от злочес- тивыхъ людей, <i>as a good shepherd you have pre- pared yourself steadfastly for suffering, and for the sake of the unity of God's Church, you have patiently accepted many sorrows from impious people</i> (Matins, doxasticon at Praises)	
союзом веры связал еси врученное ти стадо словесное, и ныне охра- нявши нас от ветров тлетворных учений, <i>you have tied together with the bond of faith the verbal flock that has been given to you, and thus protect us from the winds of pernicious teachings</i> (Matins, canon 5th ode, 2nd troparion)	молися о вѣрою творящихъ твою всечестную память ... избавитися напастей стаду твоему, и всему миру, от всякихъ иноплеменник, <i>pray ... that your flock, and the whole world, is preserved from all attacks of all kinds of other nations</i> (GV, doxas- ticon at Lord, I have called)	

Saint Andrzej is praised in a hymn for being “a good shepherd who feeds the Lord’s flock with the truth of the words.”⁷¹ Characteristically, both Saint Afanasy and Saint Josafat are depicted as good shepherds with their individual emphases. In Saint Afanasy’s service, it is the reference to *faith* that accompanies his image as a good shepherd who “sets the flock to truth” and strengthens his “loyal flock in truth”. He “ties together with the bond of faith the verbal flock that has been given him, and thus protects us from the winds of pernicious teachings.”⁷²

For Saint Josafat, it is unity, in the face of the opponents, that permeates his image as a shepherd: “As a good shepherd you have prepared yourself steadfastly for suffering, and for the sake of the unity of God’s Church, you have patiently accepted many sorrows from impious people.”⁷³ He is the “good shepherd who has given his soul [life] for his sheep and become slain

⁷¹ *Liturgia godzin zakonów franciszkańskich*, p. 1105.

⁷² *Минея*, p. 166.

⁷³ *Вечірня і утрєня*, p. 853.

by quarrel-loving enemies.”⁷⁴ In his case, it is the treachery on the part of the once united Eastern Rite Orthodox flock that intensifies the psychological tension: they become “impious enemies”, *zlochestivyya vrazi*, the “sheep that create discord”, *razdorotvornye ovtsy*, who attack the shepherd although a while ago they belonged to the same flock. The Orthodox are thus defamiliarized into enemies by their refusal to follow Josafat to the union and by their murderous act in Vitebsk in 1623.

Contemporary Ecumenical Challenges

The potential challenges that arise from the liturgical services discussed above may be illustrated with a simple example of daily ecumenism. Let us imagine an ecumenical gathering hosted by some Roman Catholic, Orthodox, or Greek Catholic parish, for example, somewhere in Poland, Belarus, or Ukraine. The gathering would include a divine service in the respective church, conducted by the local clergy, while the representatives of other Churches would participate among the congregation. Incidentally, the liturgical commemoration would fall on the feast of one of the three saints discussed in this article. Would there be any conflict in the minds of the gathered people upon hearing, provided that their words were understood, the content of the hymns? What kind of response could be expected to the hymns sung in praise of a saint whose reception, provided that the historical context was familiar, would be so entirely different in the participant’s own tradition? Would it not make the idea of mutual respect and unity seem entirely false?

The imagined gathering, however (un)realistic, reveals the complexity of ecumenical relations in the region where the Churches have made martyrs of people slain by fellow Christians. If we consider liturgical services as media for propagating collective identities, as suggested earlier by Griffin,⁷⁵ the yearly re-enacted commemoration of the particular saint can be seen as continuously shaping the community. The process is part of the communication that is “transmitted vertically through the generations”, according to Aleida Assmann’s definition of tradition.⁷⁶ This tradition informs the contemporary of the past confrontations, those irreconcilable memories,⁷⁷ which thus continue to define the communities’ views of each other.

The liturgical services thus have the potential of reinforcing identities that are problematic in light of ecumenical aspirations. For example, from the ecclesiological point of view, the liturgical texts that manifest concepts

⁷⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 848.

⁷⁵ S. Griffin, *The Liturgical Past*, p. 26.

⁷⁶ J. Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, p. 8.

⁷⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 7.

of church unity as the incorporation or the *return* of one Church into the structure of another, function opposite to the recognition of ecumenical co-existence as a process in which all sides make compromises. It must be emphasised that although references to *unity* or *true faith* are common tropes in Christian liturgical expression in general, with the historical burden of the more or less voluntary conversions in the region in the past, the hymnographical references to *единство* or *jedność* (unity), *соединение* or *zjednoczenie* (becoming united), *истинная вера* or *prawdziwa wiara* (true faith) are easy to understand as tension-loaded.

Apart from ecclesiological views, the cult of these three saints highlights the complex intertwining of ethnic, national, and political definers in confessional identities in the territory of the earlier Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. As political borders have shifted, the positions of the religious communities in the state have waxed and waned. In the course of history, the oppressed have frequently become oppressors, and vice versa. These developments have invariably affected the reception of the saints, and their cult has been used for strengthening identities also beyond religion.

