

My Saints: “Personal” Relic Collections in Bohemia before Emperor Charles IV¹

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Charles IV, the Holy Roman emperor and king of Bohemia (died 1378), is generally seen as a person, whose personal effort made Prague into an important religious and pilgrimage centre of Central Europe.² Since his return to Bohemia from France in 1333, the scale of his collecting of and personal interest in the power of relics distinguished him among his contemporaries. Within his concept of sacred kingship,³ he visioned Prague, his residential city, to become second to Rome and Paris in the possession and use of relics of saints.⁴ The weight of his political position, his extensive travels around the Empire, Italy and France, and long-distance contacts put him in good position to develop the city’s cultic topography, which he began in the late 1340s. His project⁵ included building and rebuilding of churches, distributing hundreds of relics around Prague’s religious houses, and was culminating in the last quarter of the century, when in reaction,

¹ This contribution is part of the Krems subproject “The Visual Representation of Saints – Closeness, Distance, Identification, and Identity, 12th - 16th Centuries” being part of the international ESF EUROCORECODE project “Symbols that Bind and Break Communities: Saints’ Cults as Stimuli and Expressions of Local, Regional, National, and Universalist Identities.”

² Hartmut Kühne, *Ostensio reliquiarum. Untersuchung über Entstehung, Ausbreitung, Gestalt und Funktion der Heilumsweisungen im römisch-deutschen Regnum* (Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 2000), 106-32; Ralf Lützelshwab, “Prag – das neue Paris? Der französische Einfluss auf die Reliquienpolitik Karls IV.,” in *Wallfahrten in der europäischen Kultur/ Pilgrimages in European Culture*, ed. Daniel Doležal, and Hartmut Kühne, Europäische Wallfahrtsstudien Series 1 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2006), 201-19; David Mengel, “Bones, Stones and Brothels: Religion and Topography in Prague under Emperor Charles IV (1346-78)” (PhD Dissertation, University of Notre Dame, Indiana, 2003), Kateřina Horníčková, “In Heaven and on Earth. Church Treasure in Late Medieval Bohemia” (PhD Dissertation, Central European University, Budapest, 2009).

³ Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies. A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), 48.

⁴ Cf. Kateřina Kubínová, *Imitatio Romae. Karel IV. a Řím [Imitatio Romae. Charles IV and Rome]*. (Prague: Artefactum 2006); Lützelshwab, “Prag – das neue Paris?”.

⁵ Mengel, “Bones, Stones and Brothels,” 263-371, Horníčková, “In Heaven and on Earth,” esp. 82-127.

the reform thinkers among the Prague university masters began to criticise exaggerated cult practises and put forward the arguments used later by the theologians of the Hussite religious movement.⁶

Although Emperor Charles IV and the circle of church officials around him played a decisive role in the influx of relics to the country, he was not the first person in Bohemia, who realised the potential of relics' possession for the deepening of one's cultic experience. I would like to draw the reader's attention to other important fourteenth-century figures, whose contribution – albeit comparatively with lesser cultural, social and spatial impact – either pre-dates or complements the emperor's own effort. I see the process of growing religiosity in fourteenth-century Bohemia not as the work of one man, but rather an effort of a group of individuals from different strata of the Bohemian elites. They were mutually interconnected through the family and social networks, but did not always share the same means or motivation for collecting relics. By looking at interests, pious donations, contacts, and travels of several individuals from a wider royal circle, I would like to demonstrate that travel and personal contacts – both local and long-distance – were important conditions for the implementation of “modern” religious practises, including intensified cult of relics.

The popularity of new object-mediated devotion through presentation⁷ changed the whole cultic landscape of fourteenth-century Bohemia. Although the gradual development of the country's cult topography was rather slow taking over four centuries since around 1000, it significantly accelerated during the second half of the fourteenth century. The later period was marked by a growing number of cult objects (relics and images – the latter towards the end of the century) in the churches of Prague and its surroundings, in the urban centres, residence sites, and the churches tied to the monasteries. The “institutional” relics were shown to pilgrims at the main Christian feasts and special occasions. For the country, which, by the virtue of its Christianisation process, had only a limited possession of relics, at least in comparison with other Western European centres,⁸ and whose Christian cultic tradition at the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was still relatively young, the role of the elites' networks became vital for obtaining cult objects and redistributing them over the sacred sites.

Around 1300, the last male members of the Přemyslid dynasty followed the pattern of traditional royal piety with monastic foundations and donations to the ecclesiastical treasuries. King Wenceslas II Přemysl was confronted with the fact that the royal and metropolitan treasuries were lost or plundered after the death of Přemysl Ottakar II in 1278, and subsequently during the country's oc-

⁶ Horníčková, “In Heaven and on Earth,” 127, 192, 195, 196.

