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РОДИННІ ЗВ'ЯЗКИ БЛАЖЕННОГО ВАСИЛЯ ВЕЛИЧКОВСЬКОГО З ПРЕПОДОБНИМ ПАЇСІЄМ ВЕЛИЧКОВСЬКИМ ТА ЧЕРНІГІВЩИНА

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Праця присвячена двом значним та видатним українським діячам, які мають одне і те саме прізвище: преподобному Паїсію Величковському (1722–1794) та блаженному Василю Величковському (1903–1973). Прп. Паїсій визнаний Православною Церквою святим. Він був канонізований у 1988 році з нагоди тисячоліття Хрещення Київської Русі, попередниці України. Бл. Василя визнано мучеником Української Греко-Католицької Церкви та блаженним у 2001 році Папою Римським Іваном-Павлом II. В автобіографії прп. Паїсій писав, що він був 11-м із 12-ти братів і сестер і останнім живим членом його найближчої родини. Родинна лінія прп. Паїсія вимерла з його смертю. Бл. Василь все життя був безшлюбним, але мав двох сестер із сім'ями, які живі до теперішнього дня. Нещодавно з'явилися знахідки, які свідчать про те, що предки прп. Паїсія та бл. Василя колись мешкали на Чернігівщині в Україні. Окрім того, прізвище «Величковський» простежується за родовим походженням у Литві, починаючи з родин XIV ст. Дізнання, чи прп. Паїсій та його родина мають спільних предків з бл. Василем, не лише вирішить постійне питання, на яке у самого бл. Василя остаточної відповіді не було, але також може стати ще однією позитивною силою християнської єдності між Українською Греко-Католицькою Церквою та Православною Церквою України. У випадку, якщо вони пов'язані між собою, дві Церкви, які стали правонаступниками хрещення України в 988 році, могли б відзначати родинну лінію, яка колись жила на Чернігівщині та яка призвела до канонізації святого в Українській Православній Церкві та блаженного мученика в Українській Католицькій Церкві. Дотепер не було серйозно досліджено, як пов'язані ці дві впливові, видатні та святі особи.

Ключові слова: Паїсій Величковський, Василь Величковський, Феодор Величко, Литва, Новогрудок, Велички, Любеч, Чернігівське воєводство, Чернігівська область, Сирокомла.

Two Prominent Ukrainian Figures

The Ukrainian nation has been blessed with many historically important and prominent figures dating back to the baptism of Kyivan Rus' in 988 by St. Grand Prince Volodymyr the Great (Ukr: *Володимир Великий*).¹ Two such figures were known by the surname Velychkovsky (Ukr: *Величковський*). They are Venerable

¹ Volodymyr the Great. (n.d.). *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine*: <http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages\VO\VolodymyrtheGreat.htm>.

Paisius Velychkovsky (1722–1794)² and Blessed Vasyl Velychkovsky (1903–1973).³ Ven. Paisius' grandfather was Rev. Ivan Velychkovsky (1640?–1701),⁴ an arch-priest and famous poet and author from Poltava, Ukraine. How Ven. Paisius and his ancestors are related to Bl. Vasyl Velychkovsky has never been seriously explored.

Ven. Paisius wrote in his autobiography that he was the 11th of 12 siblings and that he was the last living member of his family so his family line became extinct with his passing. Bl. Vasyl was the oldest of three siblings and his parents were part of large families that have grown and multiplied since his passing. They are many in number and are spread around the entire world. Over the course of at least a century, many have posed the question of whether the Velychkovsky family that Bl. Vasyl descended from is in some way related to Ven. Paisius and his lineage.

The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church as well as the Ukrainian Orthodox are both successor churches to the acceptance of Christianity by St. Grand Prince Volodymyr the Great of Kyiv in 988. The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church evolved from the Union of Brest, an agreement, proclaimed in 1596 between the Ruthenian (Ukrainian-Belarusian) Orthodox church in Poland and Lithuania (*Ukr: Лубва*) and the Holy See.⁵ Since then, unity between the two churches has been elusive, challenged by many obstacles resulting in centuries of division. After seven centuries, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church formally broke from Russia and Russian Orthodoxy when in Istanbul on January 6, 2019 Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, the spiritual leader of the Eastern Orthodox church handed a Tomos of Autocephaly containing a decree of independence to Metropolitan Epiphanius of Ukraine.⁶ In the last 60 years since the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) a lot of progress has been made between the Orthodox and Catholic churches, both on a theological level and practical level.⁷

Determining whether Ven. Paisius and his family share the same ancestry with Bl. Vasyl and his family would not only resolve a standing question that Bl. Vasyl himself had no definitive answer to, it could also serve as another positive force for Ukrainian unity between the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church of Ukraine. In the event that they are related, the Ukrainian nation and its two churches that are successors to Ukraine's baptism in 988 could celebrate a family line that once lived in Chernihivshchyna and produced two prominent, famous, and saintly figures. One that was canonized a saint in the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the other beatified as a martyr in the Ukrainian Catholic Church.

Venerable Paisius Velychkovsky

Venerable Paisius (Petro) Velychkovsky (1722–1794) was born in Poltava, Ukraine and was a Ukrainian Eastern Orthodox ascetic, writer and theologian who helped spread the concept of the spiritual elder to the Slavic world known as staretsdom.⁸ He studied at the Kyivan Mohyla Academy (1735–1739) but withdrew in order to devote himself completely to monastic life. He moved to his great grandfather's ancestral home of Lyubech (*Ukr: Любеч*) and became a novice at the

² Velychkovsky Paisii. (n.d.). *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine*: <http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages\VE\VelychkovskyPaisii.htm>.

³ Sianchuk, J. C. (2014, September). Father of the Underground Church in Ukraine. *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe*, pg. 31, 52.

⁴ Шумило С. В. (2020). До питання про походження роду прп. Паїсія Величковського і його зв'язки з Чернігівщиною. *Сіверянський літопис* (1), pg. 149.

⁵ Church Union of Berestia. (n.d.). *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine*: <http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages\CH\ChurchUnionofBerestia.htm>.

⁶ Gall, Carlotta. Ukrainian Orthodox Christians Formally Break from Russia. *New York Times*, January 6, 2019. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/06/world/europe/orthodox-church-ukraine-russia.html>.

⁷ Guigou, C. (2020, July 7). Major obstacles to unity with Orthodox are resolved. What's left? *Aleteia*: <https://aleteia.org/2020/07/07/major-obstacles-to-unity-with-orthodox-are-resolved-whats-left-interview/>.

⁸ Velychkovsky Paisii. (n.d.). *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine*.

Saint Anthony of the Caves Monastery.⁹ In 1746 he traveled through Istanbul to Mount Athos where he was accepted into the Monastery of Christ Pantocrator. In 1779, Ven. Paisius moved to the Moldavian monastery in Neamț where he was named archimandrite in 1790.¹⁰ Under his leadership the Neamț monastery emerged as an important center for Slavonic theology and philosophy.¹¹ He is recognized as one of the major figures of Orthodox spirituality from the 18th century and is considered the father of the Orthodox monastic revival.¹² He is buried in the monastery church at Neamț where his grave is still greatly venerated. The Romanian Church and Mount Athos were the first to venerate him formally as a saint, and subsequently he was canonized by the Orthodox church in June 1988 on the occasion of the millennium of the Baptism of Kyivan Rus'.¹³ The holy relics of Ven. Paisius were uncovered in 1846, 1853, 1861 and 1872, and were found to be incorrupt.¹⁴

