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SAMPLE REPORT

Family history

The Sapieha family in documents (1501–1918)

20

documents in cards

19

family members

2,223

hits in the collection

No.	UZ-ARCH-F-0001
Date	19.10.2026
Scope	226 volumes of source editions · over 85,000 pages
Language	English

PRICE

€149

The Sapieha family in documents (1501–1918)

A full report on one family: all significant documents in our collection in chronological order, with quotes and translations, a timeline, an index of family members and of places linked to the family. This is what a family history built only on sources looks like.

20

documents in cards

19

family members

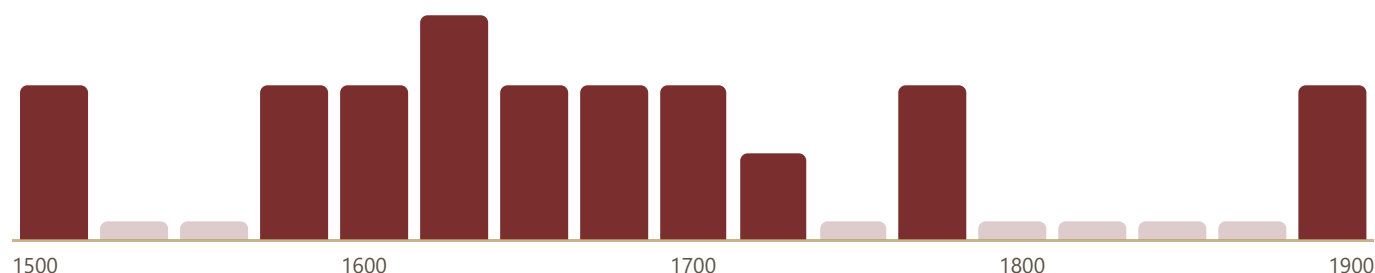
18

places

2,223

hits in the collection

Documents over time



Sapieha lands (Różana, Slonim, Wolowysk) on the 1613 map of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (public domain).

Index of family members

Person	Offices (as in the documents)	Years	Cards
Ivan (John) Sapieha	secretary and 'capitaneus' in Grand Duke Alexander's Ruthenian chancery; knight (miles) of the Vilnius diocese	1501	SAP-01, SAP-02
Mikołaj Sapieha ('Nicolò Sapia')	no office; 'gentiluomo Lituano' (identity with the Vitebsk palatine of SAP-03 not established)	1583	SAP-11
Mikołaj Sapieha	palatine of Vitebsk	1595	SAP-03
Lew (Leo) Sapieha	Grand Chancellor of Lithuania; starosta of Brest and Mahilioŭ; palatine of Vilnius and commander of the Lithuanian army (1626); recalled in 1663 as palatine of Vilnius and supreme commander	1607, 1622, 1626, 1663	SAP-04, SAP-05, SAP-12, SAP-06
Fryderyk Sapieha	starosta of 'Ostrivensis'	1634	SAP-13
Kazimierz Lew Sapieha	Grand Notary of Lithuania (editor's identification)	1636	SAP-14
Paweł Jan Sapieha	no office stated in the document; Lew's nephew	1663	SAP-06
Sapieha, commander of the Lithuanian army (first name not given)	'dux exercituum Lithuaniae'; owner of the Różana church	1663	SAP-15
Benedykt Sapieha	Grand Treasurer of Lithuania	1696	SAP-07
Kazimierz Jan Sapieha	palatine of Vilnius; Grand Hetman of Lithuania; count of Bychów, Zasław and Dąmbrowna	1696, 1709	SAP-07, SAP-16, SAP-08
Michał (Michael) Sapieha	Master of the Horse of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania; son of Kazimierz, palatine of Vilnius	1709	SAP-08
Jan Kazimierz Sapieha	starosta ('Starosta Bobrowski'; editor: of Babrujsk)	1713	SAP-17
Count Sapieha of Bychów (first name not given)	Grand Huntsman of Lithuania; hereditary lord of Bychów county	1740	SAP-18
Józef Sapieha	titular bishop of Diocaesarea, coadjutor and suffragan of Vilnius	1740	SAP-18
Aleksander Michał Sapieha	Grand Chancellor of Lithuania	1776	SAP-09, SAP-19
Anna Teofila Sapieha (Sanguszko)	daughter of the Grand Chancellor of Lithuania ('Principessa Sapieha')	1776	SAP-19
Magdalena Agnieszka Sapieha, née Lubomirska	Anna Teofila's mother ('Principessa di lei Madre'; editor's identification)	1776	SAP-19
Eustachy Sapieha	prince	1917	SAP-20
Adam Stefan Sapieha	bishop of Kraków	1917, 1918	SAP-20, SAP-10