⁷ Arnold Angenendt, *Heilige und Reliquien. Die Geschichte ihres Kultes vom Frühen Christentum bis zur Gegenwart* (Munich: C.H.Beck, 1994), 160. Anton Legner, *Reliquien in Kunst und Kult. Zwischen Antike und Erklärung* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1995), 172.

⁸ Mengel, “Bones, Stones and Brothels,” 267.

cupation in 1279-80⁹. Wenceslas' II donations tried to compensate for the losses and his generous donations of relics and reliquaries were praised by his contemporary and admirer Peter of Zittau in the *Chronicon Aulae Regiae*.¹⁰ In spite of the critical assessment of Peter's pro-Přemyslid views, the king's rule is generally perceived as the last culmination of Přemyslid piety growing out of the contemporary taste for royal dignity and representation.¹¹ In his time, the metropolitan, royal (attached to the royal chapel?) and Zbraslav monastery treasuries, the main ecclesiastical collections in Bohemia, still functioned as a royal financial reserve and depositories of relics and reliquaries, from where the objects could be removed for financial, military and political purposes. Wenceslaus' donations fell victim to the political and economical turmoil after the murder of his son, Wenceslaus III (died 1306).¹²

In the period before the ascension of Charles IV to the throne, three Přemyslid female royals related to Wenceslaus II, who cover the first thirty-five years of the fourteenth century, helped to popularise the cult of relics and new piety in Bohemia. Their effort runs parallel to the religious excitement at this time at the courts of Western Europe, referred to by scholars as *devotio moderna*, the spiritual movement that stressed the role of individual religious experience against official cultic practices and performances, fostered new forms of presentation of the sacred to the faithful, and intensified the personal contact with the sacred. This modern piety echoed in the activity of the three women, who were in the later stages of their lives marked by a certain degree of independence and were acting separately and semi-privately. The three women were Wenceslaus' II sister Cunigunde (Kunhuta), the wife of the Mazovian ruler and later abbess of Prague's St. George monastery, his daughter Queen Elisabeth, wife of John of Luxembourg and the mother of Charles IV, and Wenceslaus' last wife Elisabeth-Richenza of Polish descend. Their collection of relics for personal use or further distribution anticipated Charles' IV collecting and the popularity of relics in the second half of the fourteenth century.

⁹ Antonín Podlaha and Eduard Šittler, *Chránový poklad u sv. Víta v Praze. Jeho dějiny a popis* [The cathedral treasure of St. Vitus in Prague, its history and description] (Prague: Nákladem Dědictví sv. Prokopa, 1903), 9; Horníčková, "In Heaven and on Earth," 66-67.

¹⁰ Josef Emler, ed., *Petri Zittaviensis Cronica Aulae regiae* [Peter of Zittau. Chronicle of Zbraslav monastery] in *Fontes Rerum Bohemicarum*, vol. 4 (Prague, 1884), cited after the web edition: <http://www.clavmon.cz/clavis/FRRB/chronica/PETRI%20ZITTAVIENSIS.htm>, cap. XLIV and cap. LXXIV (accessed February 2, 2012).

¹¹ E.g., Jaromír Homolka, "Umělecké řemeslo v době posledních Přemyslovců," [Art crafts in the time of the last Přemyslids], in *Umění doby posledních Přemyslovců*, ed. Jiří Kuthan (Roztoky u Prahy: Středočeské museum v Roztokách u Prahy a Středisko státní památkové péče a ochrany přírody Středočeského kraje, 1982), 124-26.

¹² *Cronica Francisci Pragensis*, ed. Josef Emler, in *Fontes rerum Bohemicarum*, vol. 4, (Prague. 1884), 347-456, cited after the web edition: <http://www.clavmon.cz/clavis/FRRB/chronica/CRONICA%20FRANCISCI%20PRAGENSIS.htm>, cap. XIX, XXIII, (accessed February 2, 2012).

The importance of royal female religious patronage for the spreading of the cult of relics in Bohemia is shown by the fact that, as early as the 1270s, the first Bohemian treasury inventory was compiled for the parish church in the queen's dowry town of Mělník, north of Prague.¹³ The treasury lists six caskets with relics, a plenary (*plenare unum*), a silver-covered panel (*tabula argentea*), a golden cross, two ivory combs, twenty-six liturgical manuscripts and many liturgical vessels (six chalices, a golden cup), and textiles.¹⁴ The reason for inventoring the treasury was probably a donation of precious and liturgical objects. The presence of six reliquary boxes (a typical way of keeping personal relics), ivory combs, golden cup and Byzantine fabrics points to a royal person as the donor of the treasury objects. It was most likely Queen Cunigunde of Hungary (Bohemian queen from 1261 to 1285), the granddaughter of Béla IV and mother of both Wenceslaus II and Abbess Cunigunde of Přemyslid. In terms of its content, this parish treasury was clearly not a common one – it had the same number of chalices, considerably more relics and reliquaries, and twice as many books as the Augustinian Hermit monastery in Sušice some seventy years later.¹⁵