Blessed Vasyl Velychkovsky C.Ss.R. Bishop and Martyr

Blessed Vasyl Velychkovsky (1903–1973) was born a little less than 200 years after Ven. Paisius' birth in Stanislaviv, modern day Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine. He was a Ukrainian Redemptorist priest, and later bishop of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, one of the Eastern Catholic Churches in communion with Rome. While Bl. Vasyl was serving as a priest in 1946, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was declared an illegal body by the Soviet Union. Its hierarchy was arrested and thousands of clergies, religious and laity were imprisoned, tortured, and killed for their faith. Among those placed on death row and imprisoned and tortured was Bl. Vasyl Velychkovsky. He was tortured for his Christian faith by inhumane and unthinkable acts: electrocution, isolation, starvation, sleep deprivation, water torture, toxic injections, threats, violence, prolonged repetitive questioning, freezing, hard labor, confinement in crates, etc.¹⁵ Sensing his imminent death in 1972, the Soviets exiled him. In June 1973 he died in Canada from the injuries and torture he endured for many years.¹⁶ In 2001, Pope John Paul II during a pastoral visitation to Lviv, Ukraine, beatified Bl. Vasyl Velychkovsky and declared him a Christian martyr for his faith.¹⁷

Thirty years after his death, Bl. Vasyl Velychkovsky's body was found to be almost incorrupt. His toes that had been frozen during his imprisonment had fallen off and were subsequently divided to be used as holy relics. Bishop Julian Voronovsky who himself was ordained to the priesthood by (Bishop) Bl. Vasyl, called him "*The Father of the Underground Church*". On July 20, 2014 during the All-Ukraine Pilgrimage to Zarvanytsia, Ukraine, Patriarch Sviatoslav solemnly proclaimed Blessed Vasyl to be the Patron of Prison Ministry of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. Bl. Vasyl's intact remains are enshrined at the shrine at St. Joseph's Ukrainian Catholic Church in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

Ven. Paisius and Bl. Vasyl were born almost 200 years apart and they share the same surname. In March 2020, Serhiy V. Shumylo published a novel paper in the *Siverian Chronicle* that explored Ven. Paisius Velychkovsky's genealogy.¹⁸ Most recently, a detailed rodovid (*Ukr: родовід*) or family tree, sought for close to 100 years was discovered by Dr. Zynovia Sluzhyns'ka (*Ukr: Д-р Зиновія Служинська*) among papers belonging to her grandmother Zynovia Volynets nee Velychkovska,

⁹ Velychkovsky Paisii. (n.d.). *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine*.

¹⁰ IBID.

¹¹ IBID.

¹² McGuckin, J. A. (2009). The Life and Mission of St. Paisius Velichkovsky. 1722–1794. An Early Modern Master of the Orthodox Spiritual Life. *Spiritus. A Journal of Christian Spirituality* (9 (2)), pg. 168.

¹³ IBID, pg. 158.

¹⁴ Venerable Paisius Velichkovsky. (n.d.). *Orthodox Church in America*: <https://www.oca.org/saints/lives/2020/11/15/103311-venerable-paisius-velichkovsky>.

¹⁵ Kavats, K. (2014). The arrest and imprisonment of Bishop Vasyl' Velychkovs'kyi, 1945–1955.

¹⁶ Vasyl Velychkovsky. (n.d.). *Wikipedia*: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vasyl_Velychkovsky.

¹⁷ Sianchuk, J. C. (2014, September). Father of the Underground Church in Ukraine. pg. 30.

¹⁸ Шумило, С. В. (2020). До питання про походження поду Прп. Паїсія Величковського... pg. 144–163.

(1889–1971) in Lviv, Ukraine. The rodovid, dated October 3, 1928 was written by Volodymyr Kmetyk (1903–1983),¹⁹ Bl. Vasyl's paternal cousin. S. Shumylo's paper combined with V. Kmetyk's rodovid and Polish, Ukrainian and Lithuanian historical sources suggest that Ven. Paisius' ancestors may have come from Lithuania from the same ancestral pool that Bl. Vasyl's ancestors came from.



Figure 1 – Relics of Ven. Paisius Velychkovsky at the Neamț Monastery, Romania

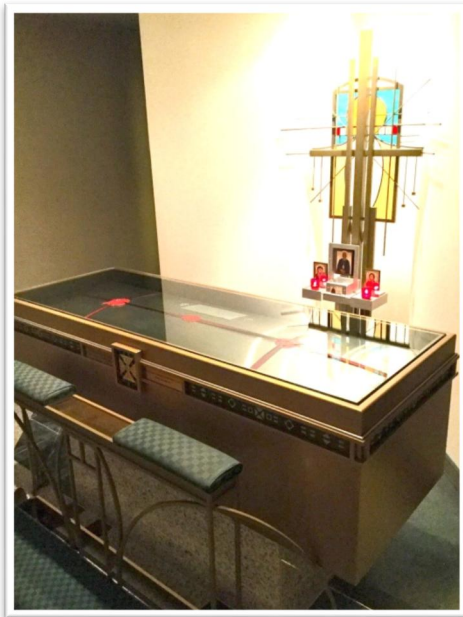


Figure 2 – Holy relics of Blessed Bishop Vasyl Velychkovsky at the shrine at St. Joseph's Ukrainian Catholic Church in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

Recently discovered evidence suggests that their paternal ancestors and relatives at one point lived in Lithuania and later in the Chernihiv region of Ukraine, including the village of Velychky near the town of Lyubech. Coincidentally, Ven. Paisius' ancestor moved from Chernihiv to Poltava,²⁰ while Bl. Vasyl's ancestor moved from

¹⁹ Свобода. (1983). Ч. 241, ст 3. Retrieved from: <http://www.svoboda-news.com/архив/pdf/1983/Svoboda-1983-241.pdf>.

²⁰ Шумило, С. В. (2020). До питання про походження роду Прп. Паїсія Величковського... рг. 146.

Velychky to Halychyna, to an area occupied today by the village of Horokholyna, at roughly the same time. Ven. Paisius was a Ukrainian Orthodox monk and came from a priestly family beginning with his grandfather. Bl. Vasyl was a Ukrainian Catholic bishop who also came from a long line of priests and the first two priests in Bl. Vasyl's lineage were orthodox priests. Both of their mothers and grandmothers became nuns after their husbands' deaths. At approximately the same period of time, both had ancestors named Luka Velychkovsky, as well as multiple ancestors named Ivan Velychkovsky. Family trees beginning in the 17th century have been reconstructed for both. Combined with historical documentation a clearer picture of a common ancestry begins to emerge.

Origins and Ancestry

The origin and evolutionary patterns of the Velychkovsky family are in a sense analogous with those of Kyivan Rus', modern day Ukraine. Analogous when considering the role cities such as Novhorod, (*Ukr: Новгород*), Novohrodok (*Ukr: Новогородок*), Chernihiv (*Ukr: Чернігів*), Poltava (*Ukr: Полтава*) and Lyubech (*Ukr: Любеч*) played in their respective developments as well as the roles of the Kingdom of Poland (*Ukr: Королівство Польське*), the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (*Ukr: Велике Князівство Литовське*), the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (*Ukr: Річ Посполита*).

According to legend, the origin of Ukraine has its beginning in the 6th century with the founding of its capital Kyiv (*Ukr: Київ*), by three Polian brothers and a sister.²¹ A little less than three centuries later, Kyiv was conquered by Varangian Prince Oleh (*Ukr: князь Олег*) from Novhorod, marking the beginning of the rule of the Riuryk Dynasty (*Ukr: Династія Рюриків*).²² Generations later in 988, the former ruler of Novhorod, Grand Prince Volodymyr the Great (*Ukr: Володимир Великий*), son of Malusha Malkovna (*Ukr: Малуша Малковна*) from Lyubech,²³ baptized Kyivan Rus', the predecessor to Ukraine.²⁴ Later, his son and three-time prince of Novhorod, Yaroslav the Wise (*Ukr: Ярослав Мудрий*), grew Kyivan Rus' to its greatest extent.²⁵

By the early XIII century Lithuania arose as a power under the Lithuanian King Mindaugas (*Ukr: Миндовг*). In 1253 he was crowned a Catholic king in the town of Novohrodok, a city 500 miles southwest of Novhorod that today is a part of Belarus (*Ukr: Білорусь*).²⁶ Mindaugas established Novohrodok as the first capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.²⁷ By 1387, a part of western Ukraine fell under Polish rule while northern and central Ukraine fell under the rule of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania whose descendants extended the rule of the Riuryk dynasty through marriage. Lithuanian rule continued over Ukrainian lands for centuries.²⁸

Michal Minigajło and Jacob Mingaila

On October 2, 1413 in the town of Horodło (*Ukr: Городло*), a treaty which strengthened the indissoluble character of the Polish-Lithuanian Union while carefully

²¹ Kyiv. (n.d.). *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine*: <http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages\KY\Kyiv.htm>.