Places linked to the family

Rome, 'Ukasno', 'Krzeslaviensis' district (as printed; unidentified), Vitebsk (Viciebsk), Ruzhany (Ružany), Brest (Brest), Mahilioŭ (Mahiloŭ), Vilnius, Polonka (battle) (Palonka), Camp on the Dnieper near Smolensk, 'Ostrivensis' starostwo (probably Astryna — uncertain) (Astryna (?)), Bychaŭ, Bychaŭ county (Bychaŭ), Zaslawye (Zasłaŭje), Dubroŭna (Dubroŭna), Bender (Tighina), Babrujsk (starostwo; per editor) (Babrujsk), Dashkaŭka (Daškaŭka), Sidaravichy (Sidaravičy), Kraków

Rome, 1501: Ivan Sapieha pleads the Kyiv metropolitan's case

From: Papież Aleksander VI · **To:** Albert (Albertus), biskup wileński

The pope answers the bishop of Vilnius, who reported that John Joseph (Iohannes Iozeph), followed as pastor by the people of Kyiv and Rus', offers obedience to Rome under the Council of Florence, and asked the pope to hear John Sapieha, secretary of Grand Duke Alexander. The pope sends the Florentine decree and orders an inquiry into Ruthenian practice (procession of the Holy Spirit, Eucharist, purgatory, papal primacy). Sapieha had asked that John Joseph be recommended to the duke as metropolitan and granted indulgence powers; the pope refuses until he receives provision from Rome. Sapieha also asked that Greek-rite baptisms not be repeated and that masonry Ruthenian churches be allowed.

„Proinde petis, ut Iohannem Sopega dilecti filii nobilis viri Alexandri magni ducis Lithuanie in cancellaria Ruthenica secretarium et capitaneum super hiis audire”

Translation: „You therefore ask that We hear on these matters John Sopega, secretary and captain of Our beloved son, the noble Alexander, Grand Duke of Lithuania, in the Ruthenian chancery”

► **Why it matters:** The earliest Vatican document in this sample in which a Sapieha personally acts as advocate of church union before the pope.

Archive: Ex Reg. orig. An. IX. Armar. XXXII. Tom. XXI. fol. 43 · Source: A. Theiner, Vetera Monumenta Poloniae et Lithuaniae gentiumque finitimarum historiam illustrantia, t. II (1410–1572), Romae 1861, nr CCC, s. 280–282; przedruk: A. G. Welykyj, Documenta Pontificum Romanorum historiam Ucrainae illustrantia, vol. I (1075–1700), Romae 1953, nr 102

Papal bull for a church founded by John Sapieha

From: Papież Aleksander VI · **To:** Ad perpetuam rei memoriam (na prośbę Jana Sapiehy)

John Sapieha, a knight of the Vilnius diocese and Ruthenian secretary of Grand Duke Alexander, had obtained the canonical erection of a parish church of the Holy Spirit at 'Ukasno' in the 'Krzeslaviensis' district and endowed it so that Ruthenian priests, Catholic and obedient to Rome, would serve there in the Greek rite; the church was not yet built. The pope allows Latin and Ruthenian priests to celebrate there after consecration by the bishop of Vilnius, and faithful of both rites to attend. He grants an indulgence of ten years and ten quarantines to those who visit it on five named feasts and help build it.

„ita quod ibi presbyteri rutheni vere catholici ac sancte Romane Ecclesie obediens semper esse ac secundum morem Grecorum seu iuxta eorum ritus ...”

Translation: „so that there should always be Ruthenian priests there, truly Catholic and obedient to the holy Roman Church, [celebrating] according to the custom of the Greeks, that is, according to their rite...”

► **Why it matters:** The oldest papal record in this sample of a Sapieha church foundation, intended for both rites.

Archive: ASV, Armarium XXXI, vol. 21, fol. 51v-52 · Source: A. G. Welykyj, Documenta Pontificum Romanorum historiam Ucrainae illustrantia, vol. I (1075–1700), Romae 1953 (Analecta OSBM, ser. II, sectio III), nr 103, s. 179–180 (paginacja druku ustalona z indeksu tomu)

A young Sapieha leaves Orthodoxy and sets off for Rome

From: Nuncjusz apostolski w Polsce (w druku bez podpisu; wcześniejsze wydanie: E. Kuntze, MPV VI — akta nuncjusza A. Bolognetiego) · **To:** Kardynał w Rzymie (w druku: „Ill.mo et Rev.mo Mons. mio Sig. Padrone”)

The writer recommends 'Nicolò Sapia', a young Lithuanian nobleman 'of excellent morals', so zealous in the Catholic faith that, having left the 'Greek schism' and returned to the Church, he left his homeland, his father and his brothers — who remain 'schismatics' — to live in Rome, although his father allowed him only two years. Sapieha himself asked for the letter of recommendation and had shown the writer filial affection in Poland. The writer asks that he be taken under protection and helped, hoping his brothers will follow his example. The editor notes that the family was then still mostly of the Ruthenian rite.