Cunigunde, the first of the three women dealt with in this article, was an exemplary case of late medieval female piety. Following her widowhood, she entered St. George monastery in Prague Castle, a Benedictine convent with close ties to the ruling dynasty. She donated relics to the monastery, lifted the body of Saint Ludmilla – the Přemyslid female dynastical patron and her ancestor – from her grave, arranged the body upon the altar, and ordered a silver head reliquary for the relic to be exhibited there.¹⁶ The Dominican Kolda of Koldice wrote the well-known *Passionale* for her, a mystical treatise compiled in the Eckhartian tradition, aiming at the participatory *compassio* in Christ's suffering.¹⁷ Although the impact of her cult innovations may have been to a great extent restricted to the Benedictine convent (so far one does not know

¹³ Ferdinand Lehner, *Dějiny umění národa českého* [Art history of Czech nation], vol. 1.3, (Prague: Unie 1907), 499, and 557–8. Ivan Hlaváček, *Středověké soupisy knih a knihoven v době předhusitské* [Medieval lists of books and libraries in the pre-Hussite time]. Acta Universitatis Carolinae – Philosophica et Historica Series Monographia 9 (1965) (Prague: Universita Karlova 1966), 51, cat. no. 63.

¹⁴ Textiles: 3 altarcloths, 3 solemn *vella* for chalices, 3 festive and 3 common chasubles, 5 festive and 9 common albs, 3 festive stoles, a diacon vestment, 4 choir mantles and several hangings, covers, and other textile decoration for the church interior, some reportedly of Byzantine origin (*greco • pere, greca*).

¹⁵ Jaroslav Kadlec, ed., *Codex Thomaus. Das Augustinerkloster Sankt Thomas in Prag*, (Würzburg: Augustiner Verlag 1985), 201 (edition on p. 201-02, no. 60).

¹⁶ Homičková, "In Heaven and on Earth," 68. The reliquary bust is in the possession of the National Gallery in Prague.

¹⁷ *Textus de Christi passione* etc. (*Passionale quod dicitur Cunegundis abbatissae*), National Library of the Czech Republic, sign. XIV.A.17; http://www.manuscriptorium.com/apps/main/index.php?request=show_record_num¶m=3&client=&ats=1327673881&mode=&testMode=&sf_queryLine=Kunhuty&qsf_field=7 (accessed January 27, 2012).

about public access to the shrine, but the contacts with the ruling house might have led to a larger cultural impact among parts of the elite), her piety influenced her niece Elisabeth, who spent her young years with her aunt in the monastery. There the latter might have begun her relic collection with a particle of Saint. Ludmilla's relics.

Elisabeth of Přemyslid (died 1330), queen of Bohemia, who married John of Luxembourg in 1310, inherited the religious ambitions of her father and grandfather. Towards the end of her life, after having fallen out of her husband's favour and being in Bavarian exile in 1322-25, the politically estranged queen, suffering from a difficult lung disease, concentrated her efforts into two directions: towards restoring the chief Bohemian collections of relics, the metropolitan treasury in Prague and the royal one in Zbraslav, and to continuing her own collection of relics. She made an effort to regain the relics belonging to her father Wenceslaus II that were lost after her brother's death in Olomouc in 1306. Upon the gift of a gold reliquary panel set with gems with which she supported her request in 1327,¹⁸ the pope urged the abbots of Třebíč and Louka monasteries as well as the provost of Kounice monastery to help the queen to get the items back from the Olomouc St. Wenceslaus chapter that had retained part of them.¹⁹ The relics had apparently belonged to the Přemyslids treasury, which Wenceslaus III had taken with him on his mission to Poland.

Among the relics that Elisabeth demanded from the Olomouc chapter in 1327 was the skull of St. Anne. In the same year she asked for the return of another piece – the head of St. Margaret, possibly enclosed in a reliquary²⁰ and probably taken from Olomouc earlier and pawned by Peter (of Aspelt), archbishop of Mainz. This may have been the relic donated to St. Vitus by Přemysl Otakar II and taken from there by Rudolf of Habsburg in 1306-1307.²¹ Her (royal) collection also contained the relics of St. Ignatius, originally from the Cistercian monastery in Osek, and the reliquary of St. Lucy and Clara that came down to her son, Charles IV, who gave them later to the metropolitan treasury. In her supplication to the pope, she reminded him of her father's good

¹⁸ *Cronica Aulae Regiae*, cap. XIX.

¹⁹ *Regesta diplomatica nec non epistolaria Bohemiae et Moraviae* [Charter regests of Bohemia and Moravia], ed. Josef Emler et al., vol. 4, *annorum 1333-1346* (Prague, 1892), 537, no. 1370 (henceforth RBM).