²² Oleh, Prince. (n.d.). *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine*: <http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages\O\L\OlehPrince.htm>.

²³ Азбелев, С. Н. (2007). *Устная история в памятниках Новгорода и Новгородской земли*. Санкт-Петербург: Дмитрий Буланин. pg. 90.

²⁴ Volodymyr the Great. (n.d.). *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine*: <http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages\V\O\VolodymyrtheGreat.htm>.

²⁵ Yaroslav the Wise. (n.d.). *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine*: <http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages\Y\A\YaroslavtheWise.htm>.

²⁶ Миндовг, король пруссов и литвинов. Войшелк, сын Миндовга. (n.d.). *Краткая история Беларуси за последние 1000 лет*: <http://history-belarus.by/pages/figures/mindowg.php>.

²⁷ IBID.

²⁸ The Ukrainian lands making part of the Great Lithuanian Principality and of other States. (n.d.). *THELIB*: <https://thelib.info/tehnologii/2940383-the-ukrainian-lands-making-part-of-the-great-lithuanian-principality-and-of-other-states/>

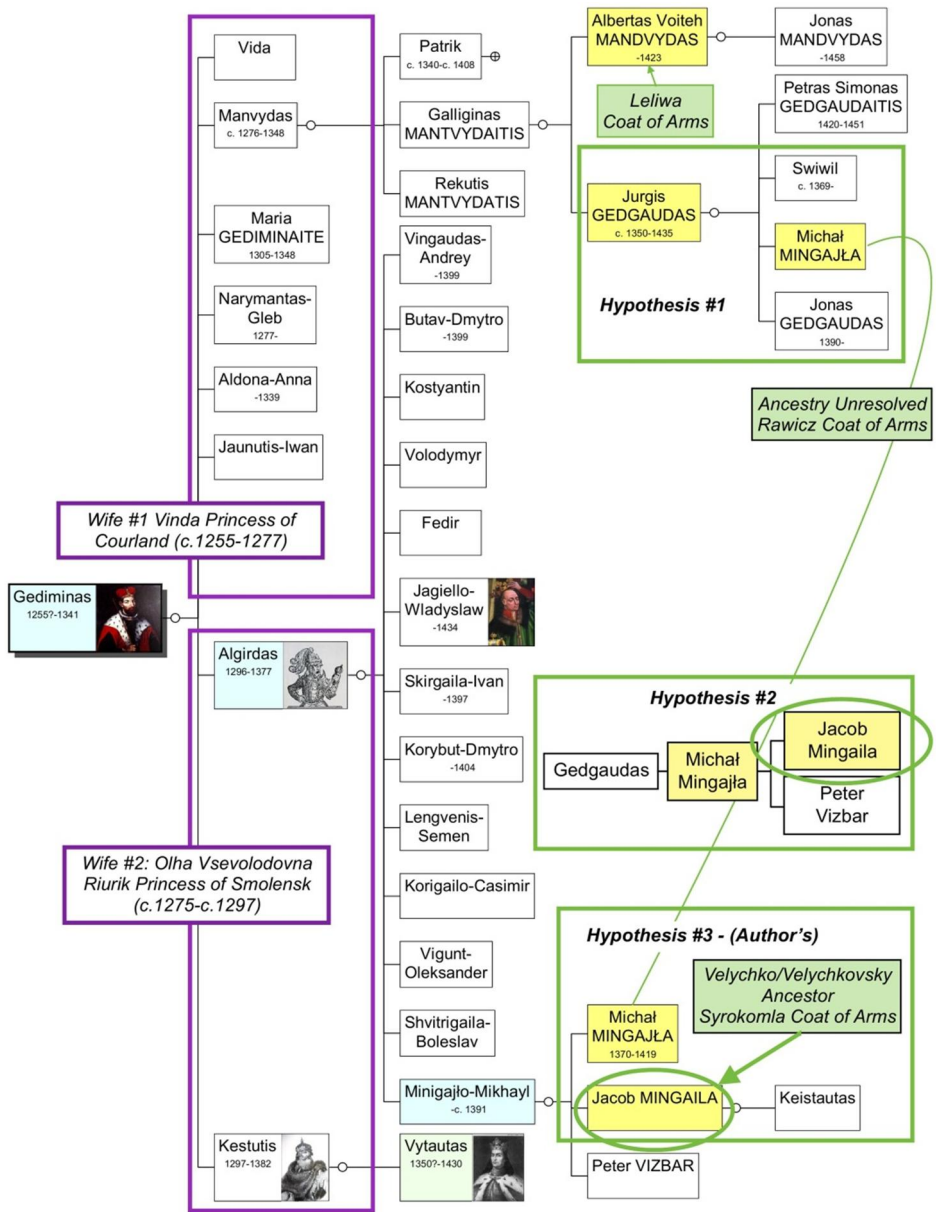


Figure 3 – Partial Hypothetical Gediminas Family Tree – Names in yellow were recipients of Polish Coats of Arm at the Union of Horodło. Vytautas who represented Lithuania at the Union of Horodło in green shaded box. There are at least three versions of who MichałMingajła’s father was. Velychko/Velychkovsky ancestor circled in red. This diagram assumes Gediminas had children by three different wives (violet boxes) and that Algirdas had two wives

balancing Polish and Lithuanian interests was signed between Poland and Grand Duke Vytautas (*Ukr: Вітовт*) from Lithuania. As part of the treaty, 47 Lithuanian nobles received rights to various Polish coats of arm.²⁹ Among them was Jacob Mingaila (*alt: Jan Minigel Ukr: Якуб Мінігайло*), who received rights to the Syrokomla (*Ukr: Сурокомла*) coat of arms.³⁰ The Rawicz (*Ukr: Равич*) coat of arms was granted to Michał (Mykola) Minigajło (*alt: Mingailas, Minigajło, Minigał Ukr: Міхал Мінігайло*)

²⁹ Sužiedėlis, S. (n.d.). Horodle, Union of. *Encyclopedia Lituanica II*. Boston, Massachusetts. pg. 443–444.

³⁰ Górczyński, S., & Kochanowski, J. (1990). *Herby Szlachty Polskie*. Warszawa: Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego. pg. 145–146.

castellan of Vilnius. Michal Minigajło is thought to be related to Jacob Mingaila, bearer of the Syrokomla coat of arms.³¹

Information Michal Minigajło's ancestry is sparse but several hypotheses have emerged about the identity of his father. Hypothesis #1 promotes him as the son of Jurgis Gedgaudas (*alt: Gedihold Ukr: Гедигольд*), brother of Albertas Manvydas (*Ukr: Альберт Войцех Монивид*).^{32 33 34} Some associate him with Prince Butovt (*alt: Demetrius Ukr: Бутав-Дмитро*) (1359–1399) who was Algirdas' (*Ukr: Ольгерд*) son.³⁵ Hypothesis #2 was formed by Historian E. Chernet's'kyand genealogist Z. Sluzhyn's'ka. They wrote that Michal Minigajło's father was Gedgaudas, the head of Oshmy any and a castellan from Vilnius³⁶ who they surmised was the son of the Novhorod prince Minigajło, son of Algirdas.³⁷ New data however, shows that Michal Minigajło's signature always appeared before the signature of Albertas Manvydas in documents from Vytautas the Great, which mean she held a higher position in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania than Albertas.³⁸ This brings to question Hypothesis #2 because if Michal Minigajło was the son of Gedgaudas, he would have been two generations younger than Vytautas and a generation younger than Albertas Manvydas. It is unlikely that someone that much younger would be closer to Vytautas than Albertas Manvydas. Hypothesis #3 argues that Albertas Manvydas, Gedgaudas, Michal Minigajło and Jacob Mingaila all received coats of arm at the Union of Horodło, so it is likely that they may have been from a similar generation. Considering this and the patrimony of surnames, Michal Minigajło generationally lines up as the son of Minigajło, son of Algirdas and brother of Jacob Mingaila. All three hypotheses suggest that both Michal Minigajło and Jacob Mingaila are descendants of King Gediminas.