„havendo già lasciato lo scisma greco et ridottosi nel grembo di Santa Chiesa, non si è curato di abandonar la patria, il padre et fratelli”

Translation: „having already left the Greek schism and returned to the bosom of Holy Church, he did not hesitate to leave his homeland, his father and his brothers”

► Why it matters: An early record of a family member converting to Catholicism and going to Rome while his family remained Orthodox.

Archive: ASV, Nunz. di Polonia, vol. 1 A, fol. 39 · Source: A. G. Welykyj, *Litterae Nuntiorum Apostolicorum historiam Ucrainae illustrantes* (1550–1850), vol. I (1550–1593), Romae 1959, nr 170 (wcześniej: E. Kuntze, *Monumenta Poloniae Vaticana* VI, p. 119, nr 113)

Vitebsk palatine renounces Calvinism at the union synod

From: Nuncjusz apostolski w Polsce Germanico Malaspina (list niepodpisany; autorstwo według przypisu wydawcy) · **To:** Kardynał-patron w Rzymie (w druku tylko „Ill.mo et Rev.mo Sig. Padrone mio Col.mo”)

After military news, the nuncio turns to the union: the Ruthenian bishops chosen as envoys to the pope are still delayed by cases in the Lublin courts. At the synod held on the union of their Church with the Catholic one many lords were present — Catholics, heretics and Ruthenians. Among them was Mikołaj Sapieha, palatine of Vitebsk, hitherto a Calvinist, who after hearing the disputations abjured Calvinism and embraced the Ruthenian faith on condition that the union be completed and the Ruthenians recognise the pope as Vicar of Christ; otherwise, he declared, he would turn to Latin Catholicism. Heretics and schismatics, the nuncio adds, are 'gnashing their teeth'.

„abiurando la calvinistica heresia, et abbracciando la Ruthena religione, purché la Unione con la Sede Apostolica si riducesse alla sua perfettione”

Translation: „abjuring the Calvinist heresy and embracing the Ruthenian religion, provided that the Union with the Apostolic See were brought to its perfection”

► Why it matters: A Vatican record of a Sapieha's change of confession, made explicitly conditional on the success of church union.

Archive: ASV, Fondo Borghese, Ser. III, vol. 89 B, fol. 183-83v · Source: A. G. Welykyj, *Litterae Nuntiorum Apostolicorum historiam Ucrainae illustrantes* (1550–1850), vol. II (1594–1608), Romae 1959 (*Analecta OSBM*, ser. II, sectio III), nr 493, s. 62–63 (paginacja druku ustalona z indeksu tomu)

Chancellor Lew Sapieha answers Herburt's charges to the nuncio

From: Lew Sapieha · **To:** Francesco Simonetta, nuncjusz apostolski w Polsce

Sapieha replies to what Cardinal Borghese wrote on the pope's behalf in the case of Jan Herburt. He marvels at Rome's patience with Herburt, who claims he is unsafe in the Kingdom because of the chancellor's power. Sapieha promises the nuncio and the pope that he will never even think of harming his opponent. He refuses, however, the formal guarantees used elsewhere: the custom of the Commonwealth and his status as nobleman and senator permit only bonds of honour and given word. He describes the quarrel as one about inequality of birth, and asks the nuncio to judge by truth alone, treating him as an equal in the proceedings.

„cum ipse Nobilis Polonus et liber sim, et praeterea Senator, nequeo me astringere ... validioribus vinculis, quam ea sunt, quae honoris, morum, vitaeque meae professio admittit”

Translation: „since I myself am a Polish nobleman and free, and moreover a Senator, I cannot bind myself ... with stronger bonds than those which my honour, customs and way of life allow”

► Why it matters: Chancellor Lew Sapieha's own voice in a lawsuit before the nunciature, setting out noble liberty in reply to Rome.

Archive: AV, F. Borghese II 234 f. 94r-95r (cop.) · Source: Acta Nuntiaturae Polonae, t. XVIII: Franciscus Simonetta (1606–1612), vol. 1 (21 VI 1606 – 30 IX 1607), ed. A. Tygielski, Romae 1990, N. 345, s. 356–358

Lew Sapieha to Josaphat Kuntsevych: no union by force

From: Lew Sapieha · **To:** Józefat Kuncewicz, arcybiskup połocki

The chancellor replies to a lost letter of the archbishop. He admits he was himself an 'author' of the union, but just as it is sinful to reject those who come to the Church, it is wicked to force anyone into union. He blames the Uniate hierarchy's conduct for alienating Muscovy and warns that, in wartime against the Turks, domestic strife endangers the state. He cites Cossack threats and their demand to keep the bishops Borecki and Smotrycki. He accuses Josaphat of abusing authority, ambition and endless lawsuits, and writes that the union must not harm the Commonwealth. The edition titles it 'a very harsh letter of a certain senator'.