²⁰ RBM, vol. III, 538, no. 1371: "caput s. Margaritae". Peter of Aspelt, archbishop of Mainz, visited the Olomouc chapter in 1316, RBM, vol. III, 133. It was taken among other jewels from the St. Vitus treasury by Rudolf of Habsburg in 1306-1307 (possibly having been pawned to the Olomouc chapter?); Tomáš Sekyrka, "Inventáře kostelních pokladů v předhusitské Praze" [Inventories of church treasuries in pre-Hussite Prague] (MA thesis, Prague, Charles University, 1991), 152, no. 150. Jana Zachová, ed. *Franciscus of Prague. Chronicon Francisci Pragensis*, *Fontes Rerum Bohemicarum*, series nova, tomus 1 (Prague: Nadace Patriae and Historický Ústav AV ČR, 1997), IV, 374.

²¹ Peter of Aspelt was charged between 1311 and 1318 with the administration of Bohemia; he might have pawned the object out of financial need; *Cronicon Francisci Pragensis*, cap. XIX (accessed February 2, 2012)

custodianship and devotion of relics – in return she received from the pope another group of relics.²²

Meanwhile, the queen was keenly collecting relics through her international contacts.²³ The existence of a royal collection of relics in the 1330s–1340s is confirmed by the first donations of Charles to the metropolitan treasury, recorded in the first St. Vitus inventory.²⁴ In spite of her limited means, Elisabeth's personal relic collection must have been remarkable, as only a part of it donated in her will to the Cistercian monastery of Waldsassen in today's Bavaria counts more than 102 pieces. The bequest included a priest's garment, relics of the Apostles in a crystal nave-shaped reliquary, five reliquaries with relics of the Apostles, St. George, and St. Valentine, a crystal *pyxis*, a relic of St. Bartholomew, and other numerous relics in three ivory caskets. In the first casket, there were mostly the relics of saintly virgins as well as of St. Peter and St. John the Baptist. The second and third caskets contained numerous martyr and Apostel relics, and memorial relics of Christ and the Virgin (relics of *manna*, *pannum*, the cradle of Jesus, the Flagellation column, a tunic, bed, and the Sepulchre of Christ, the Holy Cross, stones from the Calvary and Mount of Olives, and the Virgin's milk, hair and veil, stained with Christ's blood). She made some effort to wrap her relics in new reliquaries, however, the vast majority of the Waldsassen relics remained bare, without a reliquary. It has also been suggested that these relics may have originated from Bavaria and came to her collection during her stay there.²⁵

Elisabeth also became the second royal in Bohemia after her grandfather, who received from the French king a relic of the Crown of Thorns in 1326; it was this piece which she gave at her deathbed to her step-brother Jan Volek, provost of Vyšehrad and later bishop of Olomouc. The arrival of the relic was welcomed by a procession of Prague clergy on October 28, 1327, and it was added to the royal treasury, referred to in the chronicle as "the queen's relics", which confirms the existence of such a collection at this date.²⁶ The following year, in an effort to support the canonisation of Agnes of Bohemia, her great-granddaughter, Elisabeth sent part of the relic to Pope John XXII in a golden reliquary adorned with precious stones. The relic possibly remained in Vyšehrad

²² RBM, vol. III, 537–538, no. 1370–1.

²³ *Cronica Aulae Regiae*, cap. XIX.

²⁴ Podlaha, and Šitler, *Chrámový poklad*, 21, n. 2 and 13 mentioned the relics of the head of St. Ignatius and a small reliquary of St. Lucy and Clara. The Martyrology of Prague's St. Vitus Church, Archive of Prague Castle, Chapter Archive, inv. no. C 5, has on the head of St. Ignatius: *cuius caput Elysabeth ... in monasterio Osek ... obtinuit et eidem Karolo, filio suo dedit. ... quod ipse postmodum ecclesiae Pragensi donavit et voluit ac ordinavit, ut hoc festum sub duplici officio cum propulsatione veneraretur.*

²⁵ Zdenka Hledíková, "Závět' Elišky Přemyslovny" [Testament of Elisabeth of Přemyslid], in *Královský Vyšehrad* 3, ed. Bořivoj Nechvátal (Kostelní Vydří: Karmelitánské nakladatelství, 2007), 133.