The Lithuanian recipient of the Syrokomla coat of arms was Jacob Mingaila who was among the boyars of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania who converted to Christianity, received the rights and privileges of the Polish gentry, as well as the right to use the Polish coats of arms.³⁹ He was an influential Samogitian (*Ukr: Самогітянин*) noble (i.e. boyar)⁴⁰ and one of the most influential nobles of Kaltinénai (*Ukr: Колтиняни*), a town in Lithuania about 137 miles northwest of Vilnius.⁴¹ He was close to Grand Duke Vytautas the Great where he held various responsible positions^{42 43} and was referred to as a "Samogitian elder".⁴⁴ He was mentioned in either 1406 or 1408 together with his brother Peter Vizbar as having met with Kűchmeister, an official of the Order who ruled Samogitia at that time.⁴⁵ In 1412, he along with his brother Peter Vizbar, his son

³¹ Служинська, З., & Чернецький, Е. (2001). Князі і Шляхта Велички (Величковські). *Генеалогічні записки Українського геральдичного товариства* (Випуск II), pg. 183.

³² Jurgis Gedgaudas. (n.d.). *GENI*: <https://www.geni.com/people/Jurgis-Gedgaudas/6000000014913002876>.

³³ Petrauskas, Rimvydas (2003). Lietuvos diduomenė XIV a. pabaigoje – XV a. (in Lithuanian). *Aidai*. pg. 77.

³⁴ Городельская уния. (n.d.). Retrieved from: <https://www.litviny.net/104310861088108610761077108311001089108210721103-1091108510801103.html>.

³⁵ Beauvois, D. B. (1991). *Szkolnictwo polskie na ziemiach litewsko-ruskich 1803–1832* (Vol. 2: Szkoły podstawowe i średnie). Lublin. pg. 166.

³⁶ Служинська, З., & Чернецький, Е. (2001). Князі і шляхта Велички (Величковські). *Генеалогічні записки Українсько геральдичного товариства* (Випуск II), pg. 182–184.

³⁷ *IBID*.

³⁸ Пятраўскас, Р., & Макараў, М. (2015). Літоўская знаць у канцы XIV–XV ст.: Склад–структура–улада. Смаленск: Інбелкульт. pg. 270.

³⁹ Городельская уния. (n.d.). Retrieved from: <https://www.litviny.net/104310861088108610761077108311001089108210721103-1091108510801103.html>.

⁴⁰ Пятраўскас, Р., & Макараў, М. (2015). Літоўская знаць у канцы XIV–XV ст.: Склад–структура–улада. pg. 270.

⁴¹ Kaltinėnų krašto bajorai XIV a. pabaigoje – XV a. pradžioje. (2010). *Voruta. It*: <http://www.voruta.lt/kaltinenu-krasto-bajorai-xiv-a-pabaigoje-%E2%80%93-xv-a-pradzioje/>; Lietuvos Metrika. Kn. 3, p. 50.

⁴² *IBID*.

⁴³ Almonaitis, V. (2011). Kaltinėnų krašto bajorai XIV a. pabaigoje – XV a. pradžioje. *Lietuvos istorijos metraštis*, pg. 85–92.

⁴⁴ *IBID*. pg. 87–88.

⁴⁵ *IBID*.

Kestaut (*alt: Kstautas or Keistautas*) were called elders of Vilnius.⁴⁶ Jacob, his brother and son, along with 27 other nobles were also mentioned in a donation deed issued by Grand Duke Vytautas in 1415 to the nobles of the Kaitinėnai region and in letters of the Order's Marshal sent in 1419.^{47,48}

Research into the most prominent noblemen of Vytautas' epoch shows that their high status could be accounted for by their descent.⁴⁹ Their parents belonged to then ruling elite,⁵⁰ thus the Union of Horodło drove the institutionalization of the social élite which attributed to the appearance of estate privileges.⁵¹

Prince Teodor Velychko and Dutchess Druzhiyana Voronetska

More than 150 years later, in 1578, Prince Teodor (*alt: Fedir Ukr: Федір*) Welychko (*alt: Wieliczko Ukr: Величко*), a Lithuanian nobleman in Novohrodok who was married to Dutchess Druzhiyana Voronetska (*alt: Woronieckq Ukr: князівня Дружияна Воронецька*) in Novhorodok, is mentioned in the constitution as a bearer of the Syrokomla coat of arms with variation,⁵² the same coat of arms that was granted to Jacob Mingaila. The Velychko family in Lithuania likely grew and expanded in the region because by 1641, the surnames Velychko and Velychkovsky are mentioned multiple times in the Lithuanian Archaeographic Collection as land owners in the Trakai district near Vilnius in 1641.⁵³ Evhen Chernets'kyy and Z. Sluzhyns' karpoposed that the Velychkovsky surname evolved from the surname Velychko⁵⁴ akin to the historical account of the Sanhushko (*var: Sanhuszko Ukr: Сангушки*) surname. Alexander, the grandson of Algirdas who was the great grandson of Gediminas lived in the first half of the 15th century and served as prince (1433–1443). His givend name of Alexander, in a tenderly reduced form would sound like Alexandrushko, then Sandrushko and over time was shortened to the endeared form of Sanhushko.⁵⁵ The nickname Sanhushko was subsequently adopted by his descendants as their surname, creating a new familial line.

Additional traces of the Velychko and Velychkovsky families's existence in Lithuania are evident to this day by the vitue of a village named Veličkava (*alt: Velychkova*)⁵⁶ in the Trakai district (Vilniaus apskritis) in Lithuania about 16 mi (or 26 km) west of Vilnius, the country's capital city.

In 1790, a testimony consisting of recorded documents that confirmed the Velychko family's rights to Syrokomla, was submitted by Teodor Velychko's descendants and were recognized by the Mohylansky Noble Deputy Assembly (*Ukr: Могилівське дворянське депутатське зібрання*).⁵⁷ Years later, Rev. Joseph Velychkovsky (*Ukr: о. Йосиф Величковський*) (1821–1903), a pastor in Chertizh (*Ukr: Чертиж*), Ukraine, wrote a testimony describing his oldest ancestor as a Lithuanian named Barabash (*Ukr: Барабаш*) who had noble rights, and who moved from Lithuania to the village of Velychky near Lyubech in Chervivshchyna, Ukrainewith two brothers.⁵⁸ One brother moved to Moscow, the other's destiny is

⁴⁶ Пятраўскас, Р., & Макараў, М. (2015). Літоўская знаць у канцы XIV–XV ст.: Склад–структура–улада. рг. 270.

⁴⁷ IBID.

⁴⁸ IBID.

⁴⁹ Petrauskas, R. (2002). The Lithuanian nobility in the late-fourteenth and fifteenth centuries: composition and structure. *Lithuanian Historical Studies*, 1–22, рг. 8.

⁵⁰ IBID.

⁵¹ IBID.

⁵² Niesiecki, K. (1842). *Herbarz Polski* (Vol. 9). рг. 296–297.

⁵³ Щербицкий, О. (1871). *Археографический сборник документов* (Vol. 5), рг. 25, 26, 35, 44, 46, 47, 52, 55, 57, 60, 62, 63.

⁵⁴ Служинська, З., & Чернецький, Е. (2001). Князі і шляхта Велички (Величковські). рг. 182.

⁵⁵ КНЯЗІ САНГУШКИ «RODV. WYELKIEGO. KNIZE. LITHEWSKIÉ. OLGIERDOWA». (n.d.). *Володимир-Волинський історичний музей*: <http://volodymyrmuseum.com/naukovi-statti/57-knyazi-sanhushky-rodv-wyelkiego-knize-lithewski-olgierdowa-vstup-mynuvshyni-dynastii-sanhushkiv-prysviatylo-uvahu-bahato-heraldystiv-istorykiv-suchasnykiv-kotri-neridko-buly-blyzkymy-do-kniazivskoi-familii-sere>.