As Jobst notes, Saint Josafat's cult, for example, has provided "a resource for different religious, cultural, political, and ethno-national agents" over the centuries especially because of its inclusiveness and yet exclusiveness: on one hand, it has fostered cohabitation between the Roman and Greek Catholics (Greek Catholics), but excluded the Orthodox, on the other. His cult has been characterized by its "successful use (...) as an anti-Orthodox, anti-Russian, and (after the revolutions of 1917) anti-Soviet symbol".⁷⁸

Saint Afanasiy, in turn, has served as a symbol of uncompromising defence of Orthodoxy against the advances of the Roman Church, and it is in this light that he is commemorated by the Orthodox in Belarus, Poland, Ukraine, and Russia.⁷⁹ The development of his cult has also been seen as a reaction to the recognition given by the Roman Catholic Church to the Greek Catholics who had suffered for their faith.⁸⁰ In popular historiography, Afanasiy has been perceived as "pro-Muscovite". Hodana notes how his figure and actions have frequently been overinterpreted both in terms of religious and political congeniality: because of his visit to Muscovy, for example, during the Soviet period he was presented as the Ruthenians' "spokesman of the unity and amity with the Russian brother nation".⁸¹

⁷⁸ K. Jobst, "Transnational", p. 2.

⁷⁹ T. Hodana, "Moskiewskie wizje", p. 16.

⁸⁰ A. Bobryk, "Wpływ Atanazego Brzeskiego na postawy prawosławnych wobec ruchu unijnego" [The influence of Afanasiy of Brest on the attitudes of the Orthodox towards the union movement], in: *Szkice Podlaskie* [Podlachian Sketches] 11 (5-14/2003), p. 12-14.

⁸¹ T. Hodana, "Moskiewskie wizje", p. 16.

In the contemporary Polish Orthodox Church, his patronage of the Diocese of Lublin and Chełm seems far from coincidental. Apart from the fact that the monastery of Leśna, which held part of his relics up to 1915, was once located in the same region (Podlasie), it is this region that suffered most in the revindication of property led by the Polish State in the 1920-30s, during which hundreds of Orthodox churches were transformed into Roman Catholic churches or destroyed entirely.⁸² It is not difficult to see how a saint such as Afanasiy may be perceived as the “defender of the oppressed Church” also outside his own historical context. Yet it is exactly because of the historical load of oppression that the cult itself may foster anti-ecumenical, especially anti-Catholic, sentiments.

While the cults of Saint Josafat and Saint Afanasiy are, in many ways, burdened by the historical fates of the Eastern Rite Church minorities in the territory of the old Commonwealth, the cult of Saint Andrzej Bobola could be seen as manifesting the opposite: the brutal death of Saint Andrzej has indeed been transformed into a triumph of the Roman Catholic Church and of the Polish nation.

The canonization process itself, argues Fr Jacek Bolewski SJ, was intertwined with the key moments of Polish national arising. The beatification of the saint in 1853 took place in the context of the Crimean War that raised hopes of a change in the political status of the partitioned Poland. Saint Andrzej’s protection was recognized in the fight for Polish independence in 1918 and especially in the Battle of Warsaw in 1920, when the Polish troops defeated the Soviet Army on Vistula River.⁸³ In light of the national role attributed to the saint, it is not surprising that the public discourse on Saint Andrzej on the eve of his canonization in 1938 presented him “not only as a saint, but also a statesman”.⁸⁴ As Kramarz describes, the return of his relics from Vatican to Poland provided a moral boost for the country in fear of the totalitarian forces threatening the Poles from Soviet Russia. He was addressed as a “patron of strong faith and unity”, an intercessor for the coming “days of trial”.⁸⁵

The national emphasis reached a new level with the declaration of Saint Andrzej as one of the three patrons of Poland in 2002. Yet the pa-

⁸² 1938. *Jak burzono cerkwie* [1938. How the churches were torn down]. Białystok, Fundacja im. Księcia Konstantego Ostrońskiego 2018.

⁸³ Piotr Chmielinski, “Nowy Patron Polski” [The new patron of Poland], in: *Niedziela* [Sunday] 20 (2002), <https://www.niedziela.pl/artukul/6347/nd/Nowy-Patron-Polski>, viewed October 9, 2019.

⁸⁴ H. Kramarz, “Św. Andrzej Bobola”, p. 218.

⁸⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 218-219.

triotic tones behind his cult revealed considerable tensions in inter-church relations in Poland, especially with respect to the Polish Orthodox minority. The patronage of Saint Andrzej was met by a member of the Polish Sejm, Eugeniusz Czykwini, with an article titled “Not our patron”, published in the leading Orthodox periodical, *Przegląd Prawosławny*. Czykwini objected to the depiction of Bobola as an “apostle of Church unity” in view of the mission he had conducted as among the Orthodox – a mission that aimed at converting the “schismatics” to Catholicism. “The decision of the Polish [Catholic] Church to recognize Andrzej Bobola as the patron of Poland will surely intensify distrust in the Belorussian, Ukrainian and Russian societies and a sense of threat, feelings of reluctance toward the Catholic Church, and stoward Poland as well”, he warned.⁸⁶