²⁶ *Chronica Aulae Regiae*, cap. XVII (here dated 1326, correct date 1327, Sekyrka, "Inventáře," p. 229, no. 344.), RBM, vol. III, 537–538.

between 1328 and 1335, in Volek's ownership. Later, Jan Volek donated it to his monastic foundation in Pustiměř in southern Moravia and in 1346-9 provided for it the exquisite silver gilded reliquary with the statue of the Man of Sorrow, now in the Baltimore Walters Art Gallery.²⁷

Elisabeth played a vital role in the growth of piety to Corpus Christi in Bohemia. She met with the mystical theme probably already in her youth, whilst in close contact with the circle around her aunt Cunigunde. Her personal interest in this form of piety is also reflected in the wall decoration of her palace in the Old Town Square with murals showing the *Arma Christi* and the Man of Sorrows. In 1312, a miracle with a consecrated host was reported from the southern Moravian town of Ivančice, where the host during Communion grew large in the mouth of a doubtful local person, and later bled. Elisabeth asked to be given the miraculous host and between 1319 and 1321 brought it to Prague, where she ordered an ostensory for it and exhibited it in the Zbraslav monastery.²⁸ It is probably not a coincidence that already in 1328 (only five years after the first Corpus Christi feast and procession had taken place in Paris), at the time of her residence in Vyšehrad in the house of Jan Volek, who just had returned from Avignon on her behalf, the first chapel of Corpus Christi in Prague was founded with the donation of a certain canon Eric in Vyšehrad. Was the foundation of this chapel possibly prompted by the arrival of the Thorn relic?

The queen's initiatives reflected new tendencies in devotional practices. She reportedly attended church services daily, tried to foster the canonisation of her ancestor Agnes of Bohemia, and organised and led a procession with relics in Prague during the time of the plague, which caused the infection to stop.²⁹ She herself was met by a procession of Prague priests carrying relics, when she arrived back at Prague from her "exile" in Bavaria in 1325. The royal *entré* meant that she was recognised as queen of Bohemia and was a mark of respect given to her as heiress of the Přemyslid dynastic tradition. Through the ties to the queen's circle, the Cistercian monasteries in Zbraslav, and Vyšehrad enjoyed the position of important religious centres that participated in introducing the modern practices to Bohemia. Since the eleventh century a place of memory of the Přemyslid dynasty, Vyšehrad was supported by the queen herself, who donated expensive silk vestments and a breviary, as well as by other important court individuals. The chapter church was directly subordinated to the Holy See and this position defined its particular position in Prague and Bohemia — later, it played a role in Charles' IV concept as a parallel to the

²⁷ Baltimore, The Walters Art Museum, inv. no. 57.700, Karel Otavský, "Reliquiar für einen Dom von der Dornenkrone Christi," in Jiří Fajt, ed., *Karl IV. Kaiser von Gottes Gnaden. Kunst und Repräsentation des Hauses Luxemburg 1310-1437* (Munich – Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2006), 152, cat. 41.

²⁸ Joseph Neuwirth, *Geschichte der Bildenden Kunst in Böhmen vom Tode Wenzel III. bis zu den Hussitenkriegen* (Prague: J.G. Calve, 1892), 148, years 1319-21.

²⁹ *Cronica Aulae Regiae*, cap. XX.

Vatican in Rome.³⁰ In Zbraslav monastery, the Cistercians established the Holy Crown feast, and kept the miraculous Ivančice host. Their pro-active approach might have been the reason why, in her later years, Elisabeth shifted her original support from the Dominicans to the Cistercians, who then became the prime beneficiaries of her donations. The last ten years of the queen's reign marked a formative period for new devotional practices in Bohemia, with public processions, ceremonies, and a growing public veneration of relics, as well as the enrichment of church treasures and formation of private collections of relics. The potentials of the cult of relics became a source of inspiration for the later cultural policy of Charles IV who made use of the treasury that Elisabeth had put together. Charles continued Elisabeth's legacy in royal representation through acts of piety and elaborated upon her role in the introduction of new forms of piety to Bohemia. This piety was closely linked to the growth of church treasures.

Elisabeth's competitor for the political and cultural primacy in Bohemia was another Elisabeth, originally Richza or Richenza (died 1335), the young queen-widow of two Bohemian kings, Wenceslas II and Rudolf of Habsburg, as well as lover of the nobility league leader Jindřich of Lipá (died 1329). The economically independent queen made pious donations in benefit of the Cistercian monastery *Aula Sanctae Mariae* founded by her in 1323 at Staré Brno, Southern Moravia. With her daughter Agnes, she undertook a long journey to the imperial cities in the Rhineland and their shrines in the summer of 1333 to obtain relics for her monastery, designed as her and her last partner's burial place. Like Charles IV twenty years later, she reckoned the genuineness and value of the region's relics and the willingness of the authorities to concede them to her for her monastery.