⁵⁶ Veličkava. (n.d.). *Wikipedia*: <https://lt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Veličkava>.

⁵⁷ Служинська, З., & Чернецький, Е. (2001). Князі і шляхта Велички (Величковські). рг. 182.

⁵⁸ Кметик, В. (1928). Родовід Величковських. Саджава: *George Welyczkowski Archives*. рг. 2–3.

unknown and Barabash himself and/or his family relocated to the village of Horokholyna (*Ukr: Горохоліна*), Ukraine when it was largely forest, effectively starting the Ukrainian Velychkovsky family line that Bl. Vasyl Velychkovsky (*Ukr: Бл. Василь*) descended from.⁵⁹ In 1928, Volodymyr Kmetyk (*Ukr: Володимир Кметик*) the son of Bl. Vasyl's aunt Hlykeria (*Ukr: Гликерія*) Kmetyk nee Velychkovska, preserved a transcript of Rev. Joseph Velychkovsky's notes, as well as a family tree that begins with Barabash and includes two drawings of the Velychkovsky family coat of arms – Syrokomla.⁶⁰ Bl. Vasyl in his autobiography wrote that his father told him that his ancestor was from the town of Velychky and had noble rights.⁶¹

Recognizing that the main functions of the family during this era were the preservation of the social status, personal protection and memory,⁶² Evhen Chernets'kyu and Dr. Zynovia Sluzhyns'ka, concluded that the available historical evidence shows that Bl. Vasyl's Velychkovsky family line with rights to the Syrokomla coat of arms hypothetically descended from Teodor Velychko or his relatives and Jacob Mingaila, himself a descendant of Minigajlo and Lithuanian King Gediminas.⁶³

Lithuanian Rule over Chernihivshchyna

Returning to the rule of Ukrainian lands by Lithuania, shortly after the Union of Horodlo in 1413, Lithuanian King Vytautas, the grand son of King Gediminas granted ownership of the Ukrainian town of Lyubech to Lithuanian noble Albertas Manvydas⁶⁴ who had received rights to the Leliwa coat of arms in Horodlo.⁶⁵ Rights to the Leliwa coat of arms were granted to the Cossack Velychkovsky family in 1658⁶⁶ and in 1700, a Velychkovsky coat of arms that is nearly identical to the Leliwa coat of arms appeared in the name of Cossack Joseph Andriyevich Velychkovsky.⁶⁷ In 1471, the Kyiv Voivodstvo was formed and Kazimir Jagiellon, the Grand Duke of Lithuania (*Ukr: Великий литовський князь Казимир*) appointed Martynas Goštautas (*alt: Gastold Ukr: Мартин Гаутольд*) governor of Kyiv.⁶⁸ Martynas Goštautas was the son of Jonas (*Ukr: Ян*) Goštautas who received the rights to the Abdank (*Ukr: Аданк*) coat of arms in Horodlo.⁶⁹

In 1503, Martynas Goštautas' son Albertas Goštautas (*Ukr: Ольбрихт Гаутольд*) was named governor of Novohrodok,⁷⁰ the same city that Prince Teodor Velychko and his wife Dutchess Druzhiana Voronetska would reside in years to come.⁷¹

During this period, multiple individuals with surnames that eventually appear in Lyubech and who are considered Ven. Paisius' ancestors are identified as living in Lithuania. Noblemen Stepan Savin (*Ukr: Степан Савин*) and Ivan Savich (*Ukr: Іван Савич*) are identified in 1508 and 1518 respectively, as living in Lithuania.⁷² They are both probable ancestors of the Savich and Savin-Velychkovsky and Velychkovsky

⁵⁹ Кметик, В. (1928). Родовід Величковських. рр. 2–3.

⁶⁰ IBID.

⁶¹ Velychkovsky, B. V. (2002). Be Not Afraid, A Martyr's Story. *Redeemer's Voice Press*. рр. 1–3.

⁶² Petrauskas, R. (2002). The Lithuanian nobility in the late-fourteenth and fifteenth centuries: composition and structure. рр. 19.

⁶³ Служинська, З., & Чернецький, Е. (2001). Князі і шляхта Велички (Величковські). рр. 183.

⁶⁴ Кондратьев, І. (2014). Любецьке Староство (XVI – середина XVII ст.). рр. 32.

⁶⁵ IBID; Niesiecki, K. (1842). *Herbarz Polski* (Vol. 6), рр. 41.

⁶⁶ Wykazy Polskich Rodzin Szlacheckich. (1938). *Polska Encyclopedia Szlachecka* (Vol. 12), рр. 127.

⁶⁷ Лукомский, В. К., & Модзалевський, В. (1914-г.1993). Малоросійський Гербовник (с рисунками Егора Нарбута). рр. 24.

⁶⁸ Кондратьев, І. (2014). Любецьке Староство... рр. 37.

⁶⁹ Niesiecki, K. (1839). *Herbarz Polski* (Vol. 2), рр. 4; The Goštautas family. (n.d.). *Liubavas, Museum of history, cultural and technical heritage*: <http://www.liubavas.lt/the-gostautas-family/>.

⁷⁰ Кондратьев, І. (2014). Любецьке Староство... рр. 40.

⁷¹ Niesiecki, K. (1842). *HerbarzPolski* (Vol. 9), рр. 296–297.

⁷² Кром, М. (2010). Меж Русью и Литвой. Пограничные земли в системе русско-литовских отношений конца XV – первой трети XVI вв. рр. 267.

families⁷³ in Lyubech, who were among the Cossack officers of the late XVI – mid XVII centuries.⁷⁴ The Savich-Velychkovsky (*Ukr: Савичі-Величковські*) family shared a common ancestor with the Tarasevich-Velychkovsky (*Ukr: Тарасевичі-Величковські*) family, ancestors of Ven. Paisius Velychkovsky.⁷⁵ Also living in Lithuania in 1528 was Prince Vasyl Ivanovich Veletsky (*alt: Wielicki Ukr: Василь Іванович Велецький*),⁷⁶ the possible ancestor of Joseph Veletsky (*Ukr: Йосиф Велецький*), a soldier with the Polish-Lithuanian Army who in 1651 died as a Cossack in the Lyubech–Chernihiv area under the flag of B. Khmelnytsky.⁷⁷ Joseph Veletsky is also referred to as Joseph Velychkovsky implying that he descended from ancestors common to the Velychkovsky family.⁷⁸ The surname Veletsky appears with Velychko in the list of families who had rights to the Syrokomla coat of arms (with variation).⁷⁹

In 1516, Lyubech was given to Albertas Goštautas in “eternity”.⁸⁰ He became the voivode of Vilnius (*Ukr: Вільно*) and the Grand Chancellor of Lithuania. He married Sophia Vereyska (*Ukr: Софія Верейська*) who had governed Lyubech with her mother after her father Vasyl’s death.⁸¹ Sophia was a descendant of the Moscow line of the Riurik family.⁸² After getting married, Albertas relocated to Lyubech and Chernihivshchyna and was followed into the region by a large group of Lithuanian nobility.⁸³ Since Novohrodok was shown to be the home to Velychko nobles in 1578, it is reasonable to assume that the family had a presence there decades earlier when Albertas Goštautas was governor. This in combination with the surnames living in Lithuania prior to their appearance in Lyubech, suggests that Ven. Pasius’ paternal ancestors may have originated from the same Velychko-Velychkovsky ancestry nest as Bl. Vasyl’s ancestors in Lithuania and that a branch of the family may well have followed Albertas Goštautas into Chernihivshchyna. Of note, the surname Velychkovsky appears in Chernihivshchyna only after Albertas Goštautas’ arrival.