„nam sicut illos qui ad Ecclesiam Sanctam Universalem Apostolicam confugiunt reiicere et deserere nefas, sic vice versa vi ad Unionem compellere nefandum”

Translation: „for just as it is a sin to reject and abandon those who take refuge in the Holy Universal Apostolic Church, so conversely it is wicked to compel anyone into the Union by force”

► Why it matters: Lew Sapieha's best-known text on church union, preserved in the Vatican as an annex to Josaphat's beatification process.

Archive: ASV, Archivum S. C. Rituum, vol. 2291, fol. 67-73 (copia) · Source: A. G. Welykyj, S. Josaphat Hieromartyr. Documenta Romana beatificationis et canonizationis, vol. I (1623–1628), Romae 1952 (Analecta OSBM, ser. II, sectio III), nr 74, s. 246–255

Jubilee for Lew Sapieha and his soldiers: 'first promoter of the union'

From: Kongregacja Rozkrzewiania Wiary (sesja przed papieżem, „coram Sanctissimo”) · **To:** — (akta kongregacji; dekret na prośbę Lwa Sapiehy)

At a Quirinal session before the pope and eight cardinals, Cardinal Bandini reported the Polish nuncio's letters of 23 March. Two decrees were issued: a plenary indulgence for the Basilian church at Żyrowice on Marian feasts, at Metropolitan Joseph's request, and the Holy Year jubilee for Lew Sapieha, palatine of Vilnius and general of the Lithuanian army, for himself and his soldiers. The pope ordered the reasons to be written into the brief: according to the nuncio, Sapieha was the 'first promoter' of the union of the Rus' metropolitan with Rome, always defended the Uniates at diets and before the king, especially that year, and fought the Church's enemies.

„quia fuit primus promotor Unionis Metropolitae Russiae cum suis Episcopis, et populis cum Sancta Romana Ecclesia”

Translation: „because he was the first promoter of the Union of the Metropolitan of Rus', with his bishops and peoples, with the Holy Roman Church”

► Why it matters: Rome officially calls Lew Sapieha the union's 'first promoter' — four years after his harsh letter to Josaphat Kuntsevych (SAP-05).

Archive: APF, Acta S. C. de Prop. Fide, vol. 4, fol. 57v-58, nr. 1 · Source: A. G. Welykyj, Acta S. C. de Propaganda Fide Ecclesiam Catholicam Ucrainae et Bielarusjae spectantia, vol. I (1622–1667), Romae 1953 (Analecta OSBM, ser. II, sectio III), nr 55

Starosta Fryderyk Sapieha in a Roman census of Lithuania's Uniates

From: Rafał Korsak, przebywający w Rzymie w sprawach metropolii kijowskiej (autorstwo i rękopis według wydawcy: „scriptura Korsakiana”) · **To:** — (adresat nie podany; dokument w APF, akta Kongregacji Rozkrzewiania Wiary)

Raphael Korsak draws up a count of Uniates in the Lithuanian part of the Kyiv metropolitanate, palatinate by palatinate — Vilnius, Trakai, Navahrudak and Podlasie — giving estimated numbers of souls for towns, starostwos and private estates. In the Trakai palatinate he lists, among others, Lida and Grodno and the starostwo 'Ostrivensis', which is Uniate 'because the starosta himself, the Illustrious Fryderyk Sapieha, is a Uniate' — about 3,000 Uniates there. The same list mentions Żyrowice with its miraculous icon (up to 3,000 communicants a day) and a Uniate monastery on Mikołaj Tryzna's estate at 'Biten'.

„Capitaneatus Ostrivensis est unitus, quia et ipse Capitaneus Ill.mus Fridericus Sapieha est unitus”

Translation: „The starostwo 'Ostrivensis' is Uniate, because the starosta himself, the Illustrious Fryderyk Sapieha, is a Uniate”

► Why it matters: The only mention of Fryderyk Sapieha in this set, showing the starosta's confession shaping that of his whole district.