Three charters provide us with – rather limited – information about their journey.³¹ The queen and her daughter visited first the nunnery of the Eleven-Thousand Virgins in Cologne, where, with the help of the town representatives (*magistratus Coloniensis*), she managed to convince the abbess of the convent to concede them the whole body of one of the virgins from St. Ursula's entourage (*unum verum integrum corpus de praefatis sanctarum undecim milium virginum*). Then they visited the church of St. Gereon in Cologne, where the deacon and the chapter gave them relics of the Theban legion. In a charter,³² the deacon and the chapter of St. Gereon testified that "*the heads (capita) and the relics given to Elisabeth, queen of Bohemia, were venerated as the relics of SS. Martyrs of Thebes, Gereon and his company,*" before they were sent to Bohemia. Then the queen turned to the Augustinian nunnery of the Virgin in

³⁰ Kubinová, *Imitatio Romae. Karel IV. a Řím*, 281, 283-84.

³¹ RBM, vol. III, 785, nos. 2017-2018. *Abbatissa totumque capitulum secularis eccl. S. Undecim milium virginum in Colonia profitentur, se ad preces ferventes magistratus Coloniensis et ob respectum Elisabeth, ...unum verum integrum corpus de praefatis sanctarum undecim milium virginibus ...donavisse.*

³² RBM, vol. III, 785, no. 2019.

Trier accompanied by the Wolfram, archbishop of Cologne, visited the relics there, and asked for being given some.³³ Supported by Wolfram, she overcame the convent's reluctance and obtained a flask with oil of St. Catherine. In all cases, Elisabeth requested charters as a testimony of the authentic origin of the relics. Such a "critical" attitude in requiring authentication we see in Charles' IV approach to relic collection as well. The possession of relics of "good", authorised origin not only should enrich the Brno nunnery's treasury and make the monastery a regional religious centre, but it should also support Elisabeth's chances of salvation at the Last Judgment.

Sometimes with limited means, the Přemyslid queens saw relic collecting as an appropriate sphere for their more active social and cultural role, including public appearances, demonstrations of piety, tradition and memory, as well as the pursuit of personal spiritual aims. The queens, however, were not the only public figures, who collected relics. Among the protégés of Elisabeth of Přemyslid was Andreas of Paběnice, scholastic official and lawyer, the administrator of the Prague diocese (1321-1325?) in the absence of bishop John of Dražice (absent 1318-1329), and since 1330 abbot of the Cistercian monastery of Sedlec³⁴ (a monk there since 1327?) that kept ties to the Zbraslav, and Waldsassen monasteries, as well as Vyšehrad. In the period between 1326 and 1328, he actively collected relics, using the opportunity of his position during the episcopal absence.³⁵ Unfortunately, we have no information about the purpose of his collection of more than 89 relics of 63 saints from numerous religious institutions and persons in Bohemia. Was it for his private interest, as it would seem from the lack of other information about this collection? Or was there another purpose, for example, to secure his candidature in Sedlec with a major contribution of relics? It may not have been a coincidence that the two mentioned queens and Andreas were all benefactors of the Cistercians or personally connected with them.

At any case, his former administrator's position opened him many doors to church treasures and interesting relics. There was even a miracle-making particle of the Holy Rood set in a small silver cross among them. Andreas' relics came from the main religious institutions in Prague, that is, the Cathedral of St. Vitus, the Benedictine nunnery of St. George, Augustinian monastery of St. Thomas, Premonstratensian monastery of Strahov, the commend of the Cruciferous Knights in Zderaz, and St. James of the Franciscans, as well as the

³³ RBM, vol. III, 786, no. 2021. *Praepositus...s. Mariae in Treveroyde ordinis s. Augusti cupimus fore notum, quod d. Elisabeth, bis regina Bohemiae cum Agneta, filia sua, ducissa Poloniae, devotionis causa reliquias sanctorum nostrae ecclesiae duxerit visitandas et – sibi de praedictis reliquiis aliquid postulaverit inpartiri nos igitur precibus d. Walrami, archiepiscopi Coloniensis, et earundem inclinati unum vas vitreum, impletum de sacro oleo s. Catharinae, quod de ossibus eiusdem mimitis profluxit et emanavit, duximus largiendum.*

³⁴ Hledíková, "Závěť Elišky Přemyslovny," 132.

³⁵ *Testimonium de reliquiis sanctorum ab Andrea jurisperito de Praga collectis...*, charter no. 1722, year 1330, in RBM, vol. III, *annorum* 1311-1333, 672-673.

monasteries of Postoloprty (Benedictine) and Horažďovice (Cruciferous Knights). Other sources were the Prague parish churches of St. Benedict, St. Egidius, and the Virgin on the Pond, and several private persons, mostly ecclesiastical officials. In one case, the donor was even a layman, to whom the relics descended via the inheritance after his brother, a former chaplain of King Wenceslaus II, who was said to have travelled to Rome and other places. The private donors were important persons with international contacts. Among them were Queen Elisabeth's chancellor Nicolaus, Wernher, the canon of St. Vitus Cathedral, Friedrich of Pernštejn, the archbishop of Riga, a Czech residing in Avignon, and a certain deacon from Passau in Bavaria.