The reason the Velychkovsky family may have followed Albertas Goštautas to Chernihivshchyna is supported by the historic model of land-ownership.⁸⁴ In early XVI century Lithuania there existed a rather complicated system of land holding, which could not be expressed by the formula ‘one boyar – one village’.⁸⁵ A characteristic feature of the patrimonial holdings was their topographical dispersal. The nobles’ land holdings were scattered in various parts of the country, which corresponded to the interrelated structure of the family. Such an order of landowning enabled the nobility to ensure their influence in various parts of the state.⁸⁶ Given this, it is highly probable that as nobility and others moved south to Chernihivshchyna and its surrounding areas from Lithuania, new land grants and ownership were in a sense the expansion of a family’s holdings and the family lines rooted in Lithuania.

⁷³ Кондратьев, І. (2014). Любецьке Староство... р. 56.

⁷⁴ Яковенко, Н. М. (1993). Українська шляхта з кінця XIV до середини XVII ст. Волинь і Центральна Україна. Київ: Наукова думка. р. 162, 164.

⁷⁵ Кривошея, В. (2012). Українське козацтво в національній пам’яті: Чернігівський полк: монографія (Vol. 1), р. 287.

⁷⁶ Кром, М. (2010). Меж Русью и Литвой... р. 126.

⁷⁷ Кондратьев, І., & Кривошея, В. (1999). Нариси історії Чернігівщини періоду козацтва: Любеч. р. 98; Кондратьев, І. (2014). Любецьке Староство... р. 225, 229.

⁷⁸ Кондратьев, І. (2014). Любецьке Староство... р. 225; Кондратьев, І. В. (2011). Шляхта Любецького староства як джерело поповнення Війська Запорізького. *Гілея. Науковий Вісник*, р. 314.

⁷⁹ Niesiecki, K. (1842). *Herbarz Polski* (Vol. 9), р. 296–297.

⁸⁰ Кондратьев, І. (2014). Любецьке Староство... р. 59.

⁸¹ *IBID.* р. 60–61.

⁸² Кондратьев, І. (2006). Історія міст і сіл – Любецька волость наприкінці XV – на початку XVI ст. *Сіверянський Літопис*. 27–37, р. 32; Яковенко, Н. М. (1993). Українська шляхта з кінця XIV до середини XVII ст. р. 344.

⁸³ Кондратьев, І. Історія міст і сіл – Любецька волость наприкінці XV – на початку XVI ст. р. 31; Jablonowski A. *Polska XVI wieku podwzylem Geograficzno-statystycznym*. Tom XI. Ziemia Ruskie. р. 104.

⁸⁴ Petrauskas, R. (2002). The Lithuanian nobility in the late-fourteenth and fifteenth centuries: composition and structure. р. 9.

⁸⁵ *IBID.*

⁸⁶ *IBID.*

Implicitly, it explains genealogical descent by the presence of surnames such as Savich, Savin, Velychko, Velychkovsky et al. in Lithuania prior to their appearance in Lyubech and Chernihivshchyna, and supports the hypothesis that Ven. Paisius' paternal ancestors were from the Velychko-Velychkovsky ancestry nest in Lithuania similar to Bl. Vasyl's ancestors.

Velychkovsky Family in Chernihivshchyna

A. Jablonowski⁸⁷ wrote that the Tarasevich-Velychkovsky family was nobilized during the times of Albertas Goštautas and was granted Sylchansky lands near Lyubech.⁸⁸ It is important to point out that the relations between the dukes and the nobility were a regular phenomenon in society, where power depended on personal relationships.⁸⁹ The concept of noble status was logical only in the context of lineage.⁹⁰ On March 13, 1571 the Savich-Velychkovsky family were given Humyshchena, Selhirska and Sylchansky (*Ukr: Гумишчєна, Сєльгїрська і Сїльчан-ська*) lands by Sigismund II Augustus (*Ukr: Сигїзмунд II Август*).⁹¹ On March 13, 1571 and the use of Sylchansky lands was confirmed to landowner Nazar (*Ukr: Назар*) Tarasevich.⁹²

Using generational tables with data provided by V. V. Kryvosheia and aligning them with the names of the members of the Velychkovsky family in Lyubech that in 1642 were raided by Polish magnate Martin Kalinowski (*Ukr: Мартин Калиновський*), shows that the founder of the Lyubech Velychkovsky line (or 1st generation) was Taras (*Ukr: Тарас*) with no surname.⁹³ The surname Tarasevich appears in the XVI century, then by the 1st half of the XVII century appears as Tarasevich-Velychkovsky (*Ukr: Тарасєвичі-Вєличковські*).⁹⁴ Ven. Paisus Velychkovsky is thought to be a direct descendant of the Tarasevich-Velychkovsky family line.⁹⁵

Hypothetically, by the 2nd generation, two more lines appear: Savich-Velychkovsky (*Ukr: Савичі-Вєличковські*) and Demydovich-Velychkovsky (*Ukr: Дємидовичі-Вєличковські*)⁹⁶ and by the 4th generation the Yushchenko-Velychkovsky (*Ukr: Ющєнки-Вєличковські*) family appears.⁹⁷ Odds are that all four lines had a common ancestor which hypothetically means that they were all either relatives or ancestors of Ven. Paisius'. Of note, Rev. Ivan Tarasevich (Velychkovsky) is seemingly the first name from all these lines that is identified with a date. He was a priest of the Pyatnytska Church (*Ukr: П'ятницька церква*) in Lyubech on January 18, 1548.⁹⁸

⁸⁷ Кондратьєв, І., & Кривошея, В. (1999). Нариси історії Чернігівщини періоду козацтва: Любеч. pg. 97; Jablonowski, A. (1911). Pisma (Vol. 3: Ukraina). Warszawa. pg. 35; Кондратьєв, І. (2014). Любецьке Староство... pg. 44.

⁸⁸ Кондратьєв, І., & Кривошея, В. (1999). Нариси історії Чернігівщини періоду козацтва: Любеч. pg. 97; Jablonowski, A. (1911). Pisma. pg. 35; Кондратьєв, І. (2014). Любецьке Староство... pg. 44.

⁸⁹ Petrauskas, R. (2002). The Lithuanian nobility in the late-fourteenth and fifteenth centuries: composition and structure. pg. 4.

⁹⁰ IBID, pg. 7.

⁹¹ Кондратьєв, І. (2014). Любецьке Староство... pg. 334; Кривошея, В. В. Українське козацтво в національній пам'яті. Чернігівський полк: у 2 т. / Т. І. Київ: Пріоритети, 2012. pg. 287.

⁹² Кондратьєв, І., & Кривошея, В. (1999). Нариси історії Чернігівщини періоду козацтва: Любеч. pg. 97

⁹³ Кривошея, В. (2012). Українське козацтво в національній пам'яті: Чернігівський полк. pg. 194, 287–293.