Based on a survey of Roman Catholic newspaper articles discussing Saint Andrzej’s patronage, it is possible to argue that such sentiments are not baseless. One article, for example, describes the patronage of Saint Andrzej as a reminder of the missionary calling of the Church and as particularly significant “today, in times of difficult ecumenism, when there are problems in Russia in recognizing the Catholic Church. [...] It is necessary”, argues the author, “to understand that Christ needs to be preached everywhere and that the Church with Saint Peter, the Church with the Pope, is the Church that has its root in the Apostles, the disciples of Jesus Christ.”⁸⁷ In such comments, it is possible to hear echoes of the seventeenth-century Roman Catholic mission to evangelize the Rus, regardless of the fact that they had already confessed Christian, Orthodox, faith. Analogous tones are discernible even in some academic works related to Saint Andrzej, where, for instance, the term “schismatic” is nonchalantly used as a synonym for “Orthodox”.⁸⁸

The past continues to shadow contemporary inter-church relations in these troubled lands. The tensions, manifested, among others, in the cult of the three saints discussed above, await to be recognized and reconciled, in the quest of what the late Fr Robert Taft SJ called a “healing of memories [that] will require us to put aside our myths and confront our common past

⁸⁶ Eugeniusz Czykwini, “Nie nasz patron” [Not our patron], in: *Przegląd Prawosławny* [The Orthodox Overview] 6 (204/2002), http://przeglądprawoslawny.pl/articles.php?id_n=130&id=8, viewed September 20, 2019.

⁸⁷ Ks. Ireneusz Skubiś, “Patron trudnych czasów” [The patron for difficult times], in: *Niedziela* [Sunday] 22 (2002), <https://www.niedziela.pl/numer/2002/22>, viewed October 9, 2019.

⁸⁸ See, for example: Grzegorz Wejman, “Sytuacja polityczno-społeczno-religijna XVII wieku w czasie życia i działalności św. Andrzeja Boboli” [The political, social, and religious situation in the 17th century during the life and activity of St Andrzej Bobola], in: *Studia Bobolanum* 30 (1/2019), p. 87-99.

with historical objectivity and truth, own up to our responsibilities, seek forgiveness, and turn the page to move on to a hopefully better future.”⁸⁹ Reconciliation is the only way to genuine Christian coexistence between Churches that have shed blood against each other. Difficult as it may seem, it is encouraging to see that some churches have, at least in official relations, overcome their past antagonisms, as Taft relates,

Today in Great Britain, Anglicans and Catholics venerate together the martyrs from each side – Catholics martyred by Anglicans and Anglicans by Catholics – who were sacrificed for their Anglicanism or Catholicism in the horrors of their mutual past. Now *that* is real, adult ecumenism! Until hearts and minds are changed, none of our other ecumenical efforts will amount to anything of substance for the unity of the Churches.⁹⁰

Conclusion

In this article, I have examined the role of liturgical worship, especially of the hymnographical service, for the cult of three saints that may be seen as symbols of the troubled coexistence of Christians in the Polish-Lithuanian lands in the early modern era. Hymnographical analysis may not be the most obvious tool for researching contemporary ecumenical relations, yet in this case, it reveals a number of factors at the very core of the cult that may potentially hinder aspirations toward harmony between the Orthodox, Greek Catholic, and Roman Catholic Churches.

One such factor could be the presentation of true faith as the exclusive property of a particular Church, a perception constructed by manifesting that salvation may only be attained in that Church (“I was born in the Catholic faith and in this faith I want to die, For the true faith leads to salvation”), or by contrasting the trueness of one’s own faith with the falseness of another (“conquering the persecutors of the true Church of Christ ... you have stood up against the enemies of the Orthodox faith”, “to bring back the misguided to the one Shepherd and to keep them in one faith”). Church unity also becomes a tool of dichotomizing: those not willing to accept unity in certain terms are denounced as advocates of discord and quarrel (“clearly preaching for unity, you have extinguished the hearts, inflamed by discord, of those who love quarrel, with martyr’s blood”).

⁸⁹ Robert F. Taft, SJ, “Perceptions and Realities in Orthodox-Catholic Relations Today: Reflections on the Past, Prospects for the Future”, in: George E. Demacopoulos, Aristotle Papanikolaou (eds.), *Orthodox Constructions of the West*, New York, Fordham University Press 2013, p. 20.

⁹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 44.

It may be asked, of course, how relevant the hymnographical services are to the construction and the use of the cult especially in their political or national role. It is not likely that the liturgical texts are familiar, even understandable, to wider masses of people who nevertheless recognize the saints as representatives of their own community or heritage. Secondly, should one take the liturgical texts literally? As noted earlier, the hymnographical references to *unity* or *true faith* could be also interpreted in purely spiritual terms, without historical connotations.

Yet as long as the political and national representations of the saint go back to his liturgical veneration (without which he would not be recognizable as a saint), it is hardly without meaning what is chanted on his commemoration. Worship cultivates the community's perception of themselves. If the worship manifests ideas of exclusiveness in terms of, roughly put, "monopolizing" salvation, true faith, or the concept of unity, it may be difficult to find genuine respect and love for the other side in ecumenical relations.