As Elisabeth-Richenza, Andreas insisted on the authenticity of his relics and requires a written, legally-valid confirmation by the issuing authority. If possible, Andreas was even personally present when the particle was cut from the respective relic. The charter listing his relics was compiled as a legal document testifying the origin of the relics. For "his collection", he clearly preferred well-known and "reliable" relics of local saints, such as those of the Czech patrons, and from institutions to be trusted.

The least known is the share of the laity in the influx of relics to Bohemia. Lay donations of relics and images are recorded only after the accession of Charles IV to the throne, and came from laypeople with ties to the court and to the members of the Church elite. Although this field has not been systematically studied, the sources offer us some interesting examples of lay relic donations. The Prague merchant Henslin Meinhardi (known in the sources since 1340) of the Olbramowic family gave his collection of relics to the St. Thomas church of the Augustine monastery in Prague in 1362, following a donation by Emperor Charles IV to the same institution.³⁶ Both donations were probably propelled by the celebration of the second jubilee year (*annus iubilaeus*), when the septennial festive showing of relics took place in Prague's St. Vitus' Cathedral. More than fifty relics from Henslin's donation were exhibited publicly in a transparent chalice-shaped (crystal?) ostensory at the altar in a chapel of the monastery on certain feast days.³⁷ This was probably demanded by Henslin himself to foster his and his family representation and prospective Salvation. The Olbramowic family ranked among the richest and most influential burgher families of Prague and enjoyed close personal ties to King John of Luxembourg, as well as Emperor Charles IV. In his donation, Henslin may have been inspired by his emperor's example. In any case, it shows that patrician merchant families with international contacts were yet another potential source of relics for Prague.

As a parish church of a respectable community of Old Town German merchants, St. Gastulus owned a rich treasury in 1379-1380, with six reliquaries,

³⁶ At this time, there were more than hundred relics in the twenty-two reliquaries in St. Thomas monastery, including Christ's memorial and St. Pancratius' relics, which, some twenty years later, in 1380, performed healing miracles. Horníčková, "In Heaven and on Earth," 103. *Codex Thomaes*, 376-380, pag. 189.

³⁷ *Codex Thomaes*, 48.

including two bowls carved of precious stones, and at least two images of saints, St. Sigismund and Margaret. The latter were donated by the mother of Archbishop-elect John of Jenštejn, but were kept together with the treasury's reliquaries in a chest in her house, fearing alienation.³⁸ The image of St. Sigismund is especially interesting in this respect, for it demonstrates the active participation of lay elites around the archbishop (the mother of Jan Jenštejn was also a relative of the former Archbishop Jan Očko of Vlašim, a close person to Charles IV) in fostering the popularity of a "new" official Prague cathedral cult – the body of St. Sigismund was brought to Prague by Charles IV only 15 years before, in 1365 – through a visual medium rather than a relic.

The 1390 inventory of St. Gallus parish church in Prague reveals in the introduction the fear by some distinguished urban donors for the loss of the treasure. No wonder, this unusually rich parish church treasury contained forty-four largely elaborate reliquaries, and many more relics, including numerous relics of Christ's Passion and the Virgin,³⁹ proving that Henslin Olbromowicz's example was eagerly followed by his fellow merchants.

The new cult practices arrived to Bohemia approximately at the same time as the chroniclers complained about new fashion and self-presentation among the elites.⁴⁰ Although it is generally thought that the cult reform in Bohemia was the result of Charles' IV personal effort, I have demonstrated that more individuals from his circle and his mother's family took part in it. They came from different social levels of the elites: female royals, educated clerical officials, and Prague burgher families, but all showed close ties to the royal house of the Přemyslids and the Luxembourgs. In all cases the patrons were educated individuals with either religious background or high social position, often with international as well as local contacts. They shared the interest in the new religiosity and power of relics, and were keen to support new cults by donating relics to the church treasuries. In Bohemia, the growth of treasuries and

³⁸ After her death, Archbishop John, at that time bishop of Meissen, rejected to return the treasury to the church. Displaying responsibility and independence, the visiting diocese administrator insisted on the restitution of the objects to the treasury, *Protocolum visitationis archidiaconatus Pragensis annis 1379 - 1382 per Paulum de Janowicz archidiaconum pragensem factae* [Visitation protocol of the archdeaconate of Prague 1379-1382 by Pavel of Janovice, archdeacon of Prague], ed. Ivan Hlaváček and Zdeňka Hledíková (Prague: Academia, 1973), 88, no. 16.

³⁹ Part of the relics probably came from Prague's metropolitan and royal relic collections, as implied by the choice of saints and the initial imperial donation of the namesake relic to the church. Homíčková, "In Heaven and on Earth," 107; *Inventarium de rebus Ecclesiae parochialis ad S. Gallum Pragae a Joanne Pomuk plebano conscriptum registro cancellariae Aepalis inseritur*, 19 August, 1390, in Klement Borový, ed. *Libri erectionum archidiocesis Pragensis saeculo XIV et XV*, tom. IV, (Prague: J. G. Calve 1875-1889), 1, no. 256.