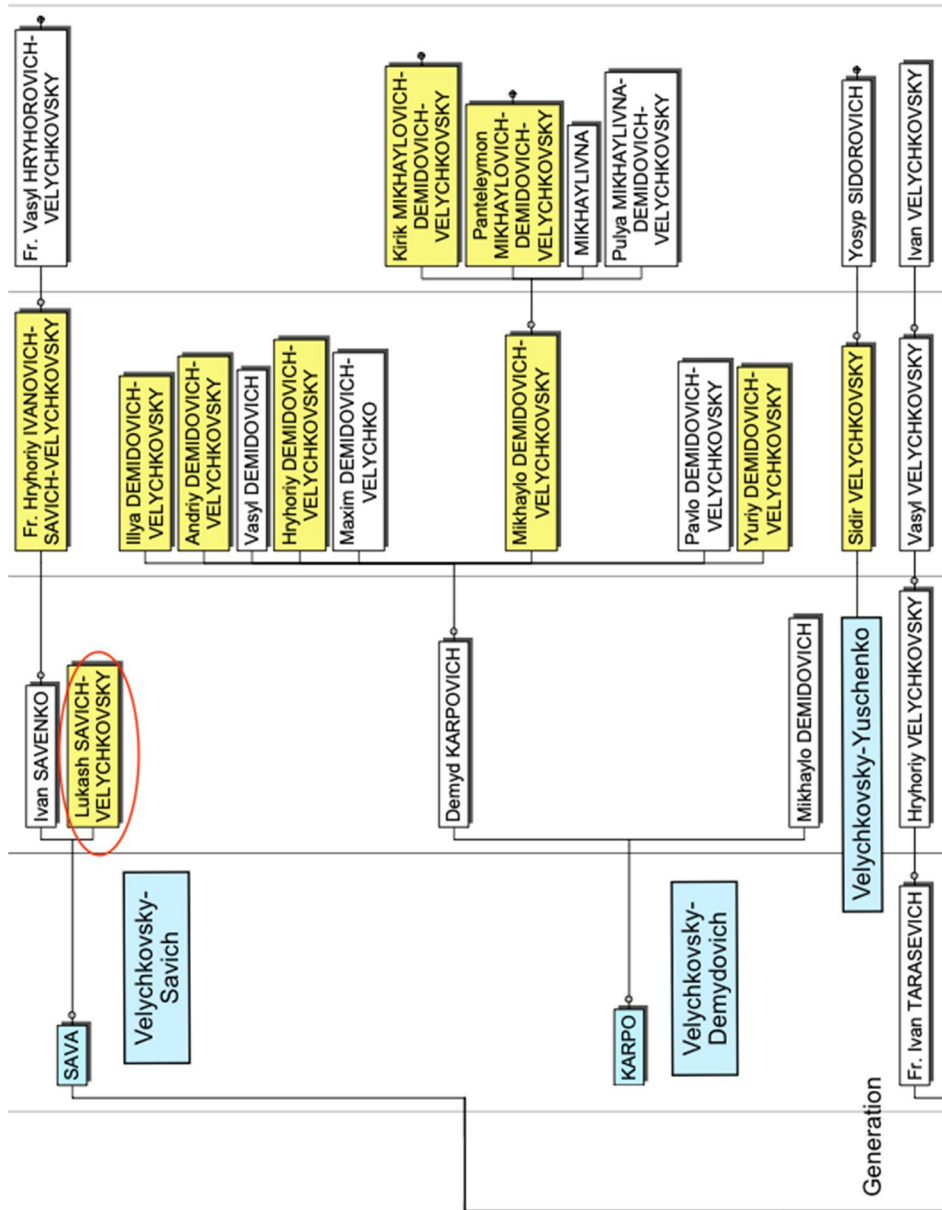
⁹⁴ Кондратьєв, І. (2014). Любецьке Староство... pg. 334; Кривошея В. (2012). Українське козацтво в національній пам'яті: Чернігівський полк. pg. 286, 291; Яковенко, Н. М. (1993). Українська шляхта з кінця XIV до середини XVII ст. pg. 164.

⁹⁵ Кривошея, В. (2012). Українське козацтво в національній пам'яті: Чернігівський полк. pg. 290–291. Note: Ven. Paisus' grandfather Ivan Velychkovsky is listed.

⁹⁶ IBID, pg. 287–293.

⁹⁷ IBID, pg. 194, 287–293.

⁹⁸ Шумило С. В. (2020). До питання про походження роду прп. Паїсія Величковського... pg. 146; Кондратьєв, І. (2014). Любецьке Староство... pg. 70; Кривошея, В. (2012). Українське козацтво в національній пам'яті: Чернігівський полк. pg. 290; Кондратьєв, І., & Кривошея, В. (1999). Нариси історії Чернігівщини періоду козацтва: Любеч. pg. 97.



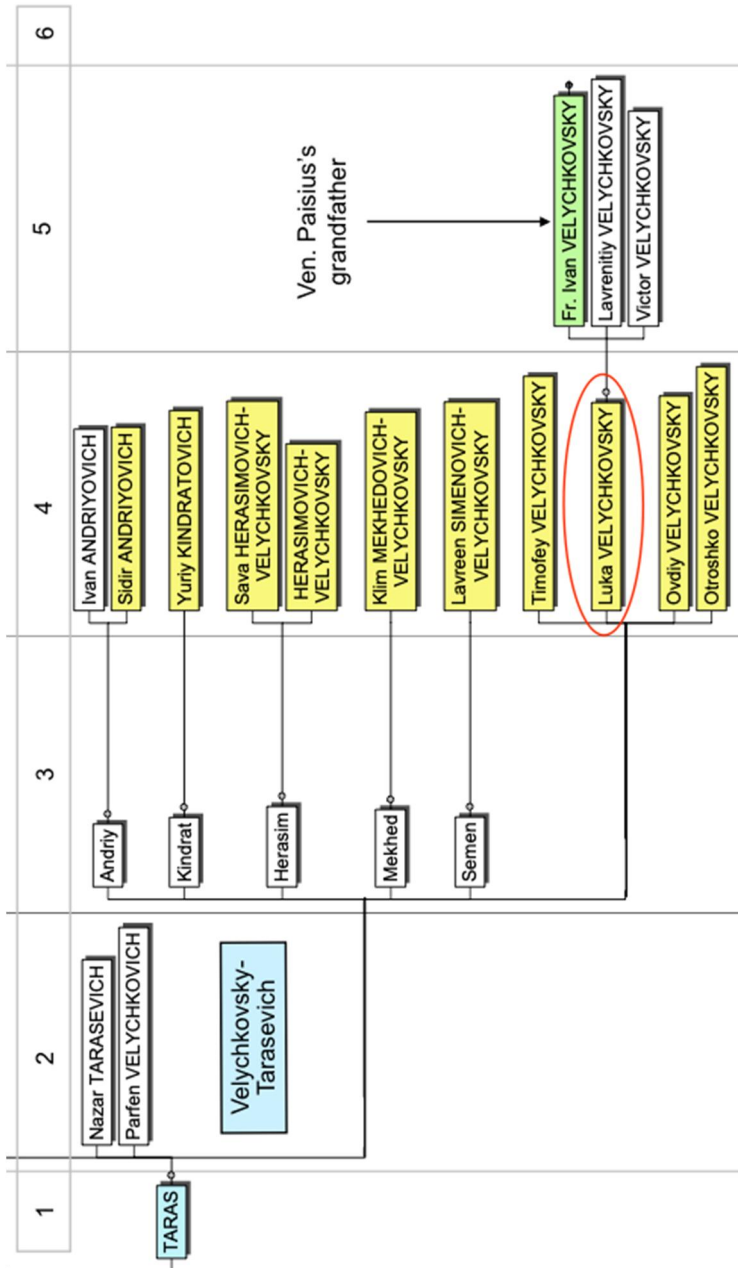


Figure 4 – Generational tables of four independent Velychkovsky families aligned by the names that were raided by Martin Kalinowski (in green shaded boxes).

Lukash Velychkovsky from the Savich line (yellow box circled in red) and Luka Velychkovsky from the Tarasevich line (green box circled in red) were likely two unique individuals but are sometimes referred to as the same person. The latter is Ven. Paisius' great-grandfather (yellow boxes at lower right)