Archive: APF, Scritt. rif. nelle Congreg. gen., vol. 336, fol. 297-298v · Source: A. G. Welykyj, Epistolae Metropolitum Kioviensium Catholicorum Raphaelis Korsak, Antonii Sielava, Gabrielis Kolenda (1637–1674), Romae 1956, nr 38

Vilnius 1636: a Sapieha triumphal arch for St Casimir

From: Nuncjusz Mario Filonardi (avviso) · **To:** Kard. Francesco Barberini

An avviso from Vilnius describes the solemn translation, on 14 August, of St Casimir's relics to the new cathedral chapel built 'at royal cost and with royal splendour'. Despite gout the king joined the procession, carried in a chair; senators kept vigil over the relics at night, and Latin and Ruthenian clergy, confraternities and orders walked in the procession. Five triumphal arches were raised along the route — by the Jesuit academy, the city, the Dominicans, the Franciscans and the 'Gran Notaro di Littuania', whom the editor identifies as Kazimierz Lew Sapieha. The relics were laid in a silver coffin blessed by the nuncio, and the Te Deum was sung.

„... eretti 5 archi trionfali: ... da' Padri Domenicani, Francescani e dal Gran Notaro di Littuania”

Translation: „... five triumphal arches were raised: ... by the Dominican Fathers, the Franciscans and the Great Notary of Lithuania”

► Why it matters: Kazimierz Lew Sapieha as one of the five sponsors of triumphal arches at a major religious celebration in Vilnius.

Archive: BV, Barb. Lat. 6598 f. 20r-21r (or. avviso) · Source: Acta Nuntiaturae Polonae, t. XXV: Marius Filonardi (1635–1643), vol. 1 (12 II 1635 – 29 X 1636), ed. T. Chynczewska-Hennel, Cracoviae 2003, N. 176, s. 233–237 (fragmenty: Welykyj, LNA V, n. 2342)

Icons from the Różana church kept by Dominicans: a Uniate complaint

From: Biskupi rusko-uniccy i zakon bazylianów (memoriał zjazdu w Żyrowicach) · **To:** Biskup chełmski, do przedstawienia Stolicy Apostolskiej

A memorandum of the Uniate bishops and Basilians from the Żyrowice assembly thanks the pope for defending the union and asks for Josaphat's canonisation, a new metropolitan and the return of churches and objects taken in the wars. Among the complaints: the Muscovites took from the church at Różana belonging to 'Ill.mus Sapieha dux exercituum Lithuaniae', beside which stands a Basilian monastery, icons of Christ the Saviour, the miraculous Virgin, St John the Baptist and Saints Peter and Paul. The Dominicans of Navahrudak pulled them from the carts at night and keep them in their church, refusing to return them despite Sapieha's requests and their provincial's warnings.

„Neque rogati ab Ill.mo Sapieha, moniti a suo Provinciali per litteras, ... ut nobis redderent, obedire noluerunt”

Translation: „Neither when asked by the Illustrious Sapieha nor when admonished by letter by their Provincial ... to return them to us, would they obey”

► Why it matters: The only document in this set about the church on the Sapieha estate at Różana and the fate of its icons in the war with Muscovy.

Archive: APF, Scritt. rif. n. Congreg. gen. (Fondo Vienna), vol. 17, fol. 127–132 · Source: A. G. Welykyj, Litterae Episcoporum historiam Ucrainae illustrantes (1600–1900), vol. II (1641–1664), Romae 1973 (Analecta OSBM, ser. II, sectio III), nr 178

From camp near Smolensk, Paweł Jan Sapieha asks to canonise Josaphat**From:** Paweł Jan Sapieha · **To:** Papież (Pontifex Romanus)

Sapieha recalls a papal letter, received two years earlier through the nuncio during the Diet, entrusting the magnates with defending the Uniate Eastern Church. He petitions for the canonisation of Blessed Josaphat Kuntsevych, archbishop of Polotsk. The saint, he writes, foretold the Kingdom's present calamities in letters written in his own hand to Leo Sapieha, palatine of Vilnius and supreme commander of the Lithuanian army, the author's paternal uncle, recently found in Leo's library. He adds that he himself experienced Josaphat's help at the great battle against Muscovy at Polonka, fought under his name as watchword. The bishop of Chełm forwards the petition.

„litteris olim suis, nuper in Bibliotheca Patru mei, bonae memoriae Leonis Sapieha, Palatini Vilnensis et supremi Militiae M. D. Lithuaniae Ducis, repertis”

Translation: „in his letters of old, recently found in the library of my paternal uncle, Leo Sapieha of blessed memory, Palatine of Vilnius and supreme commander of the army of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania”

► Why it matters: Shows the family's turn towards Josaphat: the nephew of his critic seeks his canonisation, citing letters from the family library.