⁴⁰ Martin Musílek, "Odras dvorské kultury v městském prostředí ve 13.-14. století," [Reflection of court culture in urban space in the 13th-14th centuries], cited after the internet edition <http://www.dvory-a-rezidence.cz/soubory/DRIL/Mus%C3%ADlek.pdf>, 481-2, accessed January 18, 2012.

the dissemination of new piety practices were intertwined processes implemented “from above”, by people linked in various ways to the court. Monastic treasuries profited most from the influx of relic donations. The attention that the relics attracted among the laity was often felt as unfair competition by the parish clergy. Clashes between the parish and monastic clergy occurred frequently in Prague. In the second half of the fourteenth century, the royal and clerical collectors of relics were followed by rich lay donors, who used relics for the (public) presentation of their piety and made their donations to comply with the overall imperial concept. Relics were distributed to several distinguished Prague parish churches – m exactly at the time, when the influx of “exaggerated” cult practices was criticised by the reform-oriented Prague university masters.

MEDIUM AEVUM
QUOTIDIANUM

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KREMS 2012

HERAUSGEGEBEN
VON GERHARD JARITZ

GEDRUCKT MIT UNTERSTÜTZUNG DER KULTURABTEILUNG
DES AMTES DER NIEDERÖSTERREICHISCHEN LANDESREGIERUNG

**KULTUR
NIEDERÖSTERREICH**



Titelgraphik: Stephan J. Tramèr

ISSN 1029-0737

Herausgeber: Medium Aevum Quotidianum. Gesellschaft zur Erforschung der materiellen Kultur des Mittelalters, Körnermarkt 13, 3500 Krems, Österreich. Für den Inhalt verantwortlich zeichnen die Autoren, ohne deren ausdrückliche Zustimmung jeglicher Nachdruck, auch in Auszügen, nicht gestattet ist. – Druck: Grafisches Zentrum an der Technischen Universität Wien, Wiedner Hauptstraße 8-10, 1040 Wien.

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Vorwort

Die vorliegende Ausgabe von *Medium Aevum Quotidianum* soll neuerlich die Breite vermitteln, in welcher Bereiche des mittelalterlichen und frühneuzeitlichen Alltags in der Quellenüberlieferung unterschiedlichster Inhalte, Autoren, Datierung, Provenienz und sozialer Gruppierungen auftreten können.

Während sich Francesca Battista mit „erotischen“ Musterbriefen des Heinrich von Iserna aus dem dreizehnten Jahrhundert beschäftigt, konzentriert sich Jan Odstrčilík auf anonyme Texte böhmischer Herkunft in einer Handschrift des vierzehnten Jahrhunderts aus der Corpus Christi Library in Cambridge, welche sich mit dem Eintritt Gottes in die menschliche Seele auseinandersetzen. Auch Kateřina Horníčková widmet sich Lebensäußerungen im böhmischen Raum und zwar den Reliquiensammlungen von Angehörigen der Prager Eliten bereits vor dem Zeitraum und den diesbezüglichen Bestrebungen Kaiser Karls IV.

Elisabeth Vavra untersucht Totentanz-Darstellungen des deutschsprachigen Raumes aus dem fünfzehnten und sechzehnten Jahrhundert und kann feststellen, dass die in diesen auftretenden Kleidungsdarstellungen der wiedergegebenen Protagonisten zur Kenntlichmachung der Standeszugehörigkeit derselben dienen sollten und nicht, um visuell auf deren standestypische Verfehlungen hinzuweisen. Ievgen A. Khalkov untersucht die letztwilligen Verfügungen der Bewohner der Venezianischen und Genueser Handelstationen von Tana am Schwarzen Meer aus den Dreißigerjahren des fünfzehnten Jahrhunderts hinsichtlich ihrer Aussagen zur materiellen Kultur und weist auf die herausragende Stellung des Kleidungswesens hin. Irina Savinetskaya liefert Ergebnisse ihrer Forschungen zur Konstruktion des Fremdbildes von Franzosen in deutschen Quellen des fünfzehnten und sechzehnten Jahrhunderts und deren Verhältnis zur Selbstbeurteilung der Deutschen.

Damit liefern die sechs Beiträge wichtige Ergebnisse zu Alltag, spiritueller und materieller Kultur von Angehörigen unterschiedlicher sozialer Schichten profaner und klerikaler Provenienz. Sie können dadurch mithelfen, die komparative Erforschung mittelalterlicher und frühneuzeitlicher Lebensgestaltung erfolgreich voranzutreiben.

Gerhard Jaritz