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ABSTRACT

This thesis will examine the political landscape that shaped the canonization process of Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi, a seventeenth-century Tuscan mystic. Maria Maddalena's visions, teachings and miracles led to her beatification-but only in conjunction with a carefully orchestrated campaign by a number of influential Florentines. Based on the contemporary descriptions of Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi's visions, biographies written by two of her confessors, and transcripts from the ecclesiastical investigation, this thesis will argue that the political connections of the Medici and the Barberini clans proved critical to Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi's beatification and canonization.

Maria Maddalena's visions, authenticated by the Catholic Church, and her plan of reforms for her convent inspired Florentine support first for her beatification and then for her canonization. This thesis will examine how religious imagery influenced the Florentine and Mantuan nobility who then began to petition Rome for her beatification. It will then analyze her confessors' illustrated biographies, which by highlighting this noble support sought to put pressure on the Vatican. The thesis then turns to those witnesses who testified on her behalf during the Church's investigation into her veneration. It will demonstrate that Urban VIII's network of family and clients was instrumental to Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi's beatification. Furthermore, it will argue that Urban's continued influence on later popes, along with continued support from Florence, brought about her canonization.

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