Archive: Arch. S. C. Rituum Centrale, Postulatoriae, v. K. 1, nr. 11 (charta) · Source: A. G. Welykyj, S. Josaphat Hieromartyr. Documenta Romana beatificationis et canonizationis, vol. III (1637–1867), Romae 1967 (Analecta OSBM, ser. II, sectio III), nr. 220, s. 159–160 (wg spisu treści tomu)

Excommunicated hetman: Benedykt Sapieha pleads for his brother**From:** Benedykt Sapieha · **To:** Papież Innocenty XII

Benedykt Sapieha writes that his own brother, Kazimierz Sapieha, palatine of Vilnius and commander of the Lithuanian army, was declared 'no less invalidly than unjustly' by the bishop of Vilnius to have incurred excommunication under the bull *In Coena Domini*, for past damage done by soldiers quartered on the bishopric's estates. That matter, he says, has already been settled through the nuncio's mediation. Kazimierz does not consider himself bound, but out of tenderness of conscience, as a soldier fighting the enemies of Christendom and devoted to the Church, he asks for absolution 'ad cautelam' and the apostolic blessing. Benedykt acts as his authorised representative.

„non minus nulliter quam iniuste declaratus fuit per reverendissimum dominum episcopum Vilnensem incidisse in excommunicationem bullae Coenae Domini”

Translation: „was declared, no less invalidly than unjustly, by the Most Reverend Bishop of Vilnius to have incurred the excommunication of the bull *In Coena Domini*”

► Why it matters: The Sapiehas' own voice in the family's sharpest conflict with the Church — the dispute with the bishop of Vilnius in the 1690s.

Archive: ASV, Segr. Stato, Polonia 116 f. 641r, 643r (cop.) · Source: Acta Nuntiaturae Polonae, t. XXXVII: Giovanni Antonio Davia (1696–1700), vol. 1 (13 II 1696 – 28 XII 1696), ed. W. Kęder, Cracoviae 2004, N. 242, s. 250

Hetman Sapieha pardons the confederates and pays them from his own purse

From: Kazimierz Jan Sapieha · **To:** Skonfederowani żołnierze wojska litewskiego (kopię przesłał nuncjusz G. A. Davia kard. F. Spadzie)

During the interregnum after John III's death, facing outside enemies, domestic strife and unpaid troops, Kazimierz Jan Sapieha — count of Bychów, Zasław and Dąmbrowna, palatine of Vilnius and grand hetman of Lithuania — seeks to stifle a confederation of some units near Brest. Through the mediation of Lithuanian senators and officials he pledges on his honour to pardon all offences, renounce revenge, protect the confederates' honour and property, pay two quarters' wages from his own treasury in the Commonwealth's name (to be repaid), keep the usual winter levies and dissolve no units. He asks the senators to add their signatures and seals.

„offensas et laesiones mei, quae intercesserunt, ab hodierno die Christiano et heroico animo condono et oblivioni trado”

Translation: „the offences and injuries done to me that have occurred I forgive from this day with a Christian and heroic heart and consign to oblivion”

► Why it matters: Gives the hetman's comital title with his estates (Bychów, Zasław, Dąmbrowna) and shows him lending to the army.

Archive: ASV, Segr. Stato, Polonia 116 f. 747r-747v (cop.) · Source: Acta Nuntiaturae Polonae, t. XXXVII: Giovanni Antonio Davia (1696–1700), vol. 1 (13 II 1696 – 28 XII 1696), ed. W. Kęder, Cracoviae 2004, N. 343, s. 344–345

Michael Sapieha's death before the nunciature court

From: Nuncjusz apostolski Niccolò Spinola · **To:** Aleksander Wyhowski, biskup łucki

The nuncio recalls that since 1701 Christophorus Białłozor, canon of Vilnius, had been accused before the nunciature tribunal, at the instance of Kazimierz Sapieha, palatine of Vilnius, and his sons, as the principal author of the death of Michael Sapieha, Lithuanian Master of the Horse and the palatine's son. Witnesses were heard; the accused stayed abroad and the palatine eventually dropped the case. Now Białłozor, on returning, has fallen into the hands of certain troops who hold him, although as a cleric he is subject only to church courts. The nuncio delegates the bishop of Łuck to obtain his surrender under pain of censures, resume the trial and decide it.

„occasione praetensi ipsius concursus, seu principalis influxus in mortem Ill.mi olim Michaelis Sapieha, praefecti stabuli Magni Ducatus Lithuaniae”

Translation: „on account of his alleged complicity, or principal part, in the death of the late Illustrious Michael Sapieha, Master of the Horse of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania”

► Why it matters: Shows how the death of the Vilnius palatine's son became a case in the nunciature's church court, brought by the Sapiehas themselves.