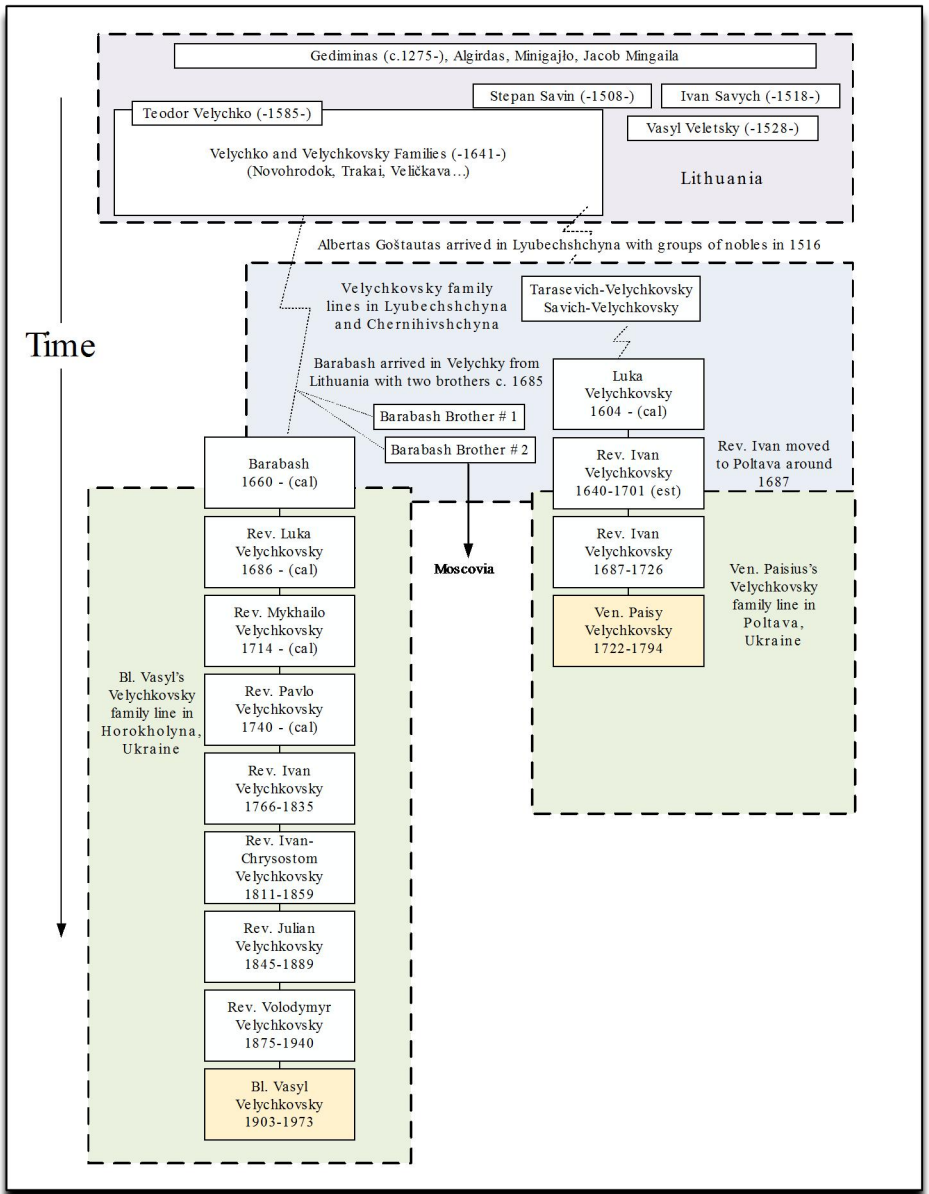


Figure 5 – High level hypothetical diagram of how Bl. Vasyl’s ancestors intersect with Ven. Paisius’ ancestors

The Lyubech line of the Velychkovsky family expanded throughout the region both in number and influence over the next 200 years. Over this period, the family established or owned many villages and lands between Lyubech and Chernihiv, including Velychky, Mokry Velychky, Sukhy Velychky, Tarasevichevy-Velychky, Savinky and others (*Ukr: Велички, Мокрі Велички, Сухі Велички, Тарасевичеві-Велички, Савинки*).⁹⁹ The village of Velychky, where Bl. Vasyl’s ancestor Barabash and his two brothers moved to from Lithuania was eventually renamed Tarasevichevy-Velychky and today is known today as the village of Tarasa Shevchenka.¹⁰⁰ Ven. Paisius’ great grandfather and nobleman Luka Velychkovsky lived in Lyubech¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ Кондратьев, І. (2014). Любецьке Староство... р. 320; Кривошея, В. В, Українське козацтво в національній пам’яті. Чернігівський полк. р. 286–287.

¹⁰⁰ Кондратьев, І. (2021, January 29). Любеч і Велички. (G. Welyczkowsky, Interviewer).

¹⁰¹ Кривошея, В. (2012). Українське козацтво в національній пам’яті: Чернігівський полк. р. 291.

while Ven. Paisius' grandfather, the famous poet and writer Rev. Ivan (*Укр: Іван*) Velychkovsky, moved from Chernihiv to Poltava around 1687,¹⁰² effectively starting the Poltava branch of the Velychkovsky family line that Ven. Paisius descended from. Records show that the greater Velychko and Velychkovsky families in the region joined the Zaporizhian Army and especially the Nizhyn regiment (*Укр: Ніжинський полк*) in number.¹⁰³ Many were horseman and named officers of the famous Cossack Lyubech 100 (*Укр: Любецька Сотня*).¹⁰⁴

Conclusion

The genesis of the Velychkovsky family has its roots in Lithuania. The surname likely evolved from the surname Velychko. Using the trail of the Syrokomla coat of arms, the Velychko and Velychkovsky families are hypothetical descendants or relatives of Prince Teodor Velychko, Jacob Mingaila and King Gediminas.

Bl. Vasyl Velychkovsky's branch of the Velychkovsky family in Ukraine began with the arrival of his ancestor, a Lithuanian named Barabash in the village of Velychky, in Chernihivshchyna around 1680. Velychky was a holding of the Velychkovsky family line in Chernihivshchyna related to Ven. Paisius.

The branch of Ven. Paisius' Velychkovsky Poltava family line in Ukraine began in Lyubech, but curated data suggests that his ancestors in Lyubech also came from Lithuania around 1525 during Albertas Goštautas' rule and from virtually the same region in Lithuanian as Bl. Vasyl's ancestors. To that degree, it is probable that the origin of the surname Velychkovsky for both Ven. Paisius and Bl. Vasyl is from a common Lithuanian ancestry.

Ultimately, a definitive way to determine whether Ven. Paisius and Bl. Vasyl were related is to examine their DNA – an extant possibility that is being actively pursued by the author.

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BLESSED VASYL VELYCHKOVSKY'S ANCESTRAL RELATIONSHIP WITH VENERABLE PAISIUS VELYCHKOVSKY AND CHERNIHIVSHCHYNA

Purpose: To determine whether two prominent Ukrainian figures with identical surnames and with ancestors who lived in the Chernihiv region were genetically related. Discoveries about the ancestries of Venerable Paisius Velychkovsky (1722–1794) and Blessed Vasyl Velychkovsky (1903–1973) have advanced and curated data leads to new hypothetical conclusions about their paternal genealogical connection.

Methodology: Findings and conclusions are presented using an anthropological and chronological approach relying on published works and family archives. **Scientific**

Novelty: For the first time a documented attempt to jointly explore and profile the collective origins of Ven. Paisius Velychkovsky and Bl. Vasyl Velychkovsky is made to determine whether they are genealogically related. **Conclusions:** Two historically prominent Ukrainian figures born almost 200 years apart shared the same paternal surname. Their significance was elevated when Ven. Paisius Velychkovsky was canonized by the Orthodox church in June 1988, more than a century after his relics were uncovered and found to be incorrupt. Similarly, Bl. Vasyl Velychkovsky was declared a Christian martyr for his faith in 2001, and thirty years after his death, his body with the exception of his toes was also found to be incorrupt. Ven. Paisius was the last living member of his immediate family, thus his immediate family line became extinct with his passing, while Bl. Vasyl was celibate but had two sisters whose families exist to present day. While their families' descendants are limited, a focus on their paternal ancestors reveals that they both once lived in the Chernihiv region of Ukraine and that their common surname and its derivations existed in Lithuania prior to the earliest known occurrences in Ukraine. Surnames of related families to the Velychkovsky family in the Chernihiv region also existed in Lithuania. Heraldry and in particular coats of arm associated with the Velychkovsky surname establish yet another link to a hypothetical Velychkovsky ancestry dating back to Lithuanian King Gediminas in the XIV century. Limited but circumstantial evidence suggests they are both related by paternal descent from a common ancestral nest in Lithuania. The possibility of scientifically answering the question of whether they have a genealogical connection using DNA remains a distinct and extant possibility.

Key words: Paisius Velychkovsky, Vasyl Velychkovsky, Teodor Velychko, Lithuania, Novohrodok, Velychky, Lyubech, Chernihiv region, Syrokomla.

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