Archive: AV, Arch. Nunz. Varsavia 183 f. 66v-67r (reg.) · Source: Acta Nuntiaturae Polonae, t. XLII: Nicolaus Spinola (1707–1712), vol. 3 (1 I 1709 – 31 XII 1709), ed. I. Kopiec, Cracoviae 2014, N. 894, s. 237–239

From Bender to Warsaw: Sapieha begs the king's pardon

From: Avviso z nuncjatury (Benedetto Odescalchi-Erba) do Sekretariatu Stanu · **To:** Sekretariat Stanu

A courier sent from Bender on 22 February by 'Count Sapieha, starosta' (the editor: Jan Kazimierz Sapieha) arrived in Warsaw on Friday. Sapieha asks the king to restore him to favour, which the king generously granted. He also sent a detailed report on the events of 11 February: the Swedish king, refusing to obey the seraskier's orders given on the Porte's command, was attacked in his quarters by Turks and Tatars; he defended himself until late at night, killing 17 Turks with his own hand (about 400 died), until, the house set on fire, he surrendered wounded and was taken deeper into the sultan's lands.

„Supplica egli il Re di essere rimesso in grazia, ciò che gli è stato generosamente accordato da Sua Maestà.”

Translation: „He begs the King to be restored to favour, which His Majesty has generously granted him.”

► Why it matters: A Sapieha at Charles XII's side in Bender seeks reconciliation with the king and supplies the nunciature with news of Bender.

Archive: AV, Segr. Stato, Polonia 138 f. 241r-242v (or.) · Source: Acta Nuntiaturae Polonae, t. XLIII: Benedictus Odescalchi-Erba (1711–1713), vol. 2 (4 I 1713 – 17 I 1714), collegit J. A. Gierowski, supplevit et edidit I. Kopiec, Cracoviae 2011, N. 690, s. 149

The Sapiehas' Bychów county: parishes for Uniates and a dean killed

From: Florian Hrebnicki, arcybiskup połocki · **To:** Kardynałowie Kongregacji Rozkrzewiania Wiary

The archbishop describes his struggle with the Orthodox bishop of Mahilioŭ, Joseph Wołczański, sent from Muscovy. In 1740 he obtained from Count Sapieha of Bychów, Grand Huntsman of Lithuania — citing old rights of the hereditary lords of Bychów county — and through the count's brother, Bishop Józef Sapieha, the award of the parishes of Daszkówka and Sidorowicze to the Uniates; the count presented two candidates as parish priests and ordered the Bychów administration to support them. On 26 April Dean Emilian Klimontowicz of Bychów was killed at Sidorowicze by an incited crowd. The archbishop asks for papal briefs to both Sapieha brothers, among others.

„decernentibus nullum posse in illo Comitatu habitare Schismaticum, nullam Ecclesiam per Schismaticos regendam in eodem Comitatu esse fundatam”

Translation: „[decrees] ruling that no schismatic may live in that county and that no church to be run by schismatics has been founded in the same county”

► Why it matters: Shows the Sapiehas as hereditary lords of Bychów county, deciding the confession of parishes on their estates.

Archive: APF, Scritt. rif. n. Congressi: Mosc., Polonia e Ruteni, vol. 6, f. 458-461v · Source: A. G. Welykyj, Epistolae Metropolitaram Kioviensium Catholicorum Leonis Kiszka, Athanasii Szeptyckyj, Floriani Hrebnyckyj (1714–1762), Romae 1959, część: F. Hrebnyckyj, nr 3

Pius VI asks Chancellor Sapieha to defend the Basilians**From:** Papież Pius VI · **To:** Aleksander Sapieha, kanclerz wielki litewski

The pope writes that he holds the Ruthenian congregation of the Order of St Basil the Great in special affection for its services to the Church. He has learned that the congregation, and especially its notable monastery 'Bitinense', is in grave danger to its rights and property because of disputes and lawsuits brought before the tribunal of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania by 'the power of the non-Uniates' and others. He asks Sapieha to defend the order's rights in the pope's stead with his equity and authority, fearing that new losses would embolden attacks on other orders and Catholic churches. He promises his gratitude and sends his blessing.

„ut loco Nostri eidem adsis, et illius iura aequitate Tua et auctoritate, qua polles, tueare”

Translation: „that you assist it in Our stead and defend its rights with your equity and the authority you wield”

► Why it matters: The pope turns directly to a Sapieha as chancellor and protector of the Uniate order in Lithuania's lawsuits.

Archive: AV, Ep. ad Princ. 176 f. 105v-106v (reg.) · Source: Acta Nuntiaturae Polonae, t. LIV: Ioannes Andreas Archetti (1776–1784), vol. 1 (8 IV 1775 – 25 VII 1776), ed. P. Zając OMI, Cracoviae 2013, Appendix A. 10, s. 608–609 (wcześniejsze wyd. w druku: „Documenta, p. 249-250”)

Chancellor Sapieha's daughter sues for separation**From:** Nuncjusz Giovanni Andrea Archetti · **To:** Kard. Lazzaro Opizio Pallavicini

The nuncio reports talk in Warsaw of plans to dissolve marriages in great families, but so far only 'Princess Sapieha, daughter of the Grand Chancellor of Lithuania', wife of 'Prince Józef Sanguszko' (the editor: Hieronim Janusz Sanguszko), has asked the Warsaw episcopal court for separation, citing her husband's dishonourable treatment and harm to her health. The prince objected that the case was brought without her consent, at her mother's urging. The judge questioned the wife: she declared the suit was brought on her express order and repeated this before both parties' lawyers. The prince appealed to the primate's tribunal and then to Rome.

„essa non solo ... gli affermò che la lite era stata promossa con suo espresso ordine e deliberato consenso”

Translation: „she not only ... told him that the suit had been brought on her express order and with her deliberate consent”

► Why it matters: A rare case in the nunciature records of a Sapieha woman defending her own cause before a church court.

Archive: AAV, Segr. Stato, Polonia 318 f. 241r-243r (orig.) · Source: Acta Nuntiaturae Polonae, t. LIV: Ioannes Andreas Archetti (1776–1784), vol. 2 (11 VII 1776 – 30 XII 1776), ed. P. Zając OMI, Cracoviae 2022, N. 782, s. 435–436

Eustachy Sapieha to Benedict XV: Lithuania, the Church's vanguard in the East**From:** Eustachy Sapieha · **To:** Papież Benedykt XV (przez nuncjusza w Wiedniu Teodoro Valfrè di Bonzo)

Prince Eustachy Sapieha writes on behalf of 'Poles, Lithuanians and Ruthenians, Catholic inhabitants of Lithuania', who await in terror the moment when their fate will be decided after the war; for a hundred and twenty years they have borne the yoke of an empire persecuting the Catholic faith. He asks the pope not to leave them at the mercy of peoples of another faith. Lithuania, he writes, united with Poland for centuries, was the vanguard of the Church in the East. Bishop Adam Stefan Sapieha forwarded 'my cousin's' petition to the nuncio on 25 March 1917, asking that the signer's name be kept strictly secret.

„Unie à la Pologne pendant de longs siècles, la Lithuanie a été l'avant-garde de l'Eglise en Orient.”

Translation: „United with Poland for long centuries, Lithuania was the vanguard of the Church in the East.”

► Why it matters: Two Sapiehas — a politician and a bishop — jointly bring the cause of Lithuania's Catholics before the pope in the pivotal year 1917.

Archive: Vaticani, Arch. CNEE, Russia 483 s.f. (cop. dactylogr. listu biskupa; annexa n. 1 et n. 2 autogr.) · Source: Acta Nuntiaturae Polonae, t. LVII: Achilles Ratti (1918–1921), vol. 1 (25 IV – 31 VII 1918), ed. S. Wilk SDB, Romae 1995, Appendix A. 6 (list A. S. Sapiehy z 25 III 1917) z annexum n. 2, s. 331–334

Bishop Sapieha to Ratti: may God spare us a revolution**From:** Adam Stefan Sapieha · **To:** Achille Ratti, wizytator apostolski w Polsce

The bishop thanks Ratti for his letter of 7 October and his telegram, and for his visit to Kraków, which left a dear memory for all. He hopes Ratti will stop in Kraków again on the way to Lviv, in happier times that may come sooner than expected — 'may God only spare us a revolution'. He offers condolences on the death of Ratti's mother; having lost his own mother that year, he promises a Mass for her. On the Sisters of Divine Love, he wrote asking the Mother General to keep the superior, but the constitutions and the new Code require a change; Mother Binder will remain in Kraków.

„Che Dio solamente ci liberi d'una rivoluzione.”

Translation: „May God only spare us a revolution.”

► Why it matters: A rare personal tone in Bishop Sapieha's correspondence with the apostolic visitor Ratti (later Pius XI) in the decisive weeks of 1918.

Archive: AV, Arch.Nunz.Vars. 191 f. 329r–330r (autogr.) · Source: Acta Nuntiaturae Polonae, t. LVII: Achilles Ratti (1918–1921), vol. 2 (1 VIII – 11 XI 1918), ed. S. Wilk SDB, Romae 1996, N. 183, s. 216

Method and sources

- **Collection:** 226 volumes of printed source editions from the Vatican archives and other archives (19th–21st c.), recognised and processed by UZYTAK software.
- **Search:** a full-text index with historical spelling variants of names; false hits (other people, other places with the same name) are discarded.
- **Verification:** every quote in the cards was checked against the text of the edition's page. Translations are UZYTAK working translations